

TUESDAY, 26 JULY 2016

ESTIMATES—EDUCATION, TOURISM, INNOVATION AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE—EDUCATION, TOURISM AND MAJOR EVENTS

Estimate Committee Members

Mr SJ Stewart (Chair)
Miss VM Barton
Mr MA Boothman
Mr SL Dickson
Mr BM Saunders
Mr RA Williams

Members in Attendance

Ms TE Davis
Mrs JR Miller
Mr JM Krause
Mr TJ Nicholls
Mrs T Smith
Mr SA Emerson

In Attendance

Hon. KJ Jones, Minister for Education, Tourism and Major Events

Department of Education and Training

Dr J Watterston, Director-General

Mr J Hunt, Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services

Ms P Walton, Deputy Director-General, State Schools

Mr A Black, Assistant Director-General and Chief Finance Officer

Ms H Stevenson, Executive Director, Student Protection

Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Mr C Rider, Chief Executive Officer

Department of Tourism, Major Events and Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

Ms M Houghton, Director-General

Mr D Walker, Acting Deputy Director-General, Tourism Division

Tourism and Events Queensland

Ms L Coddington, Chief Executive Officer

Committee met at 8.59 am



CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I declare this hearing of the estimates for the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee open. I would like to acknowledge the traditional

owners of the land on which parliament stands today. I am Scott Stewart, member for Townsville and chair of this committee. Miss Verity Barton, the member for Broadwater, is the deputy chair. The other committee members are Mr Mark Boothman, member for Albert; Steve Dickson, member for Buderim; Bruce Saunders, member for Maryborough; and Rick Williams, member for Pumicestone. The committee has resolved that non-committee members be given leave to attend and ask questions during the hearing and those members may be present over the course of today's proceedings. The visiting members present are: Tim Nicholls, member for Clayfield; Deb Frecklington, member for Nanango; Jeff Seeney, member for Callide; Tracy Davis, member for Aspley; Jon Krause, member for Beaudesert; John-Paul Langbroek, member for Surfers Paradise; Tarnya Smith, member for Mount Ommaney; Scott Emerson, member for Indooroopilly; and Jo-Ann Miller, member for Bundamba.

The committee has resolved that the whole of the proceedings of the committee may be broadcast in line with the conditions for broadcasters and guidelines for camera operators, which are available from one of the parliamentary attendants in this room. I now ask that mobile phones or pagers either be switched off or turned to silent. I should also remind you that food and drink is not permitted in the chamber.

Today the committee will examine the areas of responsibility for the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events and the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business in the order outlined in the hearing program.

The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2016 for the portfolio areas for the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events. The committee will examine the minister's portfolio area of Education from 9 am to 12.45 pm and then examine the portfolio areas of Tourism and Major Events from 1.45 pm to 3.15 pm. The committee will suspend proceedings during this time for the following breaks: 10.30 am to 10.45 am for morning tea and 12.45 pm to 1.45 pm for lunch.

I remind those present today that these proceedings are similar to parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of parliament. I remind members of the public that under standing orders the public may be admitted to or excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament apply here. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 and, therefore, questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles or argument or opinion.

I intend to guide proceedings today so that the relevant issues can be explored without imposing artificial time limits and to ensure that there is adequate opportunity to address the questions from the government and non-government members of the committee. Where necessary, I will remind ministers, directors-general, CEOs and their advisers that their answers to questions should be finalised in order that other issues can be examined.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the minister, the director-general, officials and members of the public to this hearing. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer the questions referred to them by the minister or the director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the area of responsibility administered by the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Ms JONES: Thank you very much, Chair. I would like to do that. Thank you, Chair, and thank you all committee members for the opportunity to address the committee here this morning. I am proud to be the Minister for Education in a government that has delivered record investment in Education in Queensland. We are investing more than \$9.1 billion to ensure we are delivering the best quality education we can provide and a school environment that is inclusive of every student. This investment is delivering record funding for students with a disability and is putting more teachers into our classrooms, better school facilities and more classrooms where and when we need them. A Labor government will always prioritise education because we know it has the power to change lives and create opportunities.

We released our Advancing education action plan last year to guide the future of education in this state. Rather than gathering dust on a bookshelf in Mary Street, this plan has sharpened our focus on how we can lift educational outcomes for every child and it is already delivering results. A new autism hub and reading centre at Woolloongabba is providing resources and advice to teachers and parents.

An online STEM academy is leading the way in digital education, supporting students and teachers with the latest in coding and robotics. Literacy and numeracy coaches are ensuring every student has a solid foundation, and more support and professional development for our teachers means every class gets a great education. Of course, these reforms come off the back of Queensland's best-ever NAPLAN results. Last year our students were the most improved in the nation.

Our state schools are currently experiencing significant growth with more than 65,000 extra students forecast over the next five years. This means we need to prioritise our spending to meet this growth. We need to recruit more teachers and direct more resources to capital works in our schools. That is why we have employed an extra 1,200 teachers and teacher aides this year to meet student growth now and into the future.

We have restored the cuts of the previous government that put our schools under even more pressure. We have reversed the LNP staffing model which saw more than 500 full-time teaching positions cut across this state. We have also employed 875 extra teachers above growth to put downward pressure on class sizes and ensure more individual attention for every child. That was our election commitment and I am proud that we have delivered. To that end, I want to acknowledge our 67,000 teachers and teacher aides who work so hard each and every day in our state schools.

I am pleased to announce in response to concerns teachers have raised consistently with me that we will be implementing a core curriculum for P-10. We will revise our Curriculum into the Classroom materials to give state schoolteachers more control over how they teach the Australian curriculum from term one next year. Teachers are telling me they want more time for revision, extension or deeper learning for all students in their classroom. This all part of our commitment to a quality education for all students in Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I now call the member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: My first question is to the minister. With reference to the SDS at the departmental overview on page 3 and your response to question on notice No. 4 outlining the number of claims by teachers lodged with and accepted by WorkCover Queensland in an 18-month period from January 2015, yes or no, Minister, do you agree that one assault on a teacher is one assault too many?

Ms JONES: Absolutely. I thank the honourable member for her genuine concern in supporting our teachers. There are a number of measures that we are taking as a government to ensure that we are providing greater support for our teachers in the classroom. Today I will be announcing a new campaign that we are delivering at the request of teachers in regard to saying very clearly not only to our students through the behaviour management plan, but also to parents that all of our teachers deserve respect at school, which is their workplace.

I can also advise the committee that 150 parents and guardians were excluded from state schools last year because of their behaviour in a school, whether that be direct violence on teachers or a threat of violence to teachers. I actually have some of the new posters that we will be putting into schools—

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Mr Chair. My question was a yes or no answer. I have got my answer, thank you.

Ms JONES: Sorry, I thought you wanted to hear about how I was protecting teachers.

Ms DAVIS: I have plenty of questions for you, Minister. You will get your opportunity. Minister, I appreciate what you have just given in your response and that you are doing a number of things. However, what is concerning to me is that in your response to question on notice No. 4 that I just alluded to, you attempt to trivialise 174 assaults on teachers by trying to bury it by saying that it is less than half of one per cent. I put it to you, Minister, that those 174 teachers who were assaulted by students are 100 per cent concerned about it. I ask you, Minister, what you are doing to ensure that those teachers and any in the future get the best possible support that they can. It is all very well to have a policy document there, but it is about implementing it. I want you to assure this committee and Queenslanders that you do, in fact, care for teachers, that you care for those 174 teachers who have been assaulted and whom you try to bury under statistics.

Ms JONES: I reject the assertion in the question where the member said that I would trivialise any assault on a teacher. That is fundamentally untrue and I find it offensive. I ask the member to withdraw it. However, in the spirit of estimates I will continue.

CHAIR: Member, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: It is okay. What I will say is that I will compare our government and our support for teachers with the LNP government any single day of the week. We have very strong policies in place

about which we answered other questions on notice from the opposition, I believe, in regard to putting in place behaviour management plans at every single school. We also take very seriously exclusions. In actual fact, we have seen an increase in long-term and short-term suspensions of students in our schools because we do not accept that any attack on a teacher is acceptable, whether that be by a student or a parent. In answering your first question I was also saying that 150 threats of attack or an attack on a teacher by parents or guardians is not acceptable, either. That is why when I go around Queensland—most recently in Ipswich where I met with principals and teachers there—they ask me whether I would consider launching a campaign aimed directly at parents. I have listened and that is exactly what I will be doing today. Threats or attacks on a teacher are never good enough. When I talk to teachers, one of the things they also raise with me is resources—

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Mr Chair, I have my answer to that question.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, the minister is answering your question. Please give her—

Ms DAVIS: I have my answer, though, Chair.

CHAIR: Minister, have you finished answering that question?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. Thank you, Minister, for that very long response. I would put it to you, as I am reading this response to the question on notice, that the manner in which this line appears says to me that you consider 174 teachers to be nothing but a small percentage of the overall number of teachers in this state and—

Ms JONES: You could also interpret your questioning as saying that all state school students are bad students.

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Minister, thank you. We will let the member ask her question, please.

Ms JONES: It is very long-winded.

Miss BARTON: Mr Chair, I do not think the minister needs to make such comments.

CHAIR: Thank you. Member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much, Chair. The question on notice response is this number—a claim lodgement rate of less than half of one per cent, 0.73 per cent of the 48,458 teachers in Queensland. I say to you, Minister, that a response like that is insulting to teachers—that 174 assaults are simply assigned to a small percentage. We are talking about the number of WorkCover claims that indeed were accepted. We are not talking about the number of assaults that have actually occurred. I think the minister—

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, can you actually ask one question, please? Let's make it brief and to the point.

Ms DAVIS: To that end, Minister, how many teachers were reported as being assaulted by students in 2015 that were not accepted by WorkCover?

Ms JONES: I am happy to get you that figure. I do not know if someone has it here. I just say that I think I deserve, given the comments made by the shadow minister, the opportunity to clarify very clearly that the percentage is a statement of fact. I do not think any teacher would think that I or indeed anybody in the Palaszczuk government would be talking down workplace health and safety of our teachers in our classrooms when, in actual fact, everything we have done since we have come into office has been all about empowering teachers and supporting teachers in our classrooms and in our schools whether it is providing additional resources, additional teachers so there is less stress in school environments or having smaller class sizes—one of the key EB conditions that was actually toyed with by the former government. We actually saw under the former government an increase in class sizes during their time in government.

Ms DAVIS: Mr Chair—

Ms JONES: We know—

Miss BARTON: Point of order.

Ms JONES:—that this adds to pressure in classrooms—

CHAIR: Minister, one moment, please. A point of order?

Miss BARTON: The shadow minister has asked a very direct question. The minister is straying into matters that are outside the confines of the question.

Ms JONES: I dispute that.

Miss BARTON: I would ask that you draw her back to the question, or the member for Aspley can ask another question if she is satisfied with the answer that she has received.

CHAIR: The minister may answer the question in whichever way she perceives.

Ms JONES: The interjection by the member for Broadwater clearly shows that she does not see any correlation between pressure in schools and pressure in classrooms with class sizes.

Miss BARTON: Point of order. I take offence at the imputation by the minister and I ask that she withdraw.

CHAIR: Minister, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: Yes, of course. I know that the honourable member is very familiar with WorkCover law in this state, but I would say that we have a very proud track record when it comes to supporting our teachers. We have strong enforcement of behaviour management plans in each and every school in Queensland. Today I will be launching a new campaign targeted at the 150 parents and guardians who have been excluded from state schools for the very reason that the member for Aspley is talking about, which is inappropriate behaviour, threatening behaviour or attacks on our teachers. We have also restored teachers to the front line, putting real downward pressure on class sizes in our schools.

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES: We are providing more support for teachers than they have had for years. I am happy to answer the question now.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, What is your point of order?

Ms DAVIS: I understand that the minister wants to carry on and talk about things outside of my question, but my question was very specific. My question asked how many teachers reported being assaulted in 2015 whose claims were not accepted by WorkCover. That is a pretty straightforward question and I am just after a straightforward answer.

Ms JONES: Yes, and I said that I would get that for you.

Ms DAVIS: When would that be, Minister?

Ms JONES: I think the Deputy Director-General has that answer for you now.

Miss BARTON: If you have taken the question on notice—

Ms JONES: No, I am happy to answer it. If the honourable shadow minister has asked a question, I would like to answer it as quickly as possible.

Mr Hunt: DET has a network of workplace rehabilitation coordinators across the state in regional offices and in schools, and they work with staff to make sure staff that are supported in their WorkCover claims or their rehabilitation and return to work.

The WorkCover claim rate for DET has declined by 19 claims over the last 12 months, which is 0.6 of one per cent, so we are 19 claims fewer than the prior reporting year. DET is working very hard to support those employees and, as the minister has indicated, we take great pride and make great efforts to ensure these employees are supported if they have sustained an injury at work.

Ms DAVIS: My question then, Minister, is how many assaults on teachers by students occurred in state schools? They do not have to have reached the WorkCover level; I just want to know how many reported assaults were perpetrated on teachers.

Ms JONES: We will endeavour to get you that information as early as we can. As the former principal on the committee would know—

Ms DAVIS: Are you taking that on notice, Minister?

Ms JONES: Yes, I am happy to see what data we can collect. Let me be very clear: we also report, which I know the shadow minister has access—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. The minister has taken the question on notice. I think the member for Aspley has another question.

CHAIR: I would agree, Minister. The question is taken on notice.

Ms JONES: That is fine. I was going to say that when it comes to exclusions and expulsions—

Miss BARTON: The question has been taken on notice.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, why did you wait until estimates to put out another glossy brochure and start addressing this issue of teacher assaults when it has been around and an issue for some time?

Ms JONES: I do not understand the premise of your question.

Ms DAVIS: Today you are announcing that you are going to do glossy brochures on a number of things. You are going to start an education campaign—

Ms JONES: Can I clarify what reference it is that you are making?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, can you direct us as to where this may appear in the appropriation bills?

Ms DAVIS: Certainly. This all goes to page 3 of the SDS under 'Departmental overview', which pretty much talks about the whole of education.

Ms JONES: I am happy to answer the question, because the reality is that the LNP government did nothing about this when they were in government, and today I am announcing that—

CHAIR: Minister, one moment. Member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, I put it to you that you have been the minister for nearly 18 months. You have come into estimates today. You have told us that you are going to do all of these wonderful things; you could have done them 18 months ago. My question is: why has it taken until estimates to start worrying about assaults on teachers? It has clearly been an issue for some time and certainly during your tenure as minister.

Ms JONES: I gather there is no reference to the SDS, but I am happy to answer the question because I am absolutely genuine in providing the best possible workplace that I can provide for teachers. What was the No. 1 issue raised by teachers when I first became the minister? That was the 500 teacher cuts to front-line teachers in classrooms by the LNP government. What was the first thing I did—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES: I am answering your question, which is about how I am addressing pressure in classrooms.

Ms DAVIS: I am asking the minister a particular question. She is going off topic, and I simply ask you to bring her back to the question.

Ms JONES: You did not reference the SDS. I am answering your question.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, you accepted the question and I am waiting for your answer.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, what is your point of order?

Ms DAVIS: My point of order is that the question I asked is not being answered by the minister and I ask that you draw her back to my question.

CHAIR: Minister, you can answer the question whichever way you—

Ms JONES: I will answer the question. The accusation in your question, I think, was why it took me 18 months. What I was talking the honourable member through is what I have been doing for the 18 months. What I have been doing is listening to teachers and prioritising my workload around theirs. Let me talk you through what teachers have told me to prioritise and how our Labor government has delivered. No. 1, cuts to front-line services by the previous LNP government: more than 500 teachers removed from the front line, from classrooms, because of the changes to the methodology of allocating teachers. No. 2, workload issues: I am very pleased to announce that we are taking real action and real reform when it comes to pressure in the classroom through the revision of the C2C materials and the work of the QCAA. Thirdly, not only are we supporting teachers with behaviour management in classrooms—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. The member for Aspley has asked a very specific question with respect to the minister's announcement this morning. The minister must still remain relevant to the question. It is a very narrow question, with respect.

Ms JONES: It is not.

Miss BARTON: It is a very narrow question with respect to today's announcement and why it has not been done earlier. The minister does not need to debate the question or debate the point. If

she is not going to provide an answer that is relevant, then perhaps the member for Aspley can ask her next question.

CHAIR: Minister, I will get you to move quickly to your point, please.

Ms JONES: In addition to the reforms—because I thought the question was about what I have been doing for 18 months, so I was answering that part—we also have seven positive behavioural learning regional coordinators across all regions. We have instituted additional guidance officers in our high schools, which was one of our election commitments. We are also providing funding for chaplains in our schools which was cut by the federal government and providing additional functional behaviour assessment training for our staff to support our staff. I would argue that we have undertaken a suite of reforms that provide a much more supportive workplace environment for our teachers and our staff in schools.

Ms DAVIS: I thank the minister for that answer. I would say, Minister, that one of the biggest issues facing education here in Queensland is the need for thousands of new teachers, and I note that you alluded to that in your opening statement. We are advised by the Queensland Teachers' Union that demand will certainly increase over the next five years. I put it to you again that this type of appalling—

CHAIR: Member for Aspley—

Ms DAVIS: I am about to go to my question, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Can you refrain from any inference.

Ms DAVIS: With this type of appalling behaviour—

CHAIR: Member for Aspley—

Ms DAVIS: With this type of situation where teachers are being assaulted, how does the minister propose to encourage new teachers to come into our system when it appears that we are not talking about them working in schoolyards: it is almost like fight club.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, I have reminded you of this several times. Under standing order 115B your questions cannot contain inferences or imputations. Can you please rephrase your question or we will move on.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, my question to you is: we need to encourage teachers to come along. You have talked today about a strategy that you think you might implement when you get around to it—

CHAIR: Member for Aspley! I have warned you several times under standing order 115B. Your question is not to contain imputations or inferences. Can you please ask your question directly or I shall move on to the next question.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, we need increased teacher numbers over the next five years, so how are you going to encourage new teachers to come into Queensland state schools to teach our students when there is no assurance that they will not be assaulted in numbers?

Ms JONES: I can answer that in a number of ways. I will answer it by saying that what we are committed to is putting additional support and resources into our schools, and our record investment in education demonstrates that. I also would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of our principals and our deputy principals. The \$150 million election commitment has seen additional deputy principals particularly in our largest high schools, who often have a very direct role in discipline in our schools.

I believe that our schools are doing a great job in managing all students in our schools and supporting them so they can continue to learn at school. They are also taking the steps that are required with regard to their determination on when it is in the best interests of the school community—whether that be other students or teachers—to not only exercise their power to exclude students but also short-term and long-term disciplinary action or suspensions from schools. Unlike the member for Aspley, I believe that our schools are doing a good job in providing a safe learning environment—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair. I find those comments from the minister—

Ms JONES: You said it was fight club, honourable member. You called our schools fight clubs.

Ms DAVIS: I find the comments made by the minister personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

CHAIR: Minister, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: Yes. Also the figures, I understand, also include some of our mixed—

Miss BARTON: The minister did not actually withdraw; she just said 'yes'.

CHAIR: Minister, will you actually say the words 'I withdraw'?

Ms JONES: I withdraw. Thank you, member for Broadwater. I have also been advised that a lot of the WorkCover claims are assaults which are often committed by students with complex disabilities. As I will also be talking about today, I have launched a review into the way that we provide support for disabilities in Queensland. Sorry, member for Broadwater, were you saying something?

CHAIR: It is fine. Continue, Minister.

Ms JONES: I could not hear what she was saying over there. I know that the member for Aspley, as the former minister for disabilities, understands the complexity we are dealing with in ensuring we are providing not only the best learning environment for students with disabilities but also addressing some of the behaviour management issues that can occur, particularly in our special schools. In actual fact, on Friday I was at a special school talking to a principal about this exact issue: how we get the balance right between providing a safe educational learning environment not only for students but also for our staff. We sat down for over an hour talking about how we wanted to feed into the disability review to ensure that we are providing contemporary responses and inclusive responses for all students with a disability.

CHAIR: Minister, I have a question. As a former high school principal, I know one of the big concerns raised by teachers is managing the workload, particularly with a cluttered curriculum. With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the minister update the committee on reforms the government has made to improve the implementation of the Australian curriculum in Queensland state schools and take workload pressures off our teachers?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know that as a former principal you have lived this firsthand. In actual fact, I would say that we have been on a journey here in Queensland in not only rolling out the national curriculum in the best interests of all students in our schools but also ensuring that we are meeting national standards. Today I have announced that, following the QCAA's review of the implementation of the national curriculum in Queensland, we will be undertaking a number of measures which teachers have been asking for for years to ensure that they have a workplace that not only keeps the standards of education but also delivers that balance.

Today I can announce that, through state schooling and the review of the C2C curriculum materials which were implemented and developed to implement the national curriculum, we will go through those units to remove any unnecessary duplication. I also stress to everybody including all members of the committee that there will be no changes to achievement standards or the core curriculum to be taught in schools and that there will be more revision of the C2C materials that support the way that teachers educate in the classroom and provide that subject content. I know already that the response has been significantly welcoming and that that is something that teachers have asked about for a number of years. I know that the head of state schooling, Patrea Walton, and the director-general acknowledge this is something that would be universally welcomed by all teachers in the classroom. Picking up on the line of questioning this morning, I support any measures that we can take, be it through restoring front-line services or listening to our teachers about workload issues and workload pressure, to provide a much more conducive environment for learning and a supportive environment for our teachers.

Mr WILLIAMS: In addition to the reforms you are delivering to de-clutter the curriculum, I understand from page seven of the SDS that the Palaszczuk Labor government is employing more teachers. Will the minister update the committee on what extra teachers are being employed in Queensland state schools and on the difference they are making?

Ms JONES: As I said, one of the key election commitments of the Palaszczuk Labor government is restoring front-line services. This is also the case in education where we committed to an additional 2,500 teachers in Queensland state schools from 2016 to 2018. This includes an additional 875 teachers above growth. As in my electorate, every single member of the committee is already benefitting from the first rollout of this additional commitment above growth to support our teachers in their working environment and also to support learning in our classrooms. I know the electorate that will benefit most from this over the next three years is the member for Bundamba's electorate where we will see an additional 18 teachers in schools in Bundamba. I thank the member for her work in opposition where we were able to develop this policy. It will make a real difference not only to the pressure teachers encounter in schools but to learning and learning outcomes.

From the start of this year, 290 extra teachers were employed across Queensland. As I said, every state primary, high school, combined and special school will benefit from the allocation of some additional teacher resources. Apart from the year 7 transition to high school, this is—and I am not sure if I can say ‘in the history of Queensland’—the largest addition of teachers to classrooms. It is also the first reform we have really delivered. Once again, when we announced this commitment I listened to teachers saying very clearly that they wanted some schools and principals in terms of flexibility about that allocation, so some have used that resourcing for additional deputy principal hours, for head of curriculum hours and for teachers in the classroom. This stands in stark contrast to the LNP which, as I said in my opening statement, through its trickery and changes to methodology saw a reduction of 500 teachers allocated to classrooms across Queensland. I will not go on for too much longer except to say that in Townsville it equates to nine full-time employees; Maryborough, 9.5; Pumicestone, 10.6; Bundamba, 18; Broadwater, more than 6.4; Albert, 17; Buderim, seven; and Aspley, eight.

Mr SAUNDERS: One priority of the Palaszczuk government is preparing students for the jobs of the future, with a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. With reference to page seven of the SDS, will the minister inform the committee how we are ensuring that our teaching workforce has the skills they need to teach STEM?

Ms JONES: I had the privilege of joining the member for Maryborough in his electorate and in visiting some of the complex schools in his community where we talked about some of the issues raised here this morning. We identified early that our government—as does the Federal Government, although they are cutting \$1.2 billion from education and not supporting it with funding—believes that we should implement more support for our teachers in STEM to upskill our workforce and provide a new program. Out of the corner of my eye I can see Patrea nodding, because this is something that we worked on in regards to partnering with universities to say, ‘What are the short courses that we can provide to upskill our existing workforce to have more skills and more confidence to deliver in the STEM area?’ I am pleased to stay that we have been overwhelmed by the response from our workforce, with more than 1,500 state school teachers this week starting an online course upskilling their skills in STEM. That is more than 1,500 teachers taking the opportunity that we are providing through this \$3 million initiative to upskill. For the benefit of the committee, I highlight the number of teachers taking a number of courses. In junior secondary maths, there is around 200 teachers; in primary science, 428 teachers; in junior secondary science, 204 teachers; in senior mathematics B, 70 teachers; in senior chemistry, 50 teachers; and in senior physics, 50 teachers.

These more than 1,500 teachers have been accepted in round one to start in one of the seven online courses both through Griffith University and the Queensland University of Technology. This is a genuine reform that will deliver the skills that will support our teachers to ensure that our students get the very best in modern education in Queensland. I think it is wonderful and I want to acknowledge our staff for putting up their hand and volunteering to upskill their skills in this way. Thank you to all of the teachers taking advantage of this new course that we are rolling out.

Mrs MILLER: Some people believe that state school education is free, but it is not. Will the minister outline some of the fees or costs that parents must pay to the schools? What retribution occurs in relation to students whose parents simply cannot afford to pay?

Ms JONES: The retribution occurring to students in schools is disturbing and I certainly would not endorse that in any way. If there are examples about which the member would like to sit down and talk, I welcome the member doing so and would be very interested to hear them.

Mrs MILLER: I can tell you now that they are not allowed to go to school formals if the fees or charges have not been paid.

Ms JONES: I really would like to hear about that because that is against our policy as a department. I am very happy to sit down with you either at the morning tea or at any time to talk about that. I do note you have not raised this with me previously, but I would be happy to sit down with you and talk about it.

Mrs MILLER: It is a very big issue and it is not the kids’ fault.

Ms JONES: Absolutely. As someone who can empathise with that directly, we make it very clear that schools do have—and I know that the LNP does support this—the flexibility to ask for co-payments or payments from parents to support particularly specific programs in schools. It is very clear—and I know this from other experiences raised with me, not in the case that the member is talking about but from other members—that under no circumstances should any child be discriminated against because of their ability or inability to pay those fees. I am a firm believer that the best thing that state education provides is equality and opportunity for students who otherwise would not have access to good quality

education to access good quality education. I take this opportunity to highlight—and I know the member for Bundamba and the member—

Mr Dickson interjected.

Ms JONES: It is very relevant. I was going to talk about the \$1.2 billion of cuts to state schools that every single member of the LNP sitting opposite endorsed at the last election.

CHAIR: Order!

Ms JONES: No, it goes right to the heart. I agree with the member for Bundamba. What concerns me—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms JONES: I want to fight it. Absolutely. I will fight the \$1.2 billion of cuts that less than a month ago every single member of the LNP stood at a polling booth endorsing, because I agree with the member for Bundamba. My concern is that we see more of the \$1.2 billion in cuts from the federal LNP government to state schools and more discrimination and more cuts between—

CHAIR: Order! Minister, one moment please. Can members opposite please cease your interjections. The minister is answering the question. She is entitled to answer the question as she sees fit. You will stop your interjections, otherwise you will be warned.

Ms JONES: I was actually picking up on the vein of the question which is about ensuring quality between students within the state school sector and, I would argue, within all sectors and ensuring that we resource our schools better. I note the interjection from the member for Buderim and I also table a picture of the member for Buderim standing with Ted O'Brien, the LNP candidate for Fairfax, endorsing the \$1.2 billion worth of cuts by the Australian government.

CHAIR: One moment please.

Miss BARTON: A point of order, Mr Chair. First and foremost, is the minister seeking leave to table the document for the committee to consider and second—

CHAIR: Just one moment. Minister, do you seek leave to table?

Ms JONES: I can seek leave or everyone can go to his Twitter account. He's very proud of supporting \$1.2 billion of—

Miss BARTON: I do not think the minister needs to debate the issue. My second point of order—

CHAIR: Sorry, one moment please, member for Broadwater. We have sought leave to table the document.

Ms JONES: I table a picture endorsing LNP federal policy.

Miss BARTON: As we consider whether or not it is appropriate to table the document, I would ask whether or not it is relevant to the consideration of the Appropriation Bills that the committee is considering today and whether or not the committee should approve the tabling of this document. Perhaps the member for Buderim might wish also to raise similar concerns.

Mr DICKSON: I have a point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: One moment please. Minister, I do not actually see the relevance of the photograph to table.

Ms JONES: I was only highlighting that the member for Dickson campaigned for \$1.2 billion of cuts.

Mr DICKSON: It's Buderim and my name is 'Dickson'. You got me wrong!

CHAIR: A point of order?

Mr DICKSON: My point of order is that I take offence with the minister's accusation and I ask her to withdraw.

CHAIR: Minister, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: That he campaigned for the LNP Federal government?

CHAIR: Minister, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: Sorry, I don't know what I said that is offensive?

Mr DICKSON: I think the minister needs an education in decorum, which she does not understand. I asked her to withdraw. If she withdraws or not, that is up to you, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES: I will withdraw.

CHAIR: Thank you. Minister, you were in the process of answering the question from the member for Bundamba; have you finished?

Ms JONES: I also have some other points to make. The member for Bundamba would also be aware that—and this is why I do want to sit down with her about this—we have in place the opportunity for fees to be waived because of our strong belief in inclusiveness and ensuring that every child does get opportunity to attend school and participate fully in the extra curricula activities provided in a school environment. I think that answers the question.

Mr SAUNDERS: Page eight of the SDS refers to the new autism hub. Will the minister explain how this hub is helping teachers and schools support students with autism around the state of Queensland?

Ms JONES: This is something which I and the Department of Education are really proud of and it is something we have been able to deliver that will make a real difference not only to students with autism in our schools but also the safety and wellbeing of students in schools. Picking up on the opening questions of the shadow minister—I probably should have answered this as well in answering those questions—it is about saying that we know that children with autism have a range of behaviours but that we also believe every child deserves the right to the best possible education we can provide. That is exactly what this autism hub is all about. We also know that there are more than 13,000 students in our state school system in Queensland who have autism and other challenging and complex behaviours. We are seeing close to around, I think, nine per cent growth each year in the number of students identifying with autism as their major disability.

We went to the election saying very clearly that not enough had been done to not only support these students with autism but also provide the support that teachers need in order to provide excellence in education for those students and also to provide a safe and healthy work environment for themselves and for other students in the classroom. I want to today recognise the executive director, Chris Lassig, and the autism hub director, Natalie Swayn, for their work. I have sat down with both of them and had a very detailed conversation about the work that they are doing through the autism hub.

Also, I am getting really good feedback from teachers in particular who now feel like they have an additional resource that they can call to talk about how they can better provide education for students with autism. At the time I announced the autism hub I was very clear in saying that I think this is an area where governments can do better. That is exactly what establishing the autism hub is about. It is providing expert advice—I would argue some of the best advice available in our nation—not only to our teachers but also to parents so that we can provide that partnership.

What is very exciting for members of the committee is that it has been supported by an additional seven autism coaches who are working in every single region in Queensland. This means in a tangible way that, if you are a teacher teaching in Townsville, for example, you have a resource now in your regional office directly dedicated to supporting you in providing that environment for children with autism. We have already some very good support from third parties. We worked very closely with Autism Queensland, the AEIOU Foundation, Autism Behavioural Intervention Queensland and the Griffith University Autism Centre of Excellence.

As I have repeatedly said this morning, we know that, in supporting principals, teachers, early childhood education staff, parents, carers and stakeholders engaged in education, we can make a real difference for every child. I should also point out before I conclude this answer that this autism hub support is also available for teachers and parents in all sectors of education, including independent and Catholic schools. Given that this is my first mention of Catholic schools this morning, I would also like to say that we are celebrating Catholic Education Week. Both the shadow minister and I were at the launch of Catholic Education Week—and I think the member for Broadwater as well—last night. They are celebrating more than 170 years of providing education to the Catholic community in Queensland.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, chair. If I could also add my congratulations to Catholic Education on what is a very important week for them. There are great celebrations. They are a wonderful group of people and we did have a very good time last night. I would also like to congratulate Chris Lassig, whom you mentioned in your response, Minister. Chris Lassig was the principal at Aspley State School. I have enormous regard for Chris and I am pleased that he is doing well in his new position.

Mr Chair, this is a follow-on question from the previous block of questions. I refer to page 3 of the SDS, 'Departmental overview'. Minister, with reference to question on notice response No. 6, in the 15

months between 15 January and March 2016, more than 82,000 students were suspended or excluded from school. I ask: how many of these instances involved acts of violence?

Ms JONES: I am happy to get that for you, but, as I said, we make no apologies for providing—

Ms DAVIS: So you will take that on notice?

Miss BARTON: Is the minister taking that on notice?

CHAIR: Minister are you answering that?

Miss BARTON: She said that she would get the information.

Ms JONES: I am just trying to see if we can get it quickly for the member specifically.

Ms DAVIS: I am happy to wait for that and move to the next question.

Ms JONES: I am just checking that.

CHAIR: Minister, are you answering that question now?

Ms JONES: In regard to short suspensions for physical misconduct, there were 23,000. That includes the assaults on teachers, 260; long suspensions, 853; and exclusions, 451. So that is—

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. I am just adding up those figures and I do not get to 82,000 students. Are there students who are getting suspended on multiple occasions? If so, are those students, who are being suspended on multiple occasions, being suspended for assault?

Ms JONES: I thought that the answer to the question on notice—and I have not seen it since Sunday—was an answer to all suspensions. Yes, so the figure, the 80,000, included all suspensions.

Ms DAVIS: But my question was that the figures that you just gave me do not add to 80,000. My question is—

Ms JONES: Because it is not just physical assaults in your question on notice.

Ms DAVIS: My question was, of those suspensions, were there students who were suspended for multiple assaults and, if so, how many students was that?

Ms JONES: I think there would be some, but I think the broader issue—and I know that—

Ms DAVIS: My question was quite specific. Do you have that data or do you not? That is really the question. If you want to take it on notice, that is fine.

Ms JONES: No, I want to answer the question. It is school based data. Schools would be aware, as the chair would know, that they keep data regarding behaviour. But I think the broader question, given the comments you made earlier—

Ms DAVIS: No—

Ms JONES: No, it is about—

Ms DAVIS: No, I do not have a broader question; I have a question.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, the minister is answering the question. We will allow the minister to answer the question. Thank you, Minister.

Ms JONES: This information that I was reading from is all publicly available, which we provide for the very reason—

Ms DAVIS: Then it should be very easy for you to find for me, Minister.

Ms JONES: I am and I have just answered your question in regard to physical misconduct, short suspensions, long suspensions and exclusions. We provide that data publicly because, as I said, we are absolutely committed to providing safe and supportive environments in our schools. Our commitment is unwavering and we will continue to empower principals and staff to make decisions about when they need to, in their decision-making, either exclude or suspend students because of behaviour.

I also really think that it is important to get on the record that 99 per cent of students in state schools are good students. They are students who come to school to learn, to engage and they are lifting their circumstances through education. I will not sit here and take a line of questioning that is attacking every single student in our state schools. It is offensive to me and offensive to the good people who work at our schools.

Miss BARTON: Point of order. The question has been answered.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Have you concluded?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. Minister, if you could clarify for me—because you did go off tangent a bit—at the local level, do the school principals input into OneSchool assaults that occur in the schoolyard?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: If so, is that uploaded to the department so that you would have those individual school figures?

Ms JONES: The answer is yes, we do upload it to the OneSchool system, as is required by government policy and departmental policy. I might ask the head of state schooling about how available it is to collate that data for the honourable shadow minister.

Ms Walton: It would be possible to do a search on OneSchool around assaults on staff to gather that information. We do not report on that through the measures that we currently publicly report. However, if I could draw the committee's attention to the fact that, unfortunately, in some schools children engage in self-injurious behaviour or behaviour related to their disability. Teachers, or teacher aides, or non-teaching staff may be assaulted in the course of trying to support a student with complex and challenging behaviours. I think that it would be fair to say that, even though that might become a WorkCover claim, not every school, not every teacher, or teacher aide would request that a student with a disability, with complex and challenging behaviours, would be reflected in the school disciplinary absence data.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. I thank the DDG for that response. I am quite aware, with a special school in my own electorate, that teaching staff within the environment of special schools are at greater risk of assault. I have spoken to my own teachers and principals about that. I am aware that there are higher numbers. Where I go with this question is more to the general school population and how many assaults on teachers. I know that it is all captured in one and if you do not separate and identify, then that is data that you do not collect. Firstly, is there a demarcation between those who require special assistance, or special support needs because of a disability or a cognitive issue?

CHAIR: Member—

Ms DAVIS: I go to the point that I have been given a response. I have given a bit of a response. I am just asking for a broader response. That is all.

CHAIR: Sorry, member for Aspley, can I get you to concisely state your question, please?

Ms DAVIS: The question is that you have given me a response on children with disabilities. I am asking for the broader school community; children do not have a diagnosed disability.

Ms Walton: Students without a disability? The data relating to assaults on staff—whether that be teaching or non-teaching staff who may be the victims of physical misconduct by students—would be recorded in OneSchool. We have not asked for that category to be recorded individually, because we would probably have to look at reporting it quite finitely around the different categories of staffing. The issue has been about suspension or exclusion and we have recorded the data and collected the data based on the activity—physical misconduct, whether that be physical misconduct against another student, whether that be physical misconduct against a parent, whether that be physical misconduct against a staff member. We have recorded the activity as opposed to the recipient.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. I will move on to another area.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you. I refer to pages 8 and 9 of the SDS with regard to Indigenous student outcomes. In particular, I would like to focus my attention on outcomes of students in the community of Aurukun. My first question is to the minister. Minister, did you assure the board of the Good to Great Schools' Cape York Academy last Friday that the government wants to work in partnership with them?

Ms JONES: Yes. What I said at the board meeting was that we believe that there is a way forward in Aurukun, which supports an ongoing partnership with the Good to Great organisation, particularly in regard to some of the curriculum work that they have been doing not only in Aurukun but also in Hope Vale and Coen and that we would be working with them to negotiate a partnership going forward.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Minister. The answer is yes, you did? Just to clarify: yes, you did, give that assurance to the board?

Ms JONES: I answered—

Ms DAVIS: No, I am simply clarifying. You went on and talked about other communities. So in Aurukun, yes?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you. My next question is to the director-general. Director-General, is it the case that you told the CEO of Good to Great that the department of education was taking over the school? Is it the case that you were changing the name of the school and new bank accounts had been set up?

Dr Watterston: I can clarify that those comments, as explicitly as you have made them, were not made at all. I can elaborate, if you like, about the comments that I did make to the CEO. I am surprised that I am being referred to those comments. My understanding was that that was a meeting that was in confidence in our office, but I am more than happy to talk about it openly.

First of all, let me start with the name change. The school name has not been changed. We separated the school's bank account from the cluster of schools that was Coen, Hope Vale and Aurukun, which have been managing their funds together. Based on the review that we have done, we wanted to clarify the funding available to Aurukun. We have loaded OneSchool with the Aurukun funding. To be able to load a school on to OneSchool, you need to have a name for that school. It is a technical decision that we had to have a name for the school to be able to load the funding.

That is where the misapprehension or the misunderstanding about the name change has come from. For the other issues that you talk about in terms of the department taking over the school, there is some ambiguity about that statement. I would need you to clarify what you mean by the department taking over the school. I am not aware that the department ever relinquished control over the school. If I could ask you to clarify what you mean by that.

Ms DAVIS: Clearly there was indication to the other party in the conversation that somehow or other Education Queensland was taking over the running of the school. You are saying to me that is not the case?

Mr Watterston: I am happy to say that the education department has always had a role in the school.

Ms DAVIS: Indeed, and I understand that.

Mr Watterston: The negotiation with Good to Great Schools is about how that role is managed into the future. Those negotiations are occurring. In fact, there is a meeting tomorrow with Mrs Walton, the deputy director-general, and representatives from Good to Great to further discuss that. I can't pre-empt what those negotiations or discussions will look like, but in the past there has been a relationship between Good to Great Schools and the department. We have never handed over the school and I've reified it, I suppose, if you like, to Good to Great that we will continue to play a very strong part in the school. But as you said, the minister went to the Good to Great board and talked about a partnership. I can confirm that I have also talked about a partnership and are very clear about wanting to continue that partnership.

There has been no misunderstanding from my point that Good to Great will be required and it is necessary that they play a role in that school going forward. The pedagogy and the curriculum that they have brought to the school, direct instruction and the program that they use, is one that we would like to continue with and that we see great merit in in terms of building on the gains that those children have already made. Not all children are at school and there are issues around attendance and I am happy to talk to those, but in terms of what this partnership looks like going forward, as I have said, we have had an MOU that has been in place for six years. It was never meant to last for six years so we are now in a position of negotiating what the next agreement will look like and how that will be structured for the betterment of all students in Aurukun going forward.

If there is anything I am missing here I am not sure, but clearly you are reporting from a meeting that I had two Fridays ago and my understanding is that I made it very clear to the people in that room that negotiations would continue.

Ms DAVIS: My question is to the minister. Does it not concern you then, Minister, that those in the room who were part of that discussion left that room with a very different view as to what was going to happen to that school moving forward?

Ms JONES: So they have spoken to you, is that what you are saying?

Ms DAVIS: I am asking you a question. You do not get to ask the questions, you get to answer them.

Ms JONES: I am just very confused.

Ms DAVIS: It is not a confusing question.

CHAIR: Order!. Member for Aspley, you have asked for an opinion. Can you rephrase your question or move on to the next one.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, given that there were indications that as a result of that meeting there were two different views of the content of that meeting and then the outcome of the meeting, what will you be doing to assure the CEO and others that are part of the Cape York academy that, in fact, this will be a true partnership?

Ms JONES: My word is my word and, as I said, I went to the Good to Great board meeting and said that it would be a true partnership. I think that it would be relevant for all members to actually look at the Cape York academy's own annual report where they clearly articulate what the partnership is which includes that 'The CYAAA agreement defines the curriculum approach and model for the Academy including related aspects of the implementation of the Academy model.'

Ms DAVIS: I have my answer, Mr Chairman. This is going outside of the scope of my question.

Ms JONES: 'The Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy campuses remain Department of Education and Training schools and meet relevant professional and industrial requirements.'

CHAIR: Minister!

Ms JONES: That is the current agreement.

Miss BARTON: Point of order.

Ms JONES: I would envisage that the new agreement—

CHAIR: Minister, one moment please.

Ms DAVIS: Whose view is correct, Minister? Yours or the DGs?

CHAIR: Order!

Ms JONES: How is Fiona Crawford?

CHAIR: Minister, one moment please. Point of order?

Miss BARTON: I have two points of order. First and foremost can I note the reflection on the chair by the minister in ignoring your directions for her to cease. I think it is terrible that there would be such a reflection.

CHAIR: What is the second point of order?

Miss BARTON: My second point of order, as has already been raised by the member for Aspley, is that the question has been answered. The minister is now straying outside the question and I would suggest that we move on to the next question.

CHAIR: No point of order. Minister, you can answer the question whichever way you see fit and you can continue answering.

Ms JONES: I take the advice from the member for Broadwater that I have answered the question.

Ms DAVIS: Not to my satisfaction.

Ms JONES: Not to your satisfaction, but the member for Broadwater felt that I did answer it.

CHAIR: Minister, thank you.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, you said in your opening statement, and I refer to the program outlined in budget paper 3, that we are experiencing significant growth in Queensland state schools. How are we planning new schools and infrastructure to cater for enrolment in 2017 and beyond?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I said in my opening address, one of the key things that our government is focused on is ensuring that we are catering for the growth that we are seeing in the state schooling sector. This fundamentally is being addressed by our record investment in education. I know that every single one of us, every single member of the Palaszczuk Labor government, is proud that we are the government that has delivered record funding for education. This includes, as I said, record funding for capital works—more than \$456 million—and also record investment in maintenance in our schools. I have actually got a bit of a graph here which I am happy to table and I seek leave to table which actually shows growth over the next—

CHAIR: Do you seek leave to table that?

Ms JONES: I do seek leave.

Miss BARTON: Can we be given a copy of that?

Ms JONES: It is just a graph that demonstrates the growth that we are seeing.

Miss BARTON: Point of order. Is the minister using this as a prop? We still have not seen it to consider it.

CHAIR: No, she is not using it as a prop. One moment, Minister. Leave to table is approved. Thank you, Minister, you may continue.

Ms JONES: I only had that table done as a way of demonstrating to the committee the growth that we are seeing in the state schooling system over the next four years and why it is critical that our government is actually prioritising, as part of our capital works spend from a whole-of-government perspective, education. To that end we are providing a number of new schools in our community in regard to where we are seeing growth. For example, we announced recently that we would be building a new high school in one of the fastest growing areas outside of Gladstone: Calliope. There will be a new high school there which is something that the community has wanted for some time. We have also committed to construction of a special school in Cairns: a \$25 million commitment to provide the expertise and support for students with a disability in the Cairns community. We will also deliver new stages in capital works for the Springfield Central State High School in the honourable member for Bundamba's electorate, as well as Pimpama State Primary College in the electorate of Coomera, Pimpama State Secondary College, also in the electorate of Coomera, and the Highfields State Secondary College in the electorate of Toowoomba North. Work will also get underway next year on new schools in north west Townsville. I know why the honourable member for Townsville probably asked this question. I know how passionately you advocated to ensure that we were building a new school in the Townsville community to cater for growth. This is a \$90 million commitment. I know that it is something that will be extremely welcomed by that community.

We also are building a new primary school at Yarrabilba in the honourable member for Beaudesert's electorate. This is a \$50 million investment. We know that Yarrabilba is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland at the moment. We have also committed to a new primary school in Coomera, which is an extra \$50 million investment, and I am sure this is something we can agree on: it is a welcome investment in that local community. Also in Caloundra South a new primary school, \$47 million committed for that, as well as a new primary school in the honourable member for Bundamba's electorate in Springfield West.

We take our responsibility of delivering not only the infrastructure needed for growth, but also the additional teachers in classrooms very seriously. As I said in our opening remarks, that is why we will always prioritise the funding of education and education infrastructure as part of a Labor government and why I do feel that it is important, given it is only I think 25 days since the federal election, that the \$1.2 billion worth of cuts by the Malcolm Turnbull government is going to have a real—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. We are considering the appropriation of this government, not another level of government.

CHAIR: No point of order. Minister, continue.

Ms JONES: I was just saying that obviously going forward in the appropriations I am happy to answer these questions about the very relevance to the cuts that they have made to early childhood education, and the cuts to the chaplaincy program which are relevant to the SDS sitting before the honourable member, but I will give this commitment to the member for Broadwater: that as the Minister for Education in Queensland I will not sit back quietly and allow the federal government to cut \$1.2 billion over the next five years from state schooling in Queensland and I expect that all members of the Queensland parliament would join with me in fighting for that otherwise the questions in your opening 20 minutes which were painting schools as fight clubs were in vain, they were all about politics and not about genuinely catering for growth or genuinely providing the environment we need to provide the best possible education. I do not think they were genuine, I think it was politics.

Mr WILLIAMS: With further reference to the capital works budget, you have outlined a number of new schools you are delivering catering for population growth. With reference to the program outlined in budget paper 3 and acknowledging that the schools supported in Queensland are 1,236 across the state, can you inform the committee of the breadth of the capital works program for 2016-17?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the follow-up question because it gives me an opportunity to go more broadly into the capital works spend that we are spending in every single part of Queensland as we listen to communities and provide capital investment where it is needed most. As

I said, in addition to schools, when you look at the early years education, and I think there is absolutely bipartisan support in recognising that those early years of education are crucial when you look at a child's learning journey, particularly as they transition from kindergarten into prep and from prep into the formal years of schooling—although now prep is formal thanks to us—what we have seen is an increase of close to \$20 million on last year's investment as we continue to see growth in our state.

We are focused on providing the additional accommodation where it is needed most. For example, in Far North Queensland we are investing more than \$58 million in new capital works. This includes more than \$3.6 million to support trade training by the upgrade of the dairy facility at Ravenshoe State School in Dalrymple; \$4 million for extra classrooms at Cairns West State School—having been there with the member for Barron River and talking about the growth that we are seeing in that western corridor of Cairns—and \$7 million to complete the construction of additional classrooms at the Tropical North Learning Academy at Trinity Beach State School.

In the Northern Queensland region we are delivering \$61 million in schools and capital works, and I know this is a region that you would be most interested in: \$4 million to deliver additional classrooms at the Townsville Community Learning Centre in the electorate of Mundingburra; about \$8 million to support additional facilities and upgrades to classrooms across the electorate of Mount Isa, including Winton, Normanton, Mount Isa Central and also Cloncurry state schools—as I said, we will provide educational resources where they are needed across the vast parts of Queensland; also \$4.7 million to provide additional classrooms in the Mackay District Special School. Having had conversations with the member for Mackay, I know how this will be a great addition and support for the students who attend and also the staff who work at the Mackay District Special School. We will also provide more than \$30 million for additional classrooms and refurbishments at Cannonvale State School in the electorate of Whitsunday; and \$2.2 million for significant upgrades at the Walkerston State School in the electorate of Mirani.

In the Central Queensland region there is \$37 million, including \$16 million in the electorate of Gladstone to provide additional classrooms at Gladstone State High School; as I said, the new school at Calliope; additional classrooms at Clinton State School; and \$4 million for the redevelopment of the administration building at Rosella Park School. I had the privilege of going to Rosella Park School and meeting with the staff. They are doing a fantastic job. I acknowledge that here, today. I know what a difference this investment will make to Rosella Park. Almost \$7 million will provide additional classrooms at Rockhampton Special School and teaching and music facilities at the Waraburra State School in the electorate of Rockhampton. In the Gold Coast region, there is \$155 million in capital works, including \$8 million to provide additional classrooms at Highfields Reserve State School and Pimpama State School in the electorate of the member for Albert.

Mr BOOTHMAN: It is Highland Reserve State School.

Ms JONES: Yes, Highland Reserve, and \$4 million to provide additional classrooms at Caningeraba State School in the electorate of Burleigh and \$6 million to provide additional classrooms at Southport Special School in the electorate of Southport. I will probably stop there, because I think it will be clear to the committee—and I could keep on going, but I think everyone is getting a bit bored in that regard—and to every single Queenslanders that we are investing capital works to schools in every single region across this state, because that is what Labor governments do.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Member for Bundamba?

Mrs MILLER: Minister, I note the relocatable buildings planned for Springfield Central State High School. In my experience, and generations of Ipswich people will confirm this, relocatable buildings tend to become permanent buildings in our area. I ask: when will these relocatable buildings be removed and permanent buildings be built at the school? What is the time frame for that?

Ms JONES: As I have outlined in that answer and in the table that was circulated, we are facing significant pressure to cater for growth. As the honourable member and I are both aware, we are putting record funding into capital works. That means that when you look at that growth data, our focus has to be on getting the classrooms so that we can provide educational provision as quickly as possible as we are seeing that growth. I am happy for Jeff to answer specifically.

Mr Hunt: As you would be aware, we are building a new state high school at Bellbird Park, which will be a further investment in state high schooling in your community. The way in which we typically build a state high school or a state school is to have it built with a core and central component to the building stock and, as it goes up through its peak, we add additional temporary stock so that we can relocate that and use it elsewhere, if required, over time. The typical horizon is that the additional temporary stock will be there for a number of years to meet the peak between the long-term average

and the peak, and then we will withdraw that stock, as required, over time. Obviously, we are operating a network of schools. As we bring new schools on to the grid, if you like, that takes the pressure off the existing schools and takes some pressure off some of the building stock on those sites.

As you can imagine, with 1,236 schools it is a significant challenge for us to make sure that we get the placement of those buildings correct. We will continue to work with communities to make sure that we get that right. We are also involved in a process of strategic infrastructure planning with schools to make sure that they are involved in the decision making around those activities and when building stock is put onto the site and when it is taken away.

Mrs MILLER: Many of us who went to Bremer State High School started our education in what we called 'tin sheds' and they stayed there for generations. That is the concern that I have, because that is our reality. Could you please ensure that these relocatable buildings are moved as soon as possible, because Ipswich people, particularly those who went to Bremer during that era, thought and believed that we were second-class citizens. I know it was during the Bjelke-Petersen era, but that is not good enough.

Ms JONES: Can I answer that question, if you do not mind?

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for Bundamba for her really good contrast of the time under the Joh era, in terms of education funding in this state. I think her summation of the poor cousins—

Miss BARTON: Come on, Minister. That was 30 years ago.

CHAIR: Thank you, there will be no further interjections.

Ms JONES: Picking up on the interjection from the member for Broadwater, what concerns the member for Bundamba and I, and I imagine that we are in furious agreement on this, is that both the antics this morning of the LNP and also the federal government—which I know you do not want me to talk about—tells me and every single Queensland, every single teacher and every state school student in this state that the LNP wants to talk down state schools. They do not want to fund state schools. They want to cut teachers from the front line. I think the honourable member's question and the answer given by Jeff highlight the clear contrast between our commitment to delivering real infrastructure and real investment in public education and the laughing and smirking by the member for Broadwater when I highlight that their record was a cut to 500 teachers and classrooms, endorsing a federal government that will deliver a \$1.2 billion—

Miss BARTON: We are not talking about Canberra.

CHAIR: Order! You will cease interjecting and allow the minister to finish the question, and then we will move on to the next one.

Ms JONES: I wish that I could have the comfort and disregard that the member for Broadwater has about a \$1.2 billion cut—

Miss BARTON: I rise to a point of order. I find that comment offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Ms JONES:—coming down the pipeline from the federal government.

CHAIR: Minister, one minute.

Miss BARTON: Mr Chair, I have asked that that be withdrawn. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

CHAIR: Minister, will you withdraw?

Ms JONES: I withdraw them. I do make the point—

Miss BARTON: Mr Chair—

Ms JONES: I withdraw.

Miss BARTON: Unqualified.

CHAIR: The minister has withdrawn, thank you.

Ms JONES: I make a point to all committee members that I am deeply concerned that the federal government continues to advocate a position of a \$1.2 billion cut to state schools in Queensland—

Miss BARTON: We are talking about the state budget; we are not talking about Canberra.

Ms JONES: As the Minister for Education—

CHAIR: Order! Member for Broadwater, you will cease your interjections. Minister, come to a conclusion, please.

Ms JONES: The point I am making is that we have genuine questions coming from members of this committee and the member for Bundamba about the provision, not only of infrastructure but also of support for our schools. It would be irresponsible in the extreme for me as a Queensland state minister for education to say that I do not want to engage in the fact that there is a \$1.2 billion cut proposed by the federal government to state schools in Queensland. Of course I am going to raise it. Of course I am going to fight it. In actual fact, to any teacher who is listening, I give a guarantee that I will be the strongest and loudest advocate to stop the cuts to state education in Queensland, and not only because it is my job. I am very concerned that LNP members on the education committee cannot see after 18 months a correlation between federal funding cuts and the provision of education services. To me, it just does not make sense. Of course I am going to fight a \$1.2 billion cut to the provision of state schooling in Queensland by the federal government. I see the member for Pumicestone—

Miss BARTON: It is not true.

Ms JONES: It is true.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms DAVIS: I return to SDS pages 8 and 9, with regards to Indigenous student outcomes. My question is to the minister: as far back as late last year, local residents, including the Wik women, raised their serious concerns around social unrest in the community with your government. I seek leave to table an email, Chair.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, do you have a copy there, please?

Ms DAVIS: Yes, certainly. I have several.

CHAIR: One moment while we look at it. I am looking for the relevance. Because of the extent of the document, we will need to look at this and determine later today whether leave will be approved.

Miss BARTON: Mr Chair, I would point out that, because it has been photocopied in black and white rather than in colour, perhaps as progressive photocopies have come through it is not as clear. There is one paragraph that the member for Aspley is particularly highlighting, which is the third paragraph of the email. I think that it would be very easy for us to agree that it is appropriate to allow this to be tabled so that the member for Aspley can ask her question of the minister.

CHAIR: You are seeking leave for the approval of that aspect of the email? Member for Aspley, is that what you will be citing?

Ms DAVIS: There are a number of things in here, Chair, but for the purposes of this question that highlighted paragraph 3 is what I will be referring to.

Miss BARTON: For this question.

CHAIR: For this question, paragraph 3 only?

Ms DAVIS: Yes.

CHAIR: I will restrict you to that one paragraph for this particular question. Leave is sought for that paragraph, without going any further. If there are any questions outside of that, we will need to look at it again, after we have fully read it.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you for your guidance, Chair.

CHAIR: Is leave granted for that paragraph to be tabled?

Mr SAUNDERS: May we look at it?

CHAIR: Certainly.

Ms JONES: I am happy to answer any question.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Is leave approved? Opposed? Member for Aspley, I will preface this by saying your question will need to relate only to that paragraph that has been approved.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you for your guidance, Chair.

CHAIR: We are due to break at 10.30.

Ms DAVIS: For the minister's benefit, I will repeat the question. As far back as late last year, local residents, including the Wik women, raised their serious concerns of social unrest in the community

with your government. You have the tabled email. For the benefit of those who do not have the email, the highlighted area that I wish to talk to states—

We need to know that we are safe to go to the shop, to our community services and to our school next term without fear of recrimination. Premier, I work at the school and need to know that this is safe for all children and those who work there.

Minister, my question is: when were you alerted by the Premier's office of this email and the concerns of safety at the school?

Ms JONES: I acknowledge the question from the member and I acknowledge that she has provided me with a letter written to the Premier and not to myself. There are a number of ways I would like to answer this. Firstly, the letter highlights around the additional support to make the community of Aurukun safe. Our government has taken a number of steps, both in regards to—

Ms DAVIS: I rise a point of order, Mr Chair. My question was quite direct. When was the minister advised about the content of this email, which highlights concerns about safety at the school?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Aspley. Minister, we will need to answer the question. I do appreciate you are building the context around that.

Ms JONES: I can confirm for the committee that the Premier and I talk regularly about concerns in schools. In regards to Aurukun, at the time that this letter was written the Department of Education was working directly with Cape York Partnerships about negotiating a new agreement at the school. This year, as you know, we have demonstrated very clearly that if there are genuine concerns raised with us or with myself about the school, we will take whatever action is needed to ensure the safety of our staff. That is clearly demonstrated here. We have also been working, as I said, through our negotiations with the Cape York Partnerships. I acknowledge the honourable member supports the ongoing partnership with Cape York Partnerships—

Ms DAVIS: I support children getting educational outcomes, Minister.

Ms JONES: Absolutely and so do I. That is why—

Ms DAVIS: The Premier did not tell you, Minister, did she?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, you need to cease your interjections. The minister is answering the question. Minister, continue your answer, please.

Ms JONES: As I said, in the discussions that I have had with representatives of the staff who work at Aurukun, we have taken all steps that have been asked by the teachers working in Aurukun to ensure, not only their safety—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair. My question was very specific. When was the minister advised of this email from the Premier's office given that there were concerns about safety at the school? It is a simple question; not that I have had a lot of conversations. I want to know when she was advised of this email.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Aspley. I call the minister.

Ms JONES: The letter was directed to the Premier, the Hon. Bill Byrne and the Hon. Curtis Pitt.

Ms DAVIS: So you did not ever get a copy, Minister?

Ms JONES: No, it was not sent to me.

Ms DAVIS: So nothing was done?

Ms JONES: I note that the date—

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms JONES: No, sorry this is really important. Twenty-nine December was when school was not in session. It was during the school break.


Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. That is clearly a reflection on you as chair.

CHAIR: There is no point of order.

Miss BARTON: I would draw that to your attention.

CHAIR: There is no point of order. The committee will now break for morning tea. The hearing will resume at 10.45 am with examination of the estimates of the Education portfolio and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Proceedings suspended from 10.30 am to 10.46 am

 **CHAIR:** The committee will now continue with consideration of the estimates for the Education portfolio and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Before we continue on with the line of questioning from the member for Aspley, leave has been granted for the tabling of the documents that were submitted. However, it is conditional upon the various names, email addresses and phone numbers contained within the document being removed from the document. I call the member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: I refer to the SDS at pages 8 and 9 with regard to Indigenous student outcomes. My question is to the minister. Minister, now that you have had 15 minutes to chase down that email from the Premier's department, do you now know why they did not disclose that information to you?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, you do not need to make inferences. You need to move on to your question and ask the minister a direct question.

Ms DAVIS: Have you sought advice from the Premier's office as to why they did not forward this email to you?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have also had the opportunity to read the letter. I understand why the Wik women wrote to the Premier, Bill Byrne and Curtis Pitt and did not write to me. The Wik women felt that it was a community safety issue. When you read the letter very clearly I think the Wik women have used their judgement rightly in writing to the minister responsible for community safety. I can also advise the committee that the Premier spoke to both ministers that the letter was addressed to. I trust the judgement of the Wik women.

Ms DAVIS: Given the minister's comments that she trusts what was offered by the Wik women—and I agree with the minister there—it seems odd that the government did not act on this more quickly.

Ms JONES: I reject that the government did not act.

Ms DAVIS: I thank you for having a look at the email. It is a shame that you did not get to see it prior to today.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, again, your imputations are not accepted during this estimates hearing. You will move on to the question you have for the minister without the imputations?

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much for your guidance, Chair. Minister, are you concerned, given that there were concerns by the local community about the safety at the Aurukun school, although you are not mentioned in this email, that you did not receive advice that on the ground in Aurukun people were concerned about safety on school grounds?

Ms JONES: In answering the member's question there are two things I would like to say. I believe that the Wik women wrote this letter—and I note there is only one sentence which says, 'On my way to school I want to feel safe'—to the ministers that they felt they wanted a response from government from.

Ms DAVIS: How many sentences do you need?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, the minister is answering your question. I am questioning whether it has relevance to this department. Allow the minister to answer the question and we will move onto the next one without interjections.

Ms JONES: I would like to acknowledge that I am in 100 per cent agreeance with Noel Pearson who believes that there has been too much focus on the school. We made it very clear in the report that we spoke to all 22 teachers at the school. Noel Pearson has said his real concern is about community safety in the broader community. That has been the No. 1 issue.

When I went to Aurukun we had a public meeting and everybody in Aurukun was welcome to attend. I can confirm, as there was media there, that there was high attendance. What the community said to the Premier, me, Bill Byrne and the Police Commissioner related to having additional police in the community, including a 24-hour police presence, which the government has delivered on.

I note that the letter was dated 29 December 2015. I am sure all members are aware that that is during the school holidays—school is not in session. The letter was asking for additional police support in the community when school returns next year. My understanding is that the police minister, the Premier and the champion for Aurukun for government, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, did have discussions about the letter.

Ms DAVIS: On that point, did you lobby to be the champion for Aurukun given all the issues that are there around the school?

Ms JONES: I do not understand the question. The Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, wanted to be the champion for Aurukun. I think that is a very good outcome for the people of Aurukun given he is a senior minister in our government.

Ms DAVIS: My question was: did you lobby for it? Did you want to do that?

Ms JONES: I would be happy to be a champion for every Aboriginal community in Queensland. I note that there is a—

Ms DAVIS: The answer is no?

Ms JONES:—stark contrast between our government and the former government. He have implemented a policy, which you are knocking, of having ministerial champions that go into the communities.

Miss Barton interjected.

CHAIR: Minister, one moment, please. Member for Broadwater, the minister is answering the question asked by the member for Aspley and will continue to answer that question. I do not need the interjections.

Miss BARTON: I am raising a point of order, Mr Chair. That was a yes or no question. The question has been answered. I think we should allow the member for Aspley to ask the next question.

Ms JONES: There is no relevance to the SDS.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, it was not a yes or no answer. The minister may answer the question in any way she deems fit and is doing so. Minister, please continue.

Ms JONES: What I was saying is that I would be happy to be a champion for any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as per our this government's, unlike those opposite, commitment to say that we want ministers to be champions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Ms DAVIS: On the back of a crisis?

Ms JONES: No, this is something that has been talked about for months right across government.

Ms DAVIS: Why did you not do anything?

Ms JONES: I am very proud to be the champion for Yarrabah.

CHAIR: Next question, member for Aspley.

Ms DAVIS: Minister you noted the date of the email being 29 December, which is during the school holidays. Does your government shut down during school holidays?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, what is the relevance regarding the Appropriation Bill?

Ms JONES: I was at work. You guys were at work. I saw you all there. They work very hard.

Ms DAVIS: It goes to the educational outcomes of Indigenous children. Although it might be school holidays it is still about providing a safe environment for children.

CHAIR: Is there a reference specifically to the Appropriation Bill or the SDS?

Miss BARTON: Page 3 of the SDS references the outcomes in schools. I believe it is either page 3 or 4 of the SDS that makes particular reference—if my memory serves me correctly—with respect to the educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

CHAIR: One moment please.

Ms JONES: That was not the question. The question was: does government close down on 29 December?

CHAIR: One moment, Minister. Member for Aspley, I do not see the relevance of that question to what we are doing today. I rule that question out of order.

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. If you look at page 3 of the SDS it refers to the learning outcomes student achieve during their school years, saying that it provides the basis for their development as successful citizens engaged in the workforce and the community. Clearly the member for Aspley's questions are with reference to those learning outcomes. Whilst it might not be page 4, I think further into the SDS it does make specific reference to Indigenous students. There is a clear link.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, there is no point of order as the question asks: does the government shut down during school holidays? That has no reference to the SDS. I rule the question out of order. Next question please, member for Aspley?

Ms DAVIS: My question to the minister is: does her department close down over Christmas?

Ms JONES: I will get the departmental officers to answer that question.

Ms DAVIS: That is very kind of you.

Ms JONES: Do you still turn up to work on 29 December?

Mr Hunt: The department typically has a compulsory closure between Christmas and New Year, as has been the longstanding convention. Senior officers are always available. I have regularly been contacted by Liberal National Party governments and Labor governments during that period to ensure that the wheels of government continue to operate effectively during that time.

CHAIR: We move to government questions. Can we turn to the senior assessment and tertiary entrance reforms. With reference to page 33 of the SDS and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, can you provide the committee with an update on the government's plans to renew senior assessment and the tertiary entrance system for Queensland students?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. We are working extremely hard to implement the reform. I acknowledge the former government for the review and report they did. They did a review into senior assessment and tertiary entrance. I hope we have bipartisan support in terms of the way forward in implementing that. Although I do note that not one dollar was allocated by the former government to actually implement any of the recommendations of the review. Nonetheless, I welcome Chris Rider, the CEO of the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, to the table. He has been working extremely hard, I would imagine all through the holidays as well given the conversations we have had about timing, with regard to rolling this out.

The Palaszczuk government is leading a historic reform to introduce new senior assessment and tertiary entrance systems into Queensland. This reform will deliver on the recommendations contained in the report into this. We have allocated more than \$72 million in the budget to do that, including \$24 million this year. This investment will support the replacement of the current senior assessment system that we have now had in place for more than 20 years.

One of the things that I established when I first became the minister was that if we were going to make such a historic reform—one that not only has significant dollars attached to it but will be the first major change to the OP system in Queensland—it was important for me and for our government to have as many people around the table as possible ensuring that we got the views of all sectors of education and as well as the university sector. I imagine that we will probably have a number of questions today about the significance of the reform. It is important for the chair and the committee to understand who is represented there.

Of course we do have representatives from the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, including Brian Short, who is the former principal of Brisbane Grammar School, and Chris Rider, who I mentioned earlier. We have Dr Lee-Anne Perry—I think she would have been the principal of All Hallows' when you were there, member for Broadwater. You would know her very well. She is a very capable and inspirational woman. I think that is something you and I could both agree on. She can also run faster than me.

Also on the task force we have David Robertson from Independent Schools Queensland; Dr John Griffiths from QTAC; Sam Pidgeon from the Queensland Teachers' Union; Paul Giles from the Queensland Independent Education Union; P&Cs Queensland and P&Fs Queensland; the Isolated Children's Parents' Association; the Independent Schools Parents Network; Andrew Pierpoint from the Queensland Secondary Principals' Association; the Catholic Secondary Principals Association of Queensland; Chris Ivey from the Association of Head of Independent Schools Queensland Branch; Geoff Latta from the Queensland State P10-12 School Administrators' Association; Professor Joanne Wright from the University of Queensland; Shard Lorenzo from the Queensland University of Technology, representatives from Griffith University; and the director-general.

The reason why I thought it was important for the committee to know is that these decisions are being made by the task force by consensus—that is, we are sitting around actively engaging in what is the best way to roll out such a significant reform here in Queensland. As a parent and as the Minister for Education, I want to assure every member of the committee from all sides how importantly I take this and why I think it is really important that we have all sectors of education at the table discussing it.

We have listened. We have listened to parents, to teachers, to academics and to other experts about how we implement this new system. One of the first decisions I made, listening to that advice, was that the original date from the previous government of implementation would be too rushed. We are now implementing the system for students that are currently in year 9. They will be the first students

in Queensland to receive an ATAR, bringing them into line with other states and territories across Australia, instead of an OP rank. This means it will be our year 12 students in 2019.

I know as a former principal of a high school that we have been used to a system in Queensland now for around 40 years of where there has been 100 per cent of assessment based in the school setting. What we are transitioning to, as recommended by a report of the previous government, is having a mix between internal assessment—that is, assessment undertaken in the school setting—and external assessment, once again bringing us into line with other states. What we have decided at the committee is to have a mix of four pieces of assessment. Every year 12 student or year 12 parent I have spoken to have really welcomed that reform in regard to ensuring that we are providing the breadth of knowledge and curriculum but also not having a situation in year 12 where it is assessment piece after assessment piece after assessment piece. We want students to be able to delve deeper into their learning areas. For the bulk of the subjects there will be three internal assessments and one external assessment. However, I have listened to teachers and experts, particularly in the maths and science area where they have lobbied strongly for 50 per cent assessment in those areas, and I have undertaken to implement that to see how that goes. It is very exciting.

CHAIR: In your previous answer you mentioned the senior assessment tertiary entrance ministerial task force and you mentioned a number of people involved with that. Can you expand on the purpose of that task force?

Ms JONES: As I said, these are significant reforms and I want to make sure that we are getting them right. Having the breadth of the task force membership is really important in doing that. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for that. Moving forward, we expect that the government will release our final position on the reforms I would say in coming weeks. Then in the last term of this year, having listened to principals and the importance of this, we will start engaging in-depth with our school communities.

Just to elaborate in regard to the work that Chris Rider's team is doing on curriculum, there have been teacher working groups that are working through all of the senior subjects at the moment, going through and ensuring that we get the curriculum right. Providing external assessment and making sure you are working through the work of the curriculum progressively is critical in the new way that we are administering this. There needs to be more up-front clarity for our teaching workforce. I want to thank all of the working groups and all of the teachers who have been involved in that.

We are currently going through a number of subjects at the moment. I have met with a number of teachers who are working on those working groups and teachers who are also providing feedback to make sure that the new curriculum for all of the subjects available in senior are ones that are not only contemporary but also relevant and are ones that have had teacher engagement. Is there anything you would like to add to that, Chris, at this stage?

Mr Rider: I think importantly at the beginning of this process we wanted to look at what was going on around Australia and the world. The minister's comments about making the curriculum contemporary and making sure we had a curriculum for the 21st century was a really important starting point for us. We are currently in the process of developing almost 80 new syllabuses in Queensland. You will see some new subjects in there that we believe address many of the initiatives of the current Queensland government. What is really important is the process in which we are going about this syllabus development.

As I said before, we are currently in the process of developing almost 80 new syllabuses in Queensland—a process that we have never witnessed before. The process that we are going through at the moment involves expert teachers in particular subject areas actually writing those syllabuses in teams of four to six. For example, in the last few months we have had 35 new syllabuses released to teachers across the state in a first draft. What is particularly important in that is that they have gone out in draft form to teachers so that we can get feedback from teachers before they have to implement these syllabuses in 2018.

If we use a simple example and we take a subject like English, English at the moment has been put out in a first draft to the teachers of English in the state. We have received feedback from English teachers from around the state. We are now about to write the second draft of that syllabus. Three times this year we are putting out a draft syllabus to teachers who teach a subject so that they can give us feedback about what is in their new syllabus before, indeed, we ask them to teach that subject. It is a very new process. It is an important process to engage teachers. Most importantly, it is a process that gives teachers ownership of their new syllabus. As I said before, almost 35 have gone out already in first draft. We are about to send out another 12 in the next few weeks, with a further five and a further

23 to come after that. It is a major undertaking to rewrite the senior curriculum in Queensland in time for 2018, but we are on track to do that.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, further to the previous question—I reference page 33 of the SDS—what processes are being undertaken to ensure Queensland schools will be ready to implement the new senior assessment and tertiary entrance systems?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. In addition to the extensive comments that Chris has made in regard to the rewriting of the curriculum and the engagement of teachers in that, the other key part that we need to start working on now to ensure that we are ready for the year 12 students in 2019 is the external assessment. In my earlier comments I talked about the fact that this is the first time in 40 years that we will be undertaking external assessment in Queensland schools, and that is all schools—Catholic, independent and state schools. That is why this year, as people would be aware, we undertook a number of trials in schools in all sectors. In fact, we had 20,000 year 11 students at 264 schools take part in that external assessment trial. I want to take this opportunity once again to thank the state schools and independent and Catholic schools that put their hand up and volunteered to be part of that process.

Subjects assessed included chemistry, English, geography, mathematics B and modern history. The English assessment, with English being one of the most popular subjects undertaken by students in their senior assessment, was the largest of the five trials, and that involved 11,000 students from across 109 schools. I am pleased to report to the committee that these trials have been a great success. Around 450 specially trained teachers are also being upskilled in regard to marking. This term we will be undertaking further trials. Those further trials will be in graphics and economics. Graphics will involve an external project. For students in economics it will be an online exam. I think this is a really critical point for the committee to look at. There has been a lot of talk about external tests, and I want to be very clear that it is not just examinations or tests. There will also be projects that will be undertaken as part of the external assessment. These trials, as I say, are all about ensuring that we are as prepared as possible for the rollout of the new reforms, particularly for the year 12 students in 2019.

Mr SAUNDERS: Minister, I refer to page 3 of the SDS and the commitment to support teachers to focus on students' needs and to lift learning outcomes. I understand that the School Improvement Unit commenced its program of school reviews in term 1 in 2015. Can you please inform the committee what work the SIU is doing in Queensland state schools to support these commitments? Can you also advise the committee how local members can be involved in this process?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know I sound a bit like Big Kev in saying I am excited about everything that is happening in Education, but this is one I am particularly excited about. Going back to the line of questioning from the member for Aspley in the very early part of this estimates hearing, we are doing everything we can to ensure that we are providing the support and that we are working with schools in the school setting to clearly understand what challenges and what opportunities they face. The School Improvement Unit, which has been rolling out these reviews since the beginning of 2015, has now undertaken more than 369 reviews across Queensland. As part of that process, and why I have extreme confidence that our senior executive team have a very clear understanding of what is happening in our schools and why I so fervently rejected the fight club comment, we have actually undertaken interviews with over 30,000 principals, teachers, students, parents and community members, and of course that includes members of parliament who have had the opportunity to participate in those school reviews. Almost 600 principals have also been trained—they are in our system—to undertake reviews with the School Improvement Unit.

I have met with a number of the principals, not only in school settings where they have had a review undertaken, including some in my own community, but also where they have come together from the School Improvement Unit in Mary Street, and have talked to them about what value they see in this process. Overwhelmingly, the feedback I am getting, whether it is from talking to one of the students at a school who was interviewed as part of the process, teachers who were interviewed as part of the process or P&C presidents and representatives who have been interviewed as part of the process, is that this is a holistic look at the way the school is functioning. Not only does it provide the principal and the school leadership team with advice and recommendations about how they can improve student learning; it also explicitly looks at school discipline data and explicitly looks at their behaviour management programs—all part, as I have said repeatedly, of a holistic approach to ensuring that we are supporting our schools in the environment and providing them with not only the resources they need but also access to leadership to make sure that we can make those changes.

I know that this is something you are very passionate about too, Director-General. Is there anything you would like to add to that? I am very confident from the comments and the feedback I have received from schools that have had the opportunity of going through the school review process that they find it extremely helpful in regard to making reforms in their school.

Dr Watterston: The school review process has many advantages for our school system on a range of different levels. One in particular is the aggregation of all of our school reviews, as you have said, over 300. Each year—and we are about to do this—we will be producing an annual report where we look at the common themes right across the state school system in Queensland and then report on what strategies schools are taking to overcome some of those complexities and challenges. Even though not every school will be reviewed in every year, they will all be reviewed over a four-year period. The system is learning with some of the best research that has ever been produced in this country. We have had feedback from all over the world in terms of the school review process.

One of the great features is that we have a strength based approach. We look forward. We find out what the school is doing well and what they can improve upon. We do not have any labelling of those schools. We do not put them on the front page of the paper. We do not give them a red, green or orange light. We do not give them a mark out of 100. We purely make recommendations focused on helping them to improve their performance. I think that is what makes us unique in terms of all states in Australia—we really are just focusing on school improvement and then sharing that school improvement.

We have a saying in the School Improvement Unit and across the system that a great state school has a great state school down the road. This system really focuses on making sure that we learn collaboratively right across the system. As the minister said, it is something to be excited about. It is being done very purposefully and very quietly, but it is being noticed in places well beyond Queensland as world's best practice.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, what is the average age of teachers and non-teaching staff? Are you expecting a surge of teachers and non-teaching staff wishing to retire due to defined benefit superannuation and their perceived concerns about the Queensland Public Service super fund?

Ms JONES: There are two things. One is when you become a new minister, as you know, you go through all of your incoming briefs, you talk to your directors-general and your DDGs and you work out, in addition to our election commitments, what is the key thing that needs to happen here that is missing. I have already talked about the fact that the review of the senior secondary was not funded, and we have got the money for that.

Also, there was really not much work happening in regards to forward planning for our teaching workforce. Once again, I established the HR task force which has representatives from all sectors—I can probably get the list for you—including the university sector. A number of reforms that have been put in place by the federal government will have an impact on the number of university students coming into our schools.

The member for Bundamba is correct in saying that we have an ageing workforce. I am also concerned about a number of reforms being put in place by the federal government. Universities are already telling me that they are worried about attracting additional teachers into their teaching courses. This is deeply concerning to me because we know that we will need additional teachers for the growth data that I showed earlier in the estimates hearing.

I can assure all teachers and non-teaching staff that the government is absolutely committed to providing superannuation entitlements to every public servant including teachers. I thank you for the opportunity to speak directly to teachers and principals in saying that they can have a 100 per cent guarantee and assurance from the Queensland government that we will deliver those entitlements, as is the law.

Secondly, we have a HR task force in place which is specifically looking at new ways to attract teachers to the profession and encourage teachers to stay in the classroom. Once again, the honourable member would be well aware when she was in opposition that we developed a policy around letting teachers teach. It was all about providing a pathway and incentive for our experienced senior teachers to stay in the classroom as opposed to taking promotions to leadership positions such as deputy principal and principal.

One of the commitments we made through the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission is to do work regarding the introduction of highly accomplished teachers and lead teachers. I am confident that we are doing a lot of work in this space to cater for that growth. I have been on the public record

about that. For me, it is about upskilling and working with the teachers already in our workforce and listening to them, as I have demonstrated here today with the changes to the C2C material. I note that Kathy Margolis, a teacher who spoke out about workload, saying that she did not want to have that pressure anymore, was on the radio only this morning saying that she believes I have done the right thing; that the reforms we have made to C2C will make a tangible difference for teachers to stay in the classroom because they feel that workload issues should be addressed. I thank Kathy for the lengthy conversation that she and I had about these reforms.

Ms DAVIS: I refer to pages 8 and 9 of the SDS with regard to Indigenous student outcomes and continue my line of questioning around education in Aurukun. My question is to the director-general. Director-General, you said on ABC Radio on 6 July this year that the key issue to address before you can address basic reading and writing is getting children to turn up to school. According to your own statistics, around half of the children, or thereabouts, are turning up to school at the moment. Why, then, did the review not deal with getting children to school as part of the terms of reference?

Dr Watterston: I thank you for the question and for the opportunity to speak a little more about this very complex situation. I would argue that the review dealt explicitly with getting children to school. There were many references right throughout the document and certainly recommendations. Can I take you to one particular theme of the review, which was about community engagement?

The No. 1 strategy, the most effective way to get children to school in that Aurukun community, is to have community buy-in and community ownership. Over a period of time there are many people—not all—who have felt estranged from the school, who have not felt like they have been part of that community. It has been really fundamental to have all people in Aurukun see the purpose of education and to rally behind the school in terms of making sure that it is a community obligation to get all young people to school.

What I did say in that radio interview, which I think is pertinent, is that for kids to want to go to school it needs to be more exciting inside the fence than outside the fence. That would apply to any school regardless of whether it is an Indigenous community or not. Clearly, for whatever reason, a number of students are not feeling like it is more exciting inside the fence. The other part of the review, apart from having community engagement and having community buy-in, in terms of people rallying around that attendance strategy is ensuring there are enticements or opportunities for kids to express themselves within the school in a way that they feel comfortable with. I do not think any state or territory has cracked that code yet. We have been working on full attendance ever since schools began, but certainly we can do better than we have been doing not just in Aurukun but also in a range of different schools.

I think the whole report is about trying to get that engagement both from a student point of view to try to make individual students feel like they would rather be at school than elsewhere but also from the community. In terms of the community, Patrea Walton, who is on my left, has been in Aurukun a number of times and spent a week there when the school opened, and has launched project 175 which is a whole community effort to boost and contribute to attendance of students. We have been getting about 100 students—maybe 106 and up to 110—a day since the school reopened, and clearly that is not good enough. Now the community has rallied behind. We had a big BBQ this week where the Wik men provided the food for the BBQ. It was all about bringing people into the school to talk about how they can contribute to what is a community issue, and that is making sure their young people get the very best opportunities through education. It is a work in progress, but I take your question and disagree: I think the whole review was about attendance.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Director-General. I want the very best for Aurukun school and its students and its community. We have some wonderful Indigenous communities across this state. It is just a shame that Aurukun has had a focus that has been on education when what we want to do is ensure that every child has an opportunity to access education in this state. There were no attendees on day one in years 7 and 8. I understand that the communication between the department and the community may not have encouraged students to turn up on those days. Would you care to provide me with details of how many children are now attending given that there were none on day one?

Dr Watterston: Years 7 and 8?

Ms DAVIS: Seven and 8.

Dr Watterston: One of the strategies we put in place for the start of this term was to get teachers into the school who will be able to facilitate the high-level provision of years 7 and 8. Some of that time will be taken in terms of developing programs. We did not want children to be there on the first couple of days because, as you would know, a lot of students in the Aurukun community attend boarding

schools. We do not want years 7 and 8 to be, as I was saying in my previous question, an enticement for kids not to continue to attend their boarding schools. We think that if they have those opportunities such as scholarships and really unique opportunities to be able to engage in education at that level that they should be focused on returning back to the boarding school that they were home for during those holidays. It was not until about Wednesday I think of that week that I understood that all students who needed to return to their boarding school had returned due to the delay in some of those schools starting after the second term holidays.

It was never our intention to set up years 7 and 8 right from the very beginning of term 3. What we are doing now is making sure that any of those students—and there are quite a number over the years who have withdrawn from boarding schools and decided that the lure of their home community, their territorial nature, is so strong that they do not want to leave. To go back to your earlier questions about law and order and it not being a school issue, of course it isn't but if you have children who have disengaged from secondary school from outside of the community, who have come back to the community and who are sitting idle, I do not mind what community it is: students of that age sitting idle will find things to do that are not always productive.

It is imperative that we have a viable, worthwhile and engaging secondary component. We have only chosen years 7 and 8 because we think years 7 and 8 will provide the capacity for us to develop socialisation and further literacy and numeracy skills in those students with the hope of still getting them out into a boarding school. That is why years 7 and 8 are in place and we did not go further, although we do have provision for years 9 to 12 in terms of distance education and other programs. Your question was about how many students we now have. We have one, and I think that is fantastic. One is that it is saying to us that we still have work to do. The point that I would like to make and that I have already made is that we have used our transition officers to make sure that all of the students who enrolled in boarding school went back to boarding school. Now the community engagement that I was talking about is on in earnest making sure that our community can identify those students who are in the community who are not engaging in years 7 and 8 and getting them in. I think the enrolment of one, which only happened this week, is a strong boost to us to know that there is a need and that we have a greater need to fulfil.

Ms DAVIS: My question is to the director-general. How many children are of school-age from grades 7 to 12 whose home is Aurukun who attend boarding school and how many children are not turning up to school in that cohort?

Dr Watterston: I am reliably informed that we have 27 students in years 7 and 8 in the community.

Ms DAVIS: And one turning up to school?

Dr Watterston: As I said to you before, we have deliberately delayed the recruitment or the enticement to school, but we are certainly open for business. Part of that is making sure that the community can make this well known to the students and their families within the Aurukun community. I appreciate that you would like me to elaborate—

Ms DAVIS: Of those 28, I assume that includes the one that is attending locally?

Dr Watterston: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: Is that 28 students attending school or is that 28 students who are of age to attend school between years 7 and 12? How many are enrolled?

Dr Watterston: Let me be clear—and I will make one other point to go with it—there are 28 students that we know of that are of years 7 and 8 age in the community, and one is attending. That then identifies to you the magnitude of the problem and why we would want to set up years 7 and 8. You couldn't imagine that just because we were open for business on the first day of this term, which is 2½ weeks ago, suddenly all of these disengaged kids who have been roaming the community without any contact with education would just suddenly turn up. This is a very long term process for us.

Ms DAVIS: Director-General, I—

CHAIR: One moment, please, member for Aspley.

Dr Watterston: Can I just add, though, in terms of identifying the number of students available for any grade in Aurukun, it is not a precise measure at this point. We are finding that the enrolments that are already in the Aurukun school are not necessarily able to be verified. We are working on the fact that there are 204 students enrolled—

Ms DAVIS: Why can they not be verified?

Dr Watterston: Some of those students have never turned up this year even though they have been enrolled, so it is quite a difficult issue. You would be aware that one of the review recommendations was that we would get the Queensland Audit Office to audit the enrolment practices to make sure that the enrolments that are on OneSchool are, in fact, students who are available to attend school within that community. We are working very hard on understanding how many students need to be in school in Aurukun and making sure that we have community engagement to bring them in.

Ms DAVIS: Have you given yourself a time line to get those numbers?

Dr Watterston: We have had to work very hard to convince our partners that we needed to do this review. No, we do not have a time line. I have met with the QAO this week because it requires some forensic auditing and some following of a range of datasets to make sure that we have a really conclusive understanding of who should have been at school and who is at school. In addition to that, as I have said, the 28 students who are potentially required to be in the Aurukun school from years 7 and 8 is also something that we are checking on. It is not an exact science, but it will be, let me tell you, by the time the QAO have finished.

Ms DAVIS: But we have no time line?

Dr Watterston: The timeline is—

Ms JONES: However long the QAO needs.

Dr Watterston:—however long they need. They have five people working on this and they have given it their highest priority even though this is the end of the financial year and their workload is horrific. They are putting this to the top of the work list and they are working on it assiduously. They know that we need that information as soon as possible and they will get it as soon as they can.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Director-General. I now move to page 8 of the SDS, outlining service standards of early childhood education and care and the primary and secondary schooling standards. My question is to the minister. I think we both agree that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in our schools is paramount. I know you are on the record as saying that the safety of children is your No. 1 priority; and, as a former minister for child safety, I agree wholeheartedly with you. Minister, the Child Protection Act 1999 outlines mandatory reporting provisions of teachers where there is a reasonable suspicion that harm is occurring for a child. I know from my previous role that Queensland teachers do undertake their reporting obligations very seriously. I certainly commend our teachers for wanting to ensure that children are safe and protected. Minister, along with the teacher's obligations for student safety, do you have a role to play as Minister for Education in ensuring the safety and protection of students? If so, can you outline what this entails for the benefit of the committee?

CHAIR: Minister, before you do answer that—and I appreciate the question from the member—I remind you that we do have legislation before the House. You cannot refer to that legislation or go down that path.

Ms JONES: Sorry, what was the SDS reference you were referring to?

Ms DAVIS: Page 8.

Ms JONES: Which part? We cannot find what you are talking about on page 8.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, there seems to be some difficulties finding the reference on page 8.

Ms DAVIS: It goes to the point of safety and wellbeing of children and their educational outcomes. That is on page 8. You would also find it on page 3. The question, Minister, was about mandatory reporting in schools—and teachers do a great job in relation to their responsibility in that regard. My question was: as minister, do you have a role to play and if you feel you do, what is your obligation?

Ms JONES: Absolutely. I made that very clear both in my actions in addressing the failed implementation of the child protection reporting mechanism by the former government in 2013 and their failed update of that system in January 2015, before I became the minister. I think it is a matter of public record the swift action we took to fix that system. I am very proud of the work that has been done by the department in that regard.

In addition to that, another key reform implemented by our government was the creation of the executive director of child safety, and Hayley Stevenson is here. I acknowledge the great work that Hayley is doing. As part of the work that we have done in our elevated position of Child Safety in our department, we have also provided child safety principal advisers in every single region of Queensland. I am looking at the member for Townsville because I know that he is a former principal and principals and teachers are telling me that they appreciate having this additional resource in the regional setting.

They can talk through complex issues that arise when a teacher or principal feels that they do have to undertake their responsibility under the act, as the honourable member said, in meeting that obligation and they now have someone with those skills with whom they can talk about that decision. When I talk to staff that is one of the key things that they have asked for.

Absolutely, we have invested heavily in this area. One, we fixed the system that was implemented wrongly by the previous government. Two, we have created a new position of executive director, child safety, who is doing a fantastic job and works collaboratively both with child safety officers and police. Across Queensland we have also rolled out new principal advisers whose specific job is to look at the welfare of children, particularly in relation to domestic and family violence and also child safety issues. They work very closely in the local community with police and child safety officers. We are providing a link like never before on the ground in regional communities because of our strong view that all of us in our broader community, whether it be me as the Minister for Education, a teacher working in a school or a teacher working in an early childhood setting, have a responsibility to end abuse of children and also violence in our community.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Minister. Following a mandatory report to Child Safety by a teacher, is their obligation to that student's safety then discharged?

Ms JONES: No.

Ms DAVIS: Can the minister explain what will happen—the process?

Ms JONES: There is no reference to the SDS, but I am happy to talk about—I have never met a teacher yet—

Ms DAVIS: Minister, it goes to the point of children in care—

Ms JONES: I have never met a teacher yet who does not go to work with the intent of supporting a child—

Ms DAVIS: What follow-up is done with Child Safety?

Ms JONES:—particularly vulnerable children in our schools.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, you have asked the minister a question that I believe lies outside of the SDS. The minister is now answering that question for you. Can you please cease your interjections and allow the minister to answer?

Ms JONES: I note that the honourable member is the former minister for child safety, so she would absolutely understand those obligations. As I said, the whole point of providing additional guidance officers, providing additional support staff for our teachers is about providing an environment where we are resourcing our schools and our teachers with the ability to provide the best care and support for our students. This is an activist model. We have changed from a reactionary model to one where we are resourcing—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—our teachers—

CHAIR: Minister, there is a point of order.

Miss BARTON: The member for Aspley has asked a very specific question asking what the subsequent process is. It is a supplementary question to the minister's answer. The minister is not answering the question and I would ask that you direct her to answer the question as posed by the member for Aspley, which was: subsequent to a mandatory reporter in Education Queensland having made that report, what is the process then within EQ?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater. Again, the question, I believe, lies outside of the Appropriation Bill. The minister has elected to answer that question to the best of her abilities and she can choose to answer the question the way she wishes. Minister, do you need to add anything further?

Ms JONES: I will. Quite frankly, in the interests of education and children, I have chosen to answer probably three-quarters of questions that have no relevant SDS reference. I have to do that as the Minister for Education, one, to demonstrate that I stand by the staff who work in our schools and our department in providing excellence in education. To that end, the legal responsibility is that they have to refer to the relevant department. The relevant department is the department of child safety. As the honourable former minister would be fully aware, that responsibility then is with the child safety department. Having said that, I believe that given the nature of the question, it is my experience that teachers have a genuine and ongoing concern for students in their care.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you for that, Minister. I agree; I do not think teachers teach unless they have a great desire to support children and have wonderful outcomes for them. But it is important that we provide the frameworks in order to allow them to do that. Minister, can you assure the committee that no child attending Queensland state schools is being left at risk because of Child Safety's backlogs?

CHAIR: Before you answer that one, Minister, I believe this lies outside of your area of responsibility. You may choose to answer that or not.

Miss BARTON: With respect to your ruling, Mr Chair, the question referred very specifically to students in Queensland schools. It falls directly within the remit of the Minister for Education, who has a responsibility for students in Queensland schools. It is directly relevant to the minister's portfolio.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater. The reference was more about the alleged backlog of reports and the Minister for Education is not responsible for the child safety area.

Ms DAVIS: Maybe she should be.

CHAIR: Minister, do you wish to answer that question or will we move on to the next one?

Ms JONES: Actually I would really like to call Hayley Stevenson because it would give a real opportunity for the former minister to see—

Ms DAVIS: My question was quite straightforward. I have my answer. Thank you. I know Hayley would be doing a great job.

Ms JONES: The answer is that we did not cut Child Safety staff like your government did; we actually put in a different—

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms DAVIS: Point of order. The minister needs to be very careful about what she says in front of the parliamentary estimates committee and to make sure her figures are correct.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Aspley. In relation to the answer to the question from the member for Aspley, would you like to introduce yourself and respond?

Ms Stevenson: Hayley Stevenson, Executive Director, Student Protection. With regard to any concerns that a teacher or a principal raises in relation to student protection, once the report goes through our system and goes to Child Safety, we receive receipt that it has gone through. Our principals have been advised if at any time they remain concerned about the wellbeing of a student at their school they are to contact one of the student protection principal advisers who are located in each of our regions and to raise that concern with them. The principal adviser then will make contact with the Child Safety service centre, get an update on the case so that they can close the loop and provide the feedback to the principal as to what is occurring for that young person and for the follow-up. If they remain concerned, the student protection principal adviser also has links to the secondary referral services. They may engage other referral avenues for that student or for the principal and talk through the different supports that may be available as well. Our principal adviser has been working really hard to make contact with principals and provide proactive advice as well as advice in relation to students on a case-by-case basis.

CHAIR: Member for Pumicestone.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, I refer to the early childhood educators working with children with a disability or complex needs, mentioned on page 5 of the SDS. What measures have you taken to ensure the smooth transition for families with children in Early Childhood Development Programs to the NDIS?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question and his genuine commitment to parents with children who rely on ECDP services. I thank him for the opportunity because estimates is the perfect place, given I have reversed the decision of the former government—and there will be a cost associated with it going forward—to keep ECDPs in Queensland provided by the state government.

The former minister for disabilities would well know this, which is why I was quite frankly shocked and horrified that she and her colleagues such as the member for Mount Ommaney and the former minister for education would go around and deliberately tell untruths about ECDPs. They know full well that it was Campbell Newman who, on 8 May 2013, decided that they would hand over ECDPs to the feds as part of the NDIS transition. Furthermore, in letters and correspondence between the now Leader of the Opposition of the LNP in Queensland and the education minister they decided that they would absolutely transition ECDPs to the federal plan. For them to sit around in cabinet and decide that and then, knowing that they were party to that decision, turn around and walk into a school, sit down with parents of students with disabilities and not tell the truth, is not only heartbreaking but, to me, is also

offensive and ethically wrong. What we saw I think was a deliberate attempt at politicising something that was absolutely their decision. The only minister who has listened to the concerns of parents that rely on ECDP services is myself.

I take it that the indignation from the member is about the fact that she has been caught out. The honourable member has been caught out doing one thing in cabinet and saying another thing when she sits down with parents in schools with students with disabilities, and it is outrageous and it is offensive and I feel deeply that it is out of—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair. The minister is not accurately relaying the scenario. I find it offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Ms JONES: I withdraw. I would like to advise the committee, however, that a decision was made and signed by—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. The withdrawal needs to be unqualified, and I would suggest that the use of the word 'however' makes the withdrawal qualified.

Ms JONES: I withdraw.

CHAIR: Let us move on to answering the question.

Ms JONES: I am answering the question that the honourable member for Pumicestone has asked. Like me, I imagine that every single member of this committee has received correspondence from parents who use ECDP services and very concerned because of the misrepresentation by members of the LNP in Queensland who said that our government was shutting down ECDP services. I am raising the issue with the committee because I think it goes to the heart of a person's credibility. When you sit around a cabinet table and make a decision that you are going to transition ECDP services to the federal government under the NDIS, and you are the minister for disability at the time and you are part of a whole-of-government decision, it is concerning to me that you would know that, make that decision and then go into a special school and argue that it was not your government that made the decision; it was actually the new government that was elected that made the decision.

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. The member for Aspley has already raised a point of order on this issue and the imputations contained within the statement of the minister—

Ms JONES: There is no imputation; it is fact.

Miss BARTON:—and I would suggest that it is inappropriate for the minister, having been asked to withdraw such comments, to continue to make them and to continue to provoke the member for Aspley.

CHAIR: Minister, I will ask you to move on and answer the question. If you have done so—

Ms JONES: No, I have not answered the question because I think this is really important. I would like to answer, and I thank the honourable member for Pumicestone for his question. I am raising this because it is a matter of public record that on 8 May 2013 the Campbell Newman government signed a partnership agreement with the then federal government which handed over ECDPs under the NDIS. It is a matter of public record, yet LNP members—including those that were part of that cabinet decision—are out there in communities saying things. Tarnya Smith said that, 'The early childhood development program is so important to so many children and families across my electorate. The LNP government is committed to the program as we'—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. I raise two points of order: first, I wonder whether it is appropriate to quote another member of parliament when they do not have an opportunity to respond—

Ms JONES: It is on their Twitter account. It is on the public record.

Miss BARTON: Secondly, I think that if the member is going to be quoting other members of parliament it is only appropriate that the committee be provided with confirmation of the quote that she is seeking to provide before the committee so that we can truly deem that the evidence that is being provided is a reflection of the member for Mount Ommaney's statements.

CHAIR: The minister is under no obligation to table.

Ms JONES: I do not think I need to because I am reading directly from her Twitter account, so the member for Broadwater—who I am sure follows her colleague—would see her Twitter comment, which is that, 'The LNP is committed to the program as we have seen the results. You can be assured that we will be fighting to keep this program running in Queensland schools.' That is what they are saying to parents in 2016, despite making decisions when they were in control to do the exact opposite.

No wonder the member for Broadwater wants to shut me down, because the truth hurts and it hurts here because—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order. I have sat here and listened to the minister rabbit on with very little understanding of any arrangements, negotiations and discussions between the then state government and the federal government.

CHAIR: What is your point of order?

Ms DAVIS: The minister is providing information to this committee that is out of context because she has no understanding of the history. If the minister does not want to withdraw because the material that she is providing is inaccurate in a contextual sense, then I will be writing to—

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, what is your point of order?

Ms DAVIS: My point of order is that the minister is going close to misleading this committee, and I ask her to withdraw the comments she made.

Ms JONES: What comment could I withdraw? There was no personal reflection on the member.

CHAIR: There is no point of order.

Ms JONES: I would like to answer that.

CHAIR: Minister, one moment. I ask you to draw your answer to a conclusion so that we can move on.

Ms JONES: Yes, I just want to clarify this because the point of order says that I am somehow misrepresenting the facts that occurred. I have in my hand the heads of agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland government on the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This is how states were going to work in partnership with the federal government to roll out the NDIS. It was signed by Campbell Newman on 8 May 2013. I think it is fair for all Queenslanders to presume that the minister for disabilities at the time would have some recall or understanding of the agreement between the Commonwealth and the Queensland government on the—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair. I find the inference that the minister is making offensive and untrue and I ask her to withdraw.

Ms JONES: I withdraw. My comment was that I think Queenslanders would expect—

Ms DAVIS: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Miss BARTON: There is a clear need for any withdrawal of a personal reflection to be unqualified. The minister is continuing to qualify her withdrawals. I think it is time that we move on to the next question.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater. The minister has withdrawn her statement. Minister, have you concluded your answer?

Ms JONES: No, I have not concluded my answer. No wonder the member for Broadwater wants to move on, because what I have clearly demonstrated through the National Partnership Agreement is that the LNP did one thing when they were in government and are saying another thing when they go out there and talk to families with children with disabilities who are genuinely concerned about their children and their care. They want to shut this down because they have been caught out. It is shameful, and only Labor will continue to provide ECDP services in Queensland using funding from our budgets to do so. You have been clearly exposed here today for the fraudulent campaign that you ran.

Mr SAUNDERS: I refer to page 8 of the SDS and the reference to students with a disability. I am well aware that the state schooling system is by far the major supporter of children with special needs. Could the minister please help the committee understand the extent of disabilities in our schools and support for this most important group of students in our schools.

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. Once again I know that his question comes from a very genuine place about supporting children with a disability in Queensland and indeed in Queensland schools. We know that in Queensland we have I think around 32,000 students with a disability in Queensland schools, and as part of our budget we are allocating a record \$980 million to support students with a disability in Queensland state schools. We take our responsibility very seriously, and this also includes funding ECDP services going forward after the former government signed up to a national agreement where they would be quarantining that funding as part of the NDIS and transitioning that to services being provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

However, as I mentioned earlier today I think that we can do a better job when it comes to supporting teachers, staff and students with disabilities in our schools. That is why I have announced that Deloitte has been successful in undertaking a disability review. These findings will help provide us with the best possible services going forward, and for me it builds on the work we have already done with regard to the autism hub here in Queensland. It is about saying, 'Where are we having difficulties and what can we do better?' I have already met with a number of principals in our schools about what they would like to see in a review, and I am sure that all principals—not only of special schools, but also schools where they have a disability support unit—would welcome the opportunity to provide feedback so we are ensuring that the guidelines, the resourcing and the processes we have in place are ones that they can support. I think this review will give us a chance to modernise and improve.

I might get Patrea Walton to add to this too, because I have been the minister for 18 months and my experience of working with Patrea is that I have absolute confidence that the head of state schooling is a woman who is committed to ensuring that we are providing the best possible advice and using world's best practice to support our students with a disability.

Ms Walton: State schools provide quality education for all students that walk through the door and come in to enrol, including a large proportion of students with a disability. What is also increasing in number in that proportion of students with a disability are the number of students with autism. Our safe, supportive and disciplined school environment policy, which provides advice around how to best support students with a disability, requires a refresh. There is no doubt about that, so the minister has announced a disability review to look at policy and procedures operating in state schools and how we can do a better job: how we can do a better job to support young people with a disability in state schools; how we can support young people with a disability to engage in the learning program, to improve their educational performance; and how to best support teachers to ensure that students with a disability maximise their learning opportunities.

I think it would be fair to say that there are some students with a disability who demonstrate complex and challenging behaviours, and that becomes a problem for teachers and principals. We are asking for research-driven evidence and advice on how we can ensure that we provide the best quality educational service to young people with a disability in the state of Queensland.

Mrs MILLER: Before I get to my next question, Minister, I would still like to know the average age of teachers and non-teaching staff within Education Queensland, even if you would like to take that on notice.

Ms JONES: I think Jeff has that now.

Mr Hunt: The average age of teachers is 43.5 years. The average age of non-teaching staff I will need to get for you, and it depends on how you would like to have that. Obviously there are teacher aids, cleaners, ground staff et cetera.

Mrs MILLER: Per occupation, please. In relation to your comments about the shortage of primary school teachers coming up, I am very concerned because over the years there has been an oversupply of primary school graduates within Queensland. I am just wondering whether the primary school graduates who are currently on short-term or long-term contracts with Education Queensland, or those who are not working within the profession and who dearly want to work within the profession, will be offered upgrade courses by the universities to give them the opportunity to become teachers. I would really like your sincere advice on that, because there are so many teachers on contracts who want to become full-time permanent teachers of EQ who have not been given the opportunity to date?

Mr Hunt: We are committed to maximising permanency in the teaching workforce and have a range of strategies to do that. Obviously Queensland is a large and diverse state and we need to ensure that every one of our schools has access to the qualified teaching staff they need to do their job. We have a state-wide teacher transfer system. Typically at this stage of the year, a number of vacancies in what might be called preferred locations are held open for transferees from what might be called the country service. That is part of the annual staffing cycle. Typically, permanency is maximised at the beginning of the year, and as the year goes through positions are held for teachers to transfer back into.

In terms of graduate appointments and the proportion of temporary teachers in the workforce, we are committed to working with our colleagues across the regions in the HR role to ensure that we maximise permanency for teaching staff. We know that there are some challenges not only in Queensland but across the nation and across the world in filling some positions at some times of the year in some disciplines. We also are making sure that we work very closely with the higher education institutions to ensure that the teacher preparation courses are fit for purpose in terms of what we need

in a modern teaching professional, and we are looking at a whole range of workforce attraction and retention strategies with the Queensland Teachers Union and with principals associations and other stakeholders to ensure the mix is right. This is an ongoing staffing challenge for a large system like ours. You may have observed that we have engaged in international and national recruitment campaigns and promotional campaigns as well to make sure that we attract the best. We want to ensure that the teachers we engage permanently are fit to meet the needs of teaching in the current age as well as into the future with, as we have heard today, the contemporary curriculum. We are working at a whole range of levels. The minister, I think, mentioned earlier that she chairs what is referred to as the HR transformation board. A key piece of that work is to ensure that we adopt the right strategies to attract and retain the teachers we need to serve our state schools right across Queensland.

Mrs MILLER: In relation to the country service teachers, my understanding of it from teachers that I know is that with the independent public schools those principals do not need to take those country teachers; can you explain that please?

Mr Hunt: They are part of the state-wide transfer system and we work through our regional HR consultants who work with independent public school principals to ensure that the people who have done service in rural or remote Queensland have an opportunity to come back to serve in preferred areas. IPS schools do have the right to make direct appointments under the IPS initiative, but we want to ensure—as the Director-General mentioned earlier—that a great state school has a great state school down the road. We operate a network of schools and that means that the HR practices must operate across the network of each school as well.

Mr DICKSON: I refer to a few of the minister's quotes of this morning: 'Every child deserves the right to an education.' 'Our government will make a difference for every child and particularly those with disabilities.' An email sent through to my office—and I won't declare the people's name but I am happy to give it to you outside of this meeting—details a mum and dad with a young boy who are expected next year to attend Year 7 at high school when his current intellectual capacity is that of second grade level. His mum and dad attempted to attain an educational disability verification for their boy and attended a special school as per his medical team's recommendation but have been refused a review from his guidance officer by his mum and dad. After contacting the minister's office on three separate occasions for an urgent meeting, why have they not had a response? The latest request was on 22 July and they have not had even their phone calls extended the courtesy of a reply?

CHAIR: We are examining the Appropriation Bill.

Mr DICKSON: I refer to page three and page eight, if you would like me to read both of those, relating to the care of our children and to disability children. I am just asking the minister—

Ms JONES: Clearly, that person's administrative decision making is not in the SDS, but having said that I agree with the member. I am happy for you to come and talk to my chief of staff directly after this so we can follow it up. We are putting record funding into supporting students with disability. I made that very clear. My intent as minister is to ensure that every child with a disability gets the support they need. I am happy for you to meet directly with me at the end of this estimates so you can provide me with the name and I can follow that up.

Mr DICKSON: I thank the minister very much for that.

Ms DAVIS: I refer to page three of the SDS which states that the Queensland government is supporting teachers to focus on student needs. By providing more teachers in schools, including specialist teachers and additional guidance officer, to support students to engage with their learning, I understand that the current policy sets out that the school principal is responsible for ensuring each child in out-of-home care has an education support plan. Is the minister confident that every child in care attending a state school has a current and contemporary education support plan?

Ms JONES: I am confident. I imagine that all principals in Queensland take seriously their responsibilities both under the Education Act and the Child Act and the relevant policies and procedures we put in place as the government, and I expect them to undertake them.

Ms DAVIS: I refer the Director-General to page 16 of the SDS where the combined revenue of the department from state government sources is listed for education services. Can the Director-General outline how much of this total funding is the grant received from child safety to administer education support plans for children in state care?

Mr Watterson: That page does not have line items. I can hand you over to our chief financial officer.

Mr Black: We will have to get the detail for that and get back to you. We can take it on notice if the minister agrees.

CHAIR: Is the minister happy to take that on notice?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: I have a series of questions around that, Chair, so when might I expect that response?

Ms JONES: We have questions on notice for that very reason. I am happy to get it as quickly as possible.

CHAIR: There is a 48 hour request on that.

Ms JONES: No, I mean that you get to lodge questions ahead of estimates.

Mr Watterston: Sorry, I might have that answer right away for you, if that is okay? In 2015 Child Safety in the Department of Communities provided \$7.549 million for the additional education support to students in out-of-home care in state and non-state schools. That is not just the state system. If you would like us to break that down, we could at some point. Approximately \$115,000 of that was used in administrative costs at the central office and \$1.098 million was allocated to the non-state sector. It is about \$6.5 million.

Ms DAVIS: That is terrific. Of that amount of money, was it fully expended or is it likely to be fully expended, and is it being directed specifically to children in out-of-home care? For example, a child might need some assistance with a teacher's aide. Can you assure the committee that the money being allocated specifically to a child in out-of-home care is being delivered directly to that child and not used more broadly, say, in the classroom?

Ms JONES: Hayley Stevenson is responsible as part of the reforms we did under child safety and through that role as a child safety officer to the Executive Director-General also has oversight of the children from foster care attending our schools.

Ms Stevenson: In our schools when a student is identified as being in out-of-home care and eligible for an education support plan, that support plan is developed at the school level and identifies the supports required either in the classroom or to assist the student generally to access education. Once that plan is developed, the funds are allocated to that student from the regional office. Our seven regions have different methods for allocating that funding. Generally they start with a base amount and then, based on the education support plan and the level of complexity of the needs for that student, additional funding may be allocated to that specific student. For example, some of the funding might go towards additional teacher aide support in the classroom, to other additional intervention or support, or for the purchase of a laptop computer or other things that assist that student to access the education both within the school and when they are outside of school hours.

Ms DAVIS: Of the money being spent, what time frame or lead time is acceptable to the department from identification of a child in care, which should be automatic once they are enrolled, to ensure that they have a contemporary plan?

Ms Stevenson: In developing the plan, we encourage the guidance officer, relevant staff in the school and the child safety officer to meet and talk about the needs of student. Generally from the start of the school year we would like to see that those plans are developed in the first month or two of the student's schooling. I know that at times it can take longer for those plans to be developed as school staff gather information and have time for the student to meet with the guidance officer. We will often see, if a student has been enrolled in a school year on year, that the plans and the interventions occurring at the school to support that student roll on year on year regardless of if the final plan has been signed off for that year.

Ms DAVIS: I am still concerned that there is a process that guarantees that you can receive confirmation that every child in care, if not with one of these plans contemporary, will get one. What you have described sounds all very reasonable and there is a process behind it, but my concern is that there does not appear to be any mechanism to check that in fact these have taken place. All the goodwill in the world does not ensure that there is a plan. Given that another agency is providing education with a significant amount of money, is the money being directed in the right circumstances to the right children in the right way for the right supports?

Ms Stevenson: Within one school we do have a mechanism to track all students with education support plans. The principals based in each of the regions have oversight of that, and part of their role is to quality-assure those education support plans and make sure that they have the right supports in

place. Additionally, our student protection principal advisers are working with their regional colleagues to develop regional action plans to specifically target the improvement of educational outcomes of students in out-of-home care. This is a new project that has just started. By the end of this year, they will have regionally focussed, data-driven action plans specifically targeting what we can do at a regional level to improve the educational outcomes of these students.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much for that. My next question is to the chief financial officer. If not all of the money that is allocated by Child Safety is used, how is that acquitted back? What do you need to provide Child Safety so that it is assured that the money has been used in the correct manner?

Dr Watterston: Sure. It is quite a simple matter, but I will hand over to Adam Black, our chief financial officer, to explain it to you.

Ms DAVIS: I do not need great detail; I just need to know, essentially, if there is any left over, do you give it back? Of the money that you use, how do you acquit it back?

Mr Black: We do not receive money directly from Child Safety. It is generally appropriated to us as part of our funding.

Ms DAVIS: Yes, on behalf of, though.

Mr Black: There is no direct acquittal process for those funds.

Ms JONES: The state does.

Ms DAVIS: Yes, I understand that, but it is working in concert with Child Safety. It goes to my point that there is a lot of money going to supporting children, and we all agree that we need to support children because children in out-of-home care have significant challenges. If there is an investment made, we need to ensure that the outcomes are, in fact, beneficial to those kids. That is it. But thank you.

Ms JONES: We have greater oversight than ever before. The new executive director of Child Safety just highlighted to the whole committee that we have new oversight with our Child Safety principal officers in every region. We have greater oversight now than in the history of Queensland to make sure that we are providing that support.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much, Minister. I refer to page 8 of the SDS, which sets out the service standards for your department. I note today, Minister, that you will be looking at the structure of the Australian Curriculum in Queensland schools. I ask: is the Australian Curriculum currently being delivered in all Queensland state schools?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Ms DAVIS: How is this being checked?

Ms JONES: It is their job.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, this is a very serious question.

Ms JONES: No, I am being serious. I mean—

Ms DAVIS: No, you are being very flippant.

Ms JONES: No, I am not.

Ms DAVIS: This is a very serious question. My question that I would like answered is what are the mechanisms in place to ensure that at each school the Australian Curriculum is being delivered?

Ms JONES: At state schools?

Ms DAVIS: At state schools

Ms JONES: We provide the Australian Curriculum. That is the responsibility of the school and that is how our students are being marked and assessed.

Ms DAVIS: And how do you check that, Minister? That is my question.

Ms JONES: With report cards.

Ms DAVIS: What is the mechanism—

Ms JONES: I know what you are getting at here, because we have rolled it out in every school.

Dr Watterston: How do we directly know? There are two ways that we fundamentally check. One is, as you would understand and appreciate, we are divided into seven regions across Queensland. Even of those regions has a regional director, but each of those regional directors has a significant number of assistant regional directors. That number has increased over the last two years. Each of

those assistant regional directors is allocated a number of schools. Their primary and single focused job is to be in those schools on a regular basis and to understand how the curriculum is being delivered but, more importantly—and way more significantly than just how is the curriculum being delivered—what are the results that are being achieved within that school and then engage in purposeful conversation with the principal around that data analysis. It is not just about implementing the Australian Curriculum; it is how well they implement the Australian Curriculum.

Secondly, as we have talked today, one of the most exciting features of the Queensland state school system is our school review unit. That school review unit, on a four-year basis, reviews every school in Queensland—as the minister said, 360 last year. I think we are up to 450 or something at this stage of this year over the last 18 months. Elements of the curriculum as well as behaviour and student engagement and a range of other things are dissected very precisely during those reviews. We are absolutely sure, not just confident, that every school is implementing the Australian Curriculum with perhaps great fidelity—

Ms JONES: The only other—

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We will let the director-general answer.

Dr Watterston: Just to qualify the answer, Aurukun is the one that we are just working with in terms of the Australian Curriculum in making sure that there is complete coverage. Until the school review that has just been done on that school, we probably had not had every school to the level that we would expect, but we are working on that now.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, are you aware of any instances where a principal has developed and implemented an AIP different from what has been placed on OneSchool? That is an annual implementation plan, Minister. Each principal is required to design one.

Ms JONES: I am not aware, but I will find out. Could the member please ask the question again?

CHAIR: Member, can you repeat your question, please?

Ms DAVIS: Certainly. Are you aware any instances where a principal has developed and implemented an annual implementation plan different from what has been placed on OneSchool?

Ms JONES: Sorry, just so I can understand the question and give an answer, you are saying that they have developed one but then what they have ended up putting on the OneSchool system is different? Is that what you are asking?

Ms DAVIS: What I am suggesting to you is can a principal develop a plan that may not align with the Australian Curriculum but use those results on OneSchool that should relate directly to the Australian Curriculum?

Ms JONES: I am happy to have it answered. There is no SDS reference to this, obviously.

Ms DAVIS: There is.

Ms JONES: We have given a lot of leeway today, which I am happy to.

Ms DAVIS: Minister, if you are that concerned about getting outcomes for children you would answer this question.

CHAIR: Member for Aspley—

Ms DAVIS: I can give you the reference.

CHAIR: You have asked your question. We will now leave it to the minister to—

Ms JONES: Yes, I will get the director-general to answer it.

CHAIR: Director-general, if you would like to answer?

Ms JONES: As I was saying, I have given you extreme leeway and I am happy to because of my genuine commitment to education.

Dr Watterston: There are a couple of things that I would say. As you identified, all principals put their annual implementation plan online. Planning is dynamic, so we would hope that people are constantly refreshing and reviewing their plans. In terms of the Australian Curriculum, that is the curriculum.

Ms JONES: Exactly.

Dr Watterston: Any departures from that would be decided at a local level. When I say 'departures', as we have talked about today, core and non-core curriculum and how it is implemented are the issues. Yes, I would expect that principals are readjusting plans and focusing on making sure

that they are relevant and contextually correct but, at this point, the plans would be around the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

We pride ourselves in Queensland on allowing the architects of the design of school improvement to be the school principals. We do not try to manage schools from Mary Street, or from regional offices. Each principal is entitled, with consultation with their staff and leadership teams, to be able to make those decisions that form the basis of their plans and the changes to their plans. I have answered the question already about the Australian Curriculum. We are absolutely sure—

Ms DAVIS: The regional directors who you alluded to earlier that you have in different regions to oversight schools and their curriculum, it would be their role to ensure that someone has a look at the implementation plans—or is it simply a localised plan? My understanding was that it was an important part of the structure for the delivery of the curriculum.

Dr Watterston: As I talked about before, the assistant regional directors who worked with every school are certainly discussing these aspects and looking at the planning. Can I just say, incidentally, that it is not compulsory for schools to put up their annual implementation plan online, but most do. It is a service that they provide so that parents can engage in the school's planning. Yes, the assistant regional directors are there to have those conversations with principals and to make sure that they test the planning and test their thinking. So absolutely.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, director-general. The annual implementation plans are simply a tool for the principal and the school; it is not essential to share that with parents, although most do? They share it then with the department? The department has oversight—

Ms JONES: It is endorsed by the P&C.

Ms DAVIS: I am asking the director-general, Minister, thank you.

Ms JONES: I know. I was—

Ms DAVIS: I do not need your help.

CHAIR: One moment, thank you.

Dr Watterston: Let us be clear. The planning is mandatory and it is endorsed by the P&C or the school council. Whether it goes online or not is up to the school but, as I said before, in my understanding the majority of schools do that. I am not exactly sure of the premise of your question, but all schools engage in that planning. I am happy to be advised if any schools, to your knowledge, are doing that insufficiently or doing that at a level that is not appropriate.

As I have said, we have put practices and processes in place in schools in the last 2½ years that give us complete and absolute coverage and, in treating people professionally, we get them to share their planning with the department so that we can be aware of what the planning looks like and assist and provide additional resources where required.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. With reference to the Budget Strategy and Outlook for 2016-17 at page 106, can the minister confirm that her government's commitment to the 2.5 per cent wages policy is as stated on that page?

Ms JONES: Our government is committed to a whole-of-government wages policy.

Ms DAVIS: My second question is to the minister. Minister, have you had a conversation with the Treasurer or the Premier about whether or not you can break that commitment in negotiations with the Teachers' Union, given that they are after four per cent, or a 4.5 per cent pay increase?

Ms JONES: I know that we are finishing this with the way we started, which I think is attacking teachers in our schools, but I will reiterate my actual answer, which is that our government has a whole-of-government wages policy for all employees.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you very much. I absolutely support teachers, but we want them—

Ms JONES: It does not sound like it.

Miss BARTON: Minister, I do not think—

CHAIR: Thank you. Member for Aspley, do you have a further question? Otherwise, we will go to government members.

Ms DAVIS: Yes. Thank you. Minister, what does that potential two per cent increase mean in dollar figures?

Ms JONES: Sorry, I am just seeking clarification. Because the enterprise bargaining agreement is still underway, I do not feel that I should be talking about the enterprise bargaining agreement.

Ms DAVIS: I am just asking what two per cent is on top the current wage.

Ms JONES: It is accounted for in the budget.

Ms DAVIS: You should be able to help me with that. There is a current amount and you add two per cent to it.

Ms JONES: Obviously, we will have budgeted for—

Ms DAVIS: 2.5—

Ms JONES:—the wages increase as per the whole-of-government policy in the forward estimates.

Ms DAVIS: That will be your negotiating position, because it appears there is nowhere in the budget that allows for any deviation from that 2.5 per cent as outlined on page 22 of the SDS; is that correct? What you are saying is that you are not going to move from the 2.5?

Ms JONES: What I am saying—

Ms DAVIS: There is no contingency for any negotiations?

CHAIR: Member for Aspley, you have asked your question.

Ms JONES: And I am answering it.

CHAIR: Please allow the minister to answer it and the minister will answer.

Ms JONES: And I am answering it in the sense that we will be entering all negotiations and undertaking all negotiations in line with the whole-of-government policy when it comes to wages, but I do note the intent of the question by the honourable member.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, I refer to page 8 of the SDS and the reference to students with a disability. What innovative measures are underway to support learning for young deaf, or hard-of-hearing children?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I invite all honourable members to the parliamentary lawn at one o'clock today where they can meet some of the deaf and hard-of-hearing children who are learning in Queensland state schools. One of the things we know is that deaf and hard-of-hearing children can face major communication obstacles that affect their learning from an early age. In Queensland, we currently have around 500 children who receive lessons through Auslan, the language of the Australian deaf community.

One of things that we have done here in Queensland, which is very innovative, is we have developed through the department of education the *Sally & Possum* resource. This is done by a Brisbane based company called Khemistry. They have produced over 30 episodes of *Sally & Possum*, which is in Auslan. Already, we have received good feedback from families and communities who are using this resource and finding that it makes a big difference to their child.

In actual fact, because of the positive feedback that we have received in regard to *Sally & Possum*, we are announcing that we will be providing for the ABC to have online at any time for parents of students who are deaf or hard of hearing to access them. I think it is worthwhile for the committee, if you want to, to come down and meet Possum and Sally today at lunchtime. One of the mums who we have received feedback from has said—

What an amazing show *Sally & Possum* is. My son is deaf and we are learning Auslan. We love watching this together.

Another mother, Sarah, said—

Thank you so much for *Sally & Possum*. My son is deaf. When he was very little we would tape Sofya on *Play School* and rewatch her so we could see someone signing on TV. Seeing him watch *Sally & Possum* on TV was breathtaking.

Another mother, Dianne, said—

Love *Sally & Possum*. Please keep it going. My son is deaf with cochlear implants. He got so excited when he first watched it yesterday and said to me, 'Same as me, mummy.'

Not only is this program teaching prereading concepts for younger children; it is helping them understand that they are not alone. As I said, there are now more than 30 episodes of *Sally & Possum* which, when you hear comments from mothers, is making a real difference for those children to feel included and to feel that they are not different. That goes to, as I have been saying repeatedly here today, our focus from the opening statement throughout this estimates hearing which is about how we

can provide an inclusive environment in our schools for every single child. I think that every child deserves that. *Sally & Possum* is a new and innovative way—and a fun way—that we are providing and engaging with our students in our state schooling who are hard of hearing or deaf.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, can you outline how the government's partnership with Playgroup Queensland, as referred to on page 5 of the SDS, will support Queensland families?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question. This is an exciting initiative that we developed with Playgroup Queensland that rolls out for families from 1 July this year. It is called Play Stars. I had the privilege of attending the launch of this program at South Bank recently and I am just so excited. I actually had the privilege myself of attending playgroup when I was a girl and still remember some of my earliest memories of going to playgroup. I can even see the honourable member smiling. It is one of those things where I think all of us can agree that the earlier we can engage with parents about learning, as the former minister for child safety would know, the better. That is exactly what playgroup is about.

We have seen significant reform in early years education, both in regard to the introduction of prep into our schools and also the rolling out of the universal access to kindergarten initiative. Now we are trying to engage with parents very early on in a playgroup setting. The feedback I have already received and why I thought that this playgroup's initiative would be a good one is because not only does it give children an opportunity to mix together with children of their own age—and we know how much they learn through play in that kind of setting—but also it gives parents an opportunity to come together and learn from each other, share their stories and stop some of those issues of isolation you can often feel when you are a parent at home with a child. I have been there.

I think this is one of those new initiatives that will make a big difference. We know, for example, that there are 1,000 playgroups across Queensland and around 12,000 young people participate in a playgroup. We are hoping that by rolling out the Play Stars initiative we will actually get more young families, more parents and their children, having the benefit of what playgroup provides.

Mrs MILLER: My question relates to school breakfast programs. I understand that the principals cannot divert any of the money that they receive at a school level into school breakfast programs and it is up to the community to provide the funding for this. I am just wondering whether or not the department will reconsider this matter because the standards of living of many people in our community, particularly in my community and others like mine, are going down. Kids are going to school hungry. They therefore cannot learn. I was wondering whether these schools could be supplemented with money for breakfast programs or whether or not you would allow the principals to divert some of their existing resources to fund these programs?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question and echo her comments about the importance of providing breakfast. We know the correlation between having breakfast and being able to be attentive at school and success outcomes. I attended a state school where we had a breakfast club so I know what a difference it can make. The advice that I have received and my understanding is that they actually can use funding allocated to the school to provide breakfast clubs. In actual fact, we would encourage it particularly in those communities. The honourable member would be aware that one of the changes that we have made under our government, which I know that she supports, is actually building into the former GRG money under the former government and our money under the I4S program was about actually providing more funding to where it is needed most. Schools in the Bundamba electorate, for example—I know because I have seen the data—actually received more funding this year than they have in previous years under that model. I see the member for Maryborough nodding as well because I know his schools are also in that category.

I would be very pleased to see if there is a school that you are aware of, and I can talk to you about that offline, but my advice and what I understand is that if that is an issue which correlates with learning, and we were talking about the school review before, if a principal during that school review process identifies that one of their concerns about learning outcomes is the opportunity for children to have access to breakfast then we would be looking holistically at learning outcomes including having a breakfast program. I know Foodbank also partners with schools in regard to this. We would be actively encouraging principals to provide holistic support for students including the provision of breakfast in order to do that.

Mrs MILLER: I have a supplementary question on that. I understand that principals will provide this funding short-term but not long-term and given the minister's response can I ask the director-general to please advise principals across Queensland that they are able to fund school breakfast programs.

Ms JONES: They might be raising with you the fact that the federal government has not committed those funds beyond the 2017.

Mrs MILLER: No, they are not raising that at all. They are concerned about the kids coming to school with no breakfast. This is not political. This is about making sure that kids have something in their bellies so that they can actually learn. I am talking about long-term sustainable funding for these breakfast programs and I am asking, director-general, if you could advise every principal of every school in Queensland that they can fund these programs.

Mr Watterston: Sure, and I would be keen to support the request that you are making because, as the minister said, when it was Great Results Guarantee money there were limitations about what they could spend it on. The Investing for Success \$240 million extra dollars put into schools is unallocated so all schools have the capacity. Some of them just probably haven't realised the capacity of the change and their ability then to focus the funding on learning needs. Learning needs, as the minister has articulated, certainly involves having breakfast and having a full stomach. I take it on board and I will certainly make sure that as a result of today's estimates hearing that we will give even greater clarity to make sure that that is possible for everyone.

Ms JONES: We will give clarity.

Mr WILLIAMS: Minister, thank you for updating the committee on the government's efforts to ensure that families are more connected to playgroup. I note our government is also committed to universal access to kindy. With reference to page 3 of the SDS can the minister please outline Queensland's investment of \$43 million into universal access to early childhood education?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. Before I answer your question I would like to update the committee that we have been advised that because of the active role we have been taking five more students today have turned up to the school in Aurukun in the senior secondary age group. That brings it to six. The work that we are doing there is making a difference. I think it is also worth saying in the conversation I had with Noel Pearson he also raised that at the time he was advocating for a position not to have year 7 and 8 because he thought it was a deterrent to kids going to boarding school, but I think what we have determined is that we actually need to provide both. We can see now that students are starting to take advantage of both options, including boarding school and also accessing year 7 and 8 at the school in the Aurukun community.

In regard to universal access, we have made it a priority, as I said earlier, to focus on those early years of learning. All of us in this room know that it makes a fundamental difference in regard to long-term educational outcomes. Labor has a very proud track record when it comes to this, as I mentioned earlier, not only with the introduction of prep but also universal access to kindergarten. Queensland has seen some of the largest increases in students accessing kindergarten programs for the first time.

This year our investment continues with \$43 million to ensure that we are keeping kindy affordable for Queensland families. Early childhood education services are critical, as I said, to building early literacy, numeracy and the social skills that they need to succeed at school. Once again I do actually need to put on the record that we have seen the federal government walk away from the funding arrangements under the national partnership agreement and there has been a \$40 million shortfall, but my view as the education minister is that that is something I need to meet because even though the feds have decided they do not want to fund it anymore I am not going to sit back and allow a decline in access for kindergarten in this state.

Our government has stepped in to meet this shortfall, as I have said, and we have seen an increase in overall kindergarten participation to more than 97 per cent from a baseline of 29 per cent in 2008. Going forward, we are working to improve access and affordability for all Queensland families to access kindergarten. In particular, our priority is focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and those at-risk, vulnerable and disadvantaged children and using evidence based strategies and initiatives to encourage participation in kindergarten. We are providing subsidies where the federal government has failed and we want to ensure that there are not cost barriers in place for these families to access kindergarten.

We are also piloting, and this is an exciting thing our government has been doing, the delivery of kindergarten through state schools in remote areas. This is something that I have had numerous meetings with the member for Mount Isa about. We are actually saying in state school facilities we can pilot having kindergarten students with our prep students. They are actually in those early year levels of learning where before they were actually missing out. We are also continuing to provide access to transport and other essential services to help families participate in kindergarten. Already I have

received good feedback from the honourable member for Mount Isa about the kindy pilot and families being able to access education services on school property from the kindergarten age of a child.

Mr SAUNDERS: Minister, with reference to page 5 of the SDS, how are you supporting regional and rural children to access kindergarten?

Ms JONES: That is a great follow-up question to what I was just talking about. As I said, we have launched the remote kindergarten pilot which enables children living in select remote communities to participate in kindergarten. I am very pleased in answering your question to give you details about where exactly we are piloting that program: Aramac State School, Augathella State School, Bedourie State School, Birdsville State School, Boulia State School, Dingo State School, Greenvale State School, Muttaborra State School, Pentland State School, Thargomindah State School and Valkyrie State School. These schools that are participating in the pilot have been recognised as what we call prescribed state schools to satisfy legislation and regulatory requirements. It has taken a bit of work to make sure that we get that in place, but the intent is very clear. It is about giving those students in some of the more remote parts of Queensland access to kindergarten.

In order to be eligible for the pilot we did put in some requirements, including that they had to be at least 50 kilometres distant from an approved existing early childhood education centre. The Brisbane School of Distance Education are funded to provide not only professional development but also ongoing mentoring and support for the teachers who are providing the kindergarten program in these rural and remote kindies. I will be happy to continue to update members of the committee and the House about how this pilot is going to see whether this is a model that we can continue to roll out more broadly across Queensland to provide kindergarten to students in the most rural and remote parts of our state.

CHAIR: You did mention rural and remote. In reference to page 5 of the SDS what has been done to increase kindergarten participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. This is probably an area where we need to see the largest gains in engaging with parents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be participating in the kindy program. We have made significant progress in this regard. I think in 2008 we were sitting at around 25 per cent of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds participating in kindy. In 2015 that has been up to 85 per cent. Obviously our government is committed to universal access which means we want students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to also be at the 95 per cent participation rate which is what we see as universal access.

One of the decisions I was confronted with very early in my piece was the fact that the children and families centres that were built in 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland under the federal government, and I acknowledge they were built under a Labor government, when the Liberal government were elected they decided that despite spending millions and millions of dollars on infrastructure, on building brand new children and families centres, of which there are 10 across Queensland, that they would just stop funding the operation of them.

I felt—and my finance officers were not that over the moon about it—that taxpayers had just forked out a whole heap of money, millions of dollars, to build these new CFCs, but the federal government walked away from actually funding the operation. I did not want a situation where this new infrastructure, which had been paid for by taxpayers, was sitting there not being utilised. Politically, if you want to accuse me of that, I could have let them go as white elephants, but I did not think that was the right thing to do. I thought that we should fund them at a state level. We found within our budget a \$39 million commitment over four years to secure funding for the CFCs.

The funding also supports the delivery of four early-years services and additional child and family centres. We have kept the operation of those child and family centres open. They are absolutely about providing holistic support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, so that they can participate in kindergarten and also get access to other support services such as health services. I have had the privilege of visiting two of the CFCs myself, to see how it is working.


CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Our time for examining the Education portfolio has come to a conclusion. Minister, there is one question on notice from the member for Bundamba, which is the breakdown of the—

Ms JONES: Yes, I have the answer for the honourable member for Bundamba. The average age of our teaching staff is 43.5. In regards to nonteaching staff, the average age of our cleaners is 52.8; the average age of public servants in our schools is 44.5; schools officers is 52.7; and teacher aides is

46.7. For public servants across the board, the average age is 44.5 and the average age of DET employees is 44.3.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. The committee will now adjourn for lunch. The hearing will resume at 1.45 pm with the examination of the estimates for the minister's portfolio areas of Tourism and Major Events.

Proceedings suspended from 12.46 pm to 1.44 pm

 **CHAIR:** Welcome back, Minister and officials. The committee will now examine the estimates for the minister's portfolio areas of Tourism and Major Events and Tourism and Events Queensland. Minister, would you like to start with an opening statement?

Ms JONES: I thank the chair and all members of the committee. Last year, I ended my introductory speech telling the committee that my focus for the future was to grow the industry to a focus on marketing and events, in aviation access and in job creation. I am happy to report to the committee that we have delivered on that commitment. Over the past 12 months, Queensland has experienced unprecedented growth in tourism. The latest international visitor survey data that was captured to the end of March has revealed international visitor spend is now up to over \$5 billion. The total number of visitors grew by over 10 per cent to 2.4 million visitors. At the same time, more Australians are choosing to holiday at home than ever before, so we are seeing record numbers of growth in domestic visitor numbers. Our growth is outpacing the nation. Tourism Research Australia figures show domestic overnight expenditure in Queensland increased 5.5 per cent to a record \$14.6 billion, while domestic overnight numbers increased to a record \$20.3 million in the 12 months to March 2016.

Our tourism industry has a lot to be proud of. I am proud to report to the committee that the Palaszczuk government has secured more than 500,000 new seats on new flights under the Aviation Attraction Investment Fund, which is expected to add up to \$350 million for our economy every year. The number of international seats heading to Queensland airports in the year to June is estimated to be 4.8 million, which is a six per cent increase on the previous year. Domestic seats over the same period are estimated to be 13.3 million, which represents a four per cent increase.

Most of the growth that we are seeing is coming out of Asia and indeed China. For the very first time, we have seen the number of Chinese visitors to Queensland overtake New Zealand visitors choosing to come to Queensland. We have seen a 29 per cent increase in the number of Chinese visitors travelling to our state. This presents a huge opportunity for Queensland tourism and now is the time for our state to capitalise on this market. That is why, in this year's state budget, we announced the \$33.5 million Connecting with Asia package, purely focused on building our relationship and Queensland's share of the Asian market. The package will focus on attracting more direct flights, building partnerships with Asian cities and building digital capacity.

This builds on our \$400 million four-year tourism funding guarantee, which was our election commitment. No longer will the industry have to come to government cap in hand every budget asking for funding, because they know that they have funding certainty and that the funding has been locked. I must acknowledge the great work of the Director-General of the Department of Tourism, Major Events and Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, Megan Houghton, and Tourism Events Queensland, particularly the Chair, Bob East, and the CEO, Leanne Coddington. In partnership with industry, they are growing tourism in our state and doing a great job marketing Queensland to the world.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to work with industry as we develop the Advancing Queensland tourism strategy, which will outline the next steps for the industry to grow for the benefit of all Queenslanders. As I said, the industry has a lot to be proud of and I look forward to continuing to work with them.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I call for questions from the member for Beaudesert.

Mr KRAUSE: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Minister and others. My question is to Ms Coddington, the CEO of TEQ. I refer to page 4 of the SDS, in relation to attracting new events to the state. Ms Coddington, how much did TEQ spend on the recent deal with Rugby League World Cup to attract games to Queensland?

Ms Coddington: I thank the member for the question. All of the negotiations that we do for events are commercial-in-confidence.

Mr KRAUSE: So you are unable to provide that information to the committee about the cost of that event to TEQ?

Ms Coddington: As I said, all the event negotiations that we do are commercial-in-confidence.

Mr KRAUSE: Was there a confidentiality clause in the agreement between TEQ and Rugby League World Cup that specifically indicated there was to be no disclosure or information about the tournament before the official launch? Was there a confidentiality agreement of that type?

Ms Coddington: In all of our contracts, there are confidentiality agreements in regard to each of the proponents and how we negotiate those contracts and announce those events.

Mr KRAUSE: When was the official announcement scheduled?

Ms Coddington: The announcement was last—

Ms JONES: Last Tuesday.

Ms Coddington: Last Tuesday, yes.

Mr KRAUSE: Tuesday, 19 July?

Ms Coddington: 19 July.

Ms JONES: Last week.

Mr KRAUSE: The question I asked was: was there a confidentiality clause in that agreement with Rugby League World Cup and your answer is, yes, there was.

Ms Coddington: Yes.

Mr KRAUSE: The official announcement was 19 July. Why then was it announced by the minister on 16 July? I refer to and seek leave to table newspaper articles from the *Courier-Mail* dated 16 July, in which it was indicated that the minister had made comment that Queensland had scored World Cup games for Brisbane.

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, can we look at those, please?

Mr KRAUSE: I seek leave to table those, Chair. There are two and I have copies of each for the committee members and others.

CHAIR: Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Minister, you have now been asked the question.

Ms JONES: I did not think it was to me, but I am happy to answer it.

Mr KRAUSE: It was actually to the CEO of TEQ.

Ms JONES: I understand why you would think it would be to me, because it is about me. If you want to talk about me, go for it.

Mr KRAUSE: Ms Coddington, I will let you get the document, if you would like. My question is this: why was it announced by the minister on 16 July when the official launch was 19 July?

Ms Coddington: We were made aware that the information had been released and it is important then that we ensure that we get best exposure for Queensland in announcing the event.

Mr KRAUSE: How were you made aware that that information had been released?

Ms Coddington: We get contacted by press, asking for comment.

Mr KRAUSE: Was not there a confidentiality clause in your agreement with Rugby League World Cup that would have prevented you from confirming that information?

Ms Coddington: If that situation occurs, we talk to the other party and come to an agreement as to how that will be handled.

Mr KRAUSE: And Rugby League World Cup agreed that TEQ was permitted to release that information?

Ms Coddington: Yes, that is our advice.

Mr KRAUSE: That is your advice?

Ms Coddington: Yes.

Mr KRAUSE: Okay. My next question is for the minister. Minister, can you confirm that, against the express wishes and without the approval of the organising committee of the Rugby League World Cup, you announced details of the World Cup on 16 July, before the official date for launch?

Ms JONES: I make no apologies for ensuring that we get best bang for buck when it comes to announcing a major event that we have put in funding support for here in Queensland. In actual fact—

Mr KRAUSE: That is not the question, Minister.

Ms JONES:—I would argue that it is my responsibility to make sure that, when we are backing an event—a world-class event like this—coming to Queensland, it is my job to sell, sell, sell it and that is exactly what I am doing. In answering your question, just as Leanne has indicated to the committee, I was advised late Friday—the Friday before the 19th—that journalists were making inquiries with quite detailed information that clearly was demonstrating to the people involved that someone—and we do not know who—had provided some information outside what we believed should have been included in the confidentiality agreement. To that end, my understanding is that discussions were held. I was advised that discussions were held both with TEQ and the World Cup. As a consequence, we decided that we should confirm Brisbane's great coup in actually getting the Rugby League World Cup here to Queensland. I believe that the decision for Queensland to own this and for us to announce it was the right decision, rather than it getting printed in the *Daily Telegraph* in Sydney. I am sure that is not what the honourable shadow minister would like for Queensland, either.

Mr KRAUSE: Did the Rugby League World Cup organising committee approve specifically the release of this information by you and TEQ against the provisions of the confidentiality agreement?

Ms JONES: I am happy to answer that. My advice is that TEQ was negotiating, as they do. You can appreciate that, as the minister, I do not, unless I absolutely deem it to be necessary, get involved in those negotiations. In actual fact, TEQ has very good people in that regard.

I can say that I have spoken directly with Michael Brown, who is now no longer at the World Cup, to say that I stand by completely the actions that I took, because my view was that I wanted Queenslanders, in their Queensland newspaper, to hear about this first, not in the *Daily Telegraph* because someone in Sydney had provided some information to the *Daily Telegraph*. Absolutely, I will stand by my strong opinion that the people of Queensland deserve to hear about this first.

Mr KRAUSE: My question was in relation to whether the Rugby League World Cup corporation approved of that disclosure. I understand your answer and that that is the way that you were advised. I ask you again to take on notice, if you would—

Ms JONES: I am happy—

Mr KRAUSE:—confirm positively or negatively whether or not that disclosure was authorised by Rugby League World Cup before it was—

Ms JONES: Sorry, can I answer that question?

Mr KRAUSE: I am finishing my question—before it was released by TEQ? Would you take that question on notice?

Ms JONES: No, I want to answer it now. There are two parts that I want to answer. Firstly, my understanding was that there had been discussions with NRL media and TEQ Media. Furthermore, I had a discussion directly with Michael Brown, who said to me that he understood and supported the action I had taken because, given the circumstances, he believed that it was well within my rights, given that the story had been leaked, he understood the position I was in and understood the action I was taking. Given this announcement was over a week and a half ago, no-one either from the NRL or from the World Cup committee have contacted me to give me other advice counter to the advice that I got directly from Michael Brown in a conversation I had with Michael Brown. If the honourable shadow minister is aware of other advice where the World Cup or, indeed, anyone from the NRL was concerned about those actions, I am very happy for him to talk to me about that, but none of them have contacted me about that. I attended the World Cup launch with the World Cup on the Tuesday, with every man and his dog and every women from the World Cup, but not one of them raised these concerns with me when they had ample opportunity, including around two hours where I was in attendance at Suncorp Stadium with the World Cup representatives, from the CEO to the board of the World Cup—everyone.

Mr KRAUSE: Thanks, Minister. I understand where you are coming from. I take it that the conversation that you had with Mr Brown was after it was put out there by TEQ and your office, as well. Minister, was it specifically leaked by your office or by the department, to give the impression that the Rugby League World Cup games would not be coming to Queensland except for the work that was undertaken by TEQ and by your department?

Ms JONES: Pardon?

Mr KRAUSE: Minister, was it leaked by your office to give the false impression that it would not have happened without you—

Ms JONES: No, absolutely not.

CHAIR: Minister—

Ms JONES: No, I am really happy to answer it. No, absolutely not. As I said, the first I was alerted to it was on the Friday night when, quite frankly, I was pretty angry. I expressed my anger to Michael Brown, not using any inappropriate language, on the Saturday.

Mr KRAUSE: Why was not the Gold Coast, with its more modern stadium, chosen to host any of the regional pool games? It is just a coincidence that all of the games out of Brisbane, six of them, are being held in Labor electorates?

Ms JONES: I am happy to answer. As I said, I was not part of the negotiations on where the games were to be held.

Mr KRAUSE: You were not a part of that negotiation at all? There was no communication between your office and TEQ or between the Treasurer's office?

Ms JONES: I expressed the view that I wanted as many games throughout Queensland as we could obtain. Detailed negotiations were undertaken by our events team with the World Cup.

Mr KRAUSE: You did not express a preference for games on the Gold Coast?

Ms JONES: I expressed a clear preference for as many games as we can, which we have achieved. Eight out of the 28 games that will be held as part of the World Cup will be held in Queensland. As the Minister for Major Events and Tourism—

Mr KRAUSE: But, Minister—

Ms JONES: You are not even the shadow minister for major events. I thought old mate—the member for Clayfield—was.

Mr KRAUSE: The member for Clayfield is sitting next to me.

Ms JONES: I know. He is the major events shadow.

Mr KRAUSE: You just said before that you did not have any communication with TEQ or the organisers about where they were going to be so how did you express a preference for where they were going to be if you had—

Ms JONES: No, I said I was not part of the detailed negotiations. That is not my job. My job is not to pull together—

Mr KRAUSE: But you did express a preference?

Ms JONES: Yes, I said that I expressed a preference for as many games to be held in Queensland, ensuring we optimised the opportunity for Queensland Rugby League fans to attend live games. The honourable member for Townsville is here. I am sure everybody in Townsville is looking forward to it. I had a discussion with Mal Meninga and Cameron Smith at the launch about how excited we are about so many World Cup games—the highest level of Rugby League in the world—going to be played in our backyard, giving what I think are some of the most dedicated fans of Rugby League the opportunity to see games played in my home state of Queensland.

Mr KRAUSE: Of course we support the Rugby League World Cup coming to Queensland, but there are questions about the breach of confidentiality and the location of the games. It is embarrassing that the information about the draw and the location was leaked before the Rugby League World Cup corporation's official launch. Minister, do you accept that promoters and national sports bodies will be reluctant to bring major events to Queensland if they feel they cannot trust the Queensland government—

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert—

Mr KRAUSE:—and TEQ—

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, your question is hypothetical. I ask you to rephrase it so that there is no hypothetical involved, please.

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Chair, I was actually asking whether the minister accepts that promoters and national sports bodies may be reluctant to bring major sports events here because they feel they cannot trust the government—

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert—

Mr KRAUSE:—to honour any agreements, including confidentiality agreements?

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert—

Ms JONES: No-one has raised it with me at all.

CHAIR:—again, I will say very clearly to you that your question to the minister contains a hypothetical. If you cannot rephrase it we will move on to the next question.

Mr NICHOLLS: Point of order, Mr Chair. The questions are questions of the estimates and the policy behind them. This is not the House, where questions to ministers are regulated in relation to hypotheticals. The questions go to policy and policy discussions. Is it a fact that future events are in jeopardy as a result of the government deliberately leaking information ahead of the program time allowed for by Queensland Rugby League.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Clayfield.

Mr NICHOLLS: That is not a hypothetical.

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield, I ask you to cease your interjections.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Chair, you can shout and—

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield, I have warned you to cease your interjections—

Mr NICHOLLS: You can shout and yell as you like—

CHAIR:—otherwise you will be warned under standing order 185—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Chair, we are entitled to ask questions.

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield, I am in the chair at the moment—

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, and we are entitled to ask questions.

CHAIR: You will cease your interjections. Member for Clayfield, you are here—

Mr NICHOLLS: You can run a protection racket again, like your colleagues can, or we can ask questions of the government.

CHAIR: I have made it—

Ms JONES: You are not asking me any questions.

CHAIR:—very clear, member for Clayfield—

Ms JONES: I am happy to answer them.

CHAIR:—that the decision I have made is in relation to the member for Beaudesert. I have made it very clear to him that his question actually involves a hypothetical. If you are dissenting from my ruling, please indicate that to me. Are you dissenting from my ruling?

Mr NICHOLLS: No, I am not dissenting from your ruling.

CHAIR: I have made my ruling. Rephrase the question or please move on to the next question, member for Beaudesert.

Mr KRAUSE: I will move on. Perth has already snatched a State of Origin game from Brisbane. Do you accept that these actions could jeopardise Brisbane hosting an NRL grand final?

Ms JONES: No.

Mr KRAUSE: Given that the confidentiality of these agreements with the Rugby League World Cup have breached—

Ms JONES: I will reject that because you said 'you'. I have already answered that. Under the parliamentary rules you asked me directly whether my office or I leaked it. I answered no, yet you have just implied in your question that I did. I understand that you are the 19th most—

Mr KRAUSE: Are you making a point of order, Minister?

Ms JONES:—senior shadow minister in the opposition, which is how you treat tourism.

Mr KRAUSE: Are you making a point of order, Minister?

Ms JONES: I also understand that the opposition leader of this state—

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Ms JONES:—who actually is the shadow minister for events, is not asking the questions about major events.

CHAIR: There is no point of order, Minister.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair. This is an estimates hearing. The non-government members and the members up here get to ask the questions, not the minister. Given that there has been this leak in relation to the Rugby League World Cup, is there any advice that you have—I will even direct the question to the CEO of TEQ—that the state could be liable for any damages or any issues relating to reputational risk in relation to this contract or any other contract?

Ms JONES: The answer is no.

CHAIR: Again, member for Beaudesert, this is a hypothetical question.

Ms JONES: It is not in the SDS. The answer is no. I have already answered that question.

CHAIR: Minister, you are happy to answer that question?

Ms JONES: Yes. The answer is no. In actual fact, we are seeing more events coming to Queensland. For the very first time we have given Tourism and Events Queensland forward funding so that they can go out there and bid for new events—unlike when the shadow minister for major events was the treasurer—

Mr KRAUSE: Thank you, Minister. I heard your answer.

Ms JONES:—and he refused to fund them into the out years. Right now we are in the best place possible.

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, you need to cease your interjections. The minister is actually answering your questions.

Mr KRAUSE: She has answered the question.

CHAIR: She is answering the question—

Mr DICKSON: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Excuse me. I am still talking. She is answering the question in the way that she sees fit and is entitled to do so. Member for Buderim, you have a point of order?

Mr DICKSON: I recollect that it is only a couple of moments ago that that question was directed to the CEO and not the minister. I cannot understand why the minister is answering on behalf of the CEO. That is inappropriate.

Mr KRAUSE: It was directed to both.

CHAIR: It was directed to both. Minister, have you ceased answering that question?

Ms JONES: Yes. I have answered it clearly.

Mr KRAUSE: I will put the same question to Ms Coddington. Is there any advice about whether the state could be liable for damages or whether there are any reputational issues at stake with this contract or others?

Ms Coddington: No.

Mr KRAUSE: In terms of the breach of confidentiality that has occurred in this case, what is more important for the state—a headline or actually building trust with project proponents and developers, people who want to run events in Queensland, to bring economic benefits to this state?

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, what you have asked is an opinion of the chief executive officer—

Mr KRAUSE: It was actually to the minister.

CHAIR: You have asked an opinion of the minister. Can I get you to rephrase your question so it is not an opinion?

Miss BARTON: On that point of order, I think the shadow minister was asking a very direct question and was not seeking an opinion: which is more important for the minister? That is not seeking an opinion; that is a statement of fact for the minister.

Mr KRAUSE: Getting a headline or actually bringing economic benefits?

CHAIR: I have made my ruling.

Ms JONES: What is important to me is being honest with the people of Queensland. I made it very clear to Michael Brown at the launch, where I stood with Michael Brown and every man and his dog associated with Rugby League in Queensland—all of the greats; as a mad Rugby League fan it was exciting to meet some of my heroes that I had watched growing up—that there was no leak by me or the government.

I made that clear to Michael Brown. Michael Brown acknowledged that. We all stood up together. There was a huge media conference. I understand that we had lots of media exposure not only in Australia but also overseas from the launch last Tuesday. It was a great event. It was really exciting. It was wonderful to see the schoolchildren who were there. It was a wonderful event. I am very excited about the millions of dollars that are going to be generated for the Queensland economy and our communities from us securing the World Cup. I know there are sour grapes in New South Wales, but I do not think that is your issue to prosecute here.

Mr KRAUSE: I refer to page 3 of the SDS in relation to attracting tourism and investment infrastructure to Queensland. Why is Aquis not included in the major tourism and infrastructure development for Cairns when other projects like Queen's Wharf in Brisbane and Great Keppel Island are included in those relevant sections? Is this just another mistake for this investment guide?

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, your question contained an imputation. I will get you to rephrase your question without an imputation at the end.

Mr KRAUSE: Sure. I refer to page 3 of the SDS in relation to attracting tourism and investment infrastructure to Queensland. Why is Aquis not included in the list of major tourism infrastructure development for Cairns when other projects like Queen's Wharf in Brisbane and Great Keppel Island are included in those relevant sections?

Ms JONES: I can answer that question. As the honourable shadow minister would know, the Minister for State Development is the lead minister when it comes to working with Aquis because of the issues involved there. We are continuing to work with Aquis as proponents of the development. We look forward to continuing to work with them to secure investment for the Cairns community. I know in particular that the Treasurer and all honourable members in the Cairns region want to see this go forward. I can assure the honourable member that the state government is working closely with the proponents to get the investment in Cairns.

CHAIR: We move to government questions.

Mr SAUNDERS: With reference to page 3 of the SDS, which outlines the objective of attracting an increasing number of visitors to the state, can the minister please update the committee on the record numbers travelling to Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question. As the Minister for Tourism I work extremely closely with the tourism industry to do all that we can to increase visitor numbers, particularly through our investment through Tourism and Events Queensland. Being in the market and promoting our destination are great ways to secure and attract more visitors to Queensland.

That is why I was deeply concerned when I became the minister to see correspondence from the former chair of the TEQ board who highlighted that the former government had not provided any funding in the forward estimates, despite having a CBRC meeting in December 2014. They decided not to provide any additional funding in the forward years for Tourism and Events Queensland.

Picking up on the comments made in the questions asked by the honourable member for Beaudesert, the biggest risk you can have in negotiating with an events partner is trying to negotiate a new event for Queensland when you have no money in the kitty. That is exactly the position that they were left in under the previous LNP government.

I know that Stephen Gregg named numerous events that were coming up for renewal that the proponents really wanted to see a renewal for in Queensland—otherwise they would be lost—but in good faith they could not enter those negotiations because there was no funding in the forward estimates beyond the 2014-15 year. I note that we have members here who have major events in their electorates. We often negotiate three-year or five-year events. Our program is all about providing funding to build events over the life of the event so they become self-sustaining.

They were left in a position where we could not, in good faith, negotiate with event proponents because they did not have any money to do so. That is the biggest risk to our reputation. Through our investment and promoting tourism and major events to a senior ministry, our government was all about saying that we are going to build this industry because we know that it creates investment and creates jobs in Queensland.

As a part of the state budget, in the SDS you will find that there is \$50 million to continue the four-year funding guarantee of our government for Tourism and Events Queensland. Not only does it ensure that we can negotiate in good faith with event proponents; it also means that we can attract additional visitors, as I highlighted in my opening remarks, through having a very strong tourism campaign in the market.

As a consequence we are seeing increases right across the state. In Townsville we have seen a huge increase in visitor numbers and visitor expenditure. It is up 32 per cent, with more than \$106 million in expenditure. In the Capricorn region we have seen international visitor numbers soar by over 20 per cent, with expenditure of \$108 million. Visitor expenditure in the Sunshine Coast region—I am sure the member for Buderim is very proud; they do a very good job on the Sunshine Coast—grew by 17 per cent and injected \$230 million into the economy. I acknowledge everybody from the tourism industry in that region. Southern Queensland country also experienced a 10 per cent jump, with expenditure of up to \$73 million. In Brisbane we saw international visitor numbers grow by 20 per cent, generating \$108.5 million. The Gold Coast has welcomed more than 949,000 international visitors. That is an increase of 11 per cent. Visitor expenditure grew by 15 per cent, bringing it to a total of \$1.2 billion.

I can advise members that this growth was driven mainly from the US but also Chinese markets. I can also report to the committee that for the first time, as I said earlier, visitors from China have overtaken our traditional strongest visitor country—that is, people coming from New Zealand. This is a huge shift but one that we are working very closely with industry to make sure we capture and deliver real jobs for Queenslanders here.

Mr WILLIAMS: With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the minister outline what the \$33.5 million Advance Queensland: Connecting with Asia strategy will achieve for Queensland tourism?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question. As I highlighted in my answer to the question about who is choosing to come to Queensland and where they are going, there is a record number of Chinese visitors in particular, but also right across Asia, and we are seeing a resurgent Japanese market. I was only meeting with Qantas yesterday where they were saying that they were going to continue to lift their investment into the Japanese market because we are seeing back to the nineties figures. Under our government not only have we seen a record number of international visitors choosing to come to Queensland, as I said, in particular but we are seeing growth in the Chinese visitor market.

The reason I think it was really important that we listen to industry on this one and roll out this funding was that when you think about the size of the prize it is significant. If Queensland could increase its share of the Chinese tourism market by just 0.5 per cent, that would equate to more than half a billion dollars for the Queensland economy—an additional 5,000 jobs in this state. Unashamedly I am going to be chasing that. Leanne, I think you were in China when all of this happened with the World Cup, weren't you?

Ms Coddington: Yes.

Ms JONES: Leanne was in China when the World Cup launch was happening. She is doing her job, targeting the market where we need to be. There is an additional \$33.5 million Connecting with Asia—tourism jobs in the regions package. This is really focused on three key areas: attracting more direct flights to Queensland, building partnerships with Asian cities and also building digital capacity and capability of our businesses. The package sits alongside our \$400 million investment through Tourism and Events Queensland and our funding guarantee that I have already talked about.

Already we have been getting really good feedback from industry about this new package. I think it is important for members to know that people like Julieanne Alroe, for example, from the Brisbane Airports Corporation has said, 'These additional funds will help Queensland secure further capacity from key Asian markets.' Daniel Gschwind from the Queensland Tourism Industry Council has said that he 'particularly welcomed ... the \$33.5 million to grow tourism and attract Asian markets by securing more international air routes, building stronger relationships with targeted Asian cities, growing awareness of Queensland experiences, creating new innovation tourism products, and building the digital capability of Queensland tourism businesses'. Margy Osmond from the Tourism and Transport Forum said, 'The announcement of an extra \$33.5 million over four years to attract more Asian visitors through the Connecting with Asia strategy shows that the Government has been listening to TTF and the tourism industry about the importance of investing in this increasingly important market for Queensland's visitor economy.'

This package will be delivered in collaboration with the tourism industry and will be very much focused on outcomes. It will target key emerging markets in Asia for specific regional Queensland destinations and these destinations, which have shown great results already, will continue to grow. I am happy to go on but happy to answer another question if you like.

Mr WILLIAMS: Again, Minister, with reference to page 3 of the SDS, the \$33.5 million Advance Queensland: Connecting with Asia strategy, can the minister outline what resources will be placed in the market to strengthen relations with targeted cities?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I said, this new program is \$33.5 million additional funding on top of the \$50 million additional funding to secure the Tourism and Events Queensland four-year funding guarantee, which was one of the election commitments that we delivered because we know that the LNP left a \$188 million shortfall in the forward estimates which constrained their ability to market in international markets and also to secure new events. It entails two programs that will connect Queensland's—

Mr Krause interjected.

Ms JONES: I have the letter to Tim Nicholls at the time. It is a new \$30 million over four years competitive Connecting with Asia fund. This is the fund that I have been talking about in my previous answer which is for tourism industry consortia to secure additional funding to support industry partnerships and collaborations for new tourism opportunities in key Asian markets. We had a pretty high-level meeting with a number of tourism heads recently where we talked about where we think there are real opportunities in this regard.

I am also very excited because not only have we given Tourism and Events Queensland their funding guarantee so they can negotiate in good faith but we have also given \$3.5 million, called the Asia boost, to assess and support these consortia in markets. This is about boosting the number of TEQ people we have on the ground in both tier 1 and tier 2 cities throughout Asia. They will be supported by the existing team that we currently already have in Shanghai, Singapore and Tokyo, and they will work to ensure our cities are well serviced in this regard. Is there anything you wanted to add, Leanne? I know that this is something that you really push for.

Ms Coddington: Boosting our resources on the ground in Asia in particular will help us with the amount of marketing that we need to put in and trade development and engagement in Asia. Relationships are very, very important in Asia, as in most of our markets. We need the resources on the ground to be able to build those relationships and then implement our activity well.

Mrs MILLER: On behalf of the workers of Queensland, many of whom are caravanners and campers, will you ensure that caravan parks remain open so that they can continue to enjoy the tourist destinations of Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for her question and agree entirely that that is one of the big parts of tourism, particularly for domestic tourists as well as those who are coming from more established markets where they have come to maybe Queensland or Australia before and are feeling a little more adventurous as they come here more times. We made an election commitment that we are working on with a number of stakeholders in regard to having the Tourism and Transport Strategy, TTS. I am working very closely with the main roads minister and the transport minister to ensure that we provide a more integrated approach to support drive tourism including caravanning. That is definitely part of the discussions we have had. We are hoping to release the new integrated Tourism and Transport Strategy later this year. I can assure the honourable member that the caravanning sector has been consulted as part of the development of that work.

The other thing that I am doing is meeting in August with all of the mayors. We know that a number of new mayors have just been elected and often they have control of caravan parks in their local community. I will be meeting with I think it is 70 new mayors. I could be corrected. I probably should not put a figure in the *Hansard*. I think it was that many when I met with the LGAQ recently. We will be sitting down and talking to them about the importance of fostering tourism opportunities for workers and to create jobs in their community, but caravanning will definitely feature as part of that. There is also \$10 million being spent by the main roads minister in regard to tourism infrastructure along our main roads to make it easier for caravanning across Queensland.

Mr SAUNDERS: With reference to page 3 of the SDS, Minister, can you outline how the government has attracted new direct flights to Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. We are working really hard to attract new flights to Queensland particularly from new markets that we have not had before. The clear example is from Wuhan directly into the Gold Coast. We know that direct flights to international markets really is a game changer when it comes to lifting the number of tourists we are able to attract into Queensland. That is why we committed a funding boost of \$10 million for the aviation attraction investment unit. This money was put in to filling the gap that was left behind when it became clear there was a funding shortfall that was left by the previous government. As part of this we have, as I said in my opening comments, attracted an additional half a million seats for international visitors to come to Queensland. This includes, as I said, the first two times weekly direct services from Wuhan, China, to the Gold Coast, being operated by Jetstar. I was fortunate enough to welcome the very first flight from

Wuhan. I heard that the bulk of passengers on that flight that landed at the Gold Coast airport had never been outside China before. To see their faces and welcome them here personally is something that I will always remember in my lifetime.

We have also been working with Hong Kong Airlines for their first seasonal program of flights which has now increased to year-round scheduled services from Hong Kong to the Gold Coast with connections directly to Cairns; the Qantas three times weekly service between Christchurch and Brisbane, which will increase to four times weekly during a 12-week period; a new daily service between Vancouver and Brisbane operated by Air Canada which commenced in June—once again that was a great launch and we are seeing similar to the Wuhan flight really good take-up of that flight. In actual fact, they think Brisbane might play a key part in providing a new way of connecting to New York through Vancouver using Air Canada.

We have also seen China Eastern Airlines with the new year-round daily Shanghai to Brisbane service which is going to commence in December 2016. That is very exciting and something that I had the privilege of meeting with China Eastern Airlines about. The scheduled increase is a boost to the originally announced three times a week. We are able to go from a three times a week service to a new year-round daily service from Shanghai to Brisbane. These daily flights were secured during the Premier's trade mission to China in April last year.

We have also increased capacity on Singapore Airlines Singapore to Brisbane services with an additional three new flights each week and increased capacity on EVA Air's Taipei to Brisbane service and AirAsia X's Kuala Lumpur to Gold Coast service. Jin Air is also commencing a two times weekly seasonal service from Seoul to Cairns from December this year and February 2017.

I will just finish this answer by quoting Queensland's Tourism Tropical North Queensland's Alex de Waal, whom I think the shadow minister knows well, as well as the shadow minister for events. He said—

The Queensland Government is to be congratulated for its focus and success in securing incremental aviation services. This will certainly help Queensland gain a greater share of the significant demand for our destination from residents in Mainland China and Hong Kong.

As I said, this is creating not only half a million additional seats into Queensland but also creating real jobs in Queensland's regional economies.

CHAIR: I now call the member for Beaudesert.

Mr KRAUSE: Minister, in your previous reply in relation to Aquis, you mentioned that Aquis fell within the remit of another minister—State Development. I understand also that the Queen's Wharf and the ASF Consortium proposal project for the Gold Coast also fall within the portfolio of State Development but they are given quite a coverage in your tourism and infrastructure investment guide. Minister, if Aquis is missing out in your investment guide, has the Palaszczuk government given up on the Aquis project for Cairns?

Ms JONES: No. Very clearly in my previous answer I said that the minister and the whole of government was continuing to work with Aquis to secure that investment. In relation to the SDS, I am advised—and it makes sense to me—that the other two projects are further down the track and that is why they are quoted in the SDS. As I said, the lead minister in working with Aquis to make sure that they can deliver this project and meet the state regulation, as I know that the former treasurer would be well aware, is the state development minister. We have kept the state development minister in charge, as was your decision when you were in government. We have kept it in that portfolio and we will continue to work with them.

Mr KRAUSE: Minister, the Treasurer has said previously that you wanted to speed up the approvals process for Aquis. Who decided not to include reference to Aquis in the 'Major tourism infrastructure development' section in this investment guide? Was it you or did you consult with the Treasurer?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I really do need to explain this to you. Obviously you do not quite understand.

Mr KRAUSE: No. I want to know if you consulted with the Treasurer about the decision that was made.

Ms JONES: No. I am explaining to you why it is not in my SDS and why it is in the SDS of the state development minister.

Mr KRAUSE: This is your investment guide though, Minister, and it is not in there.

Ms JONES: So you are not quoting from the SDS at all?

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, you have asked the minister the question. She will now answer the question for you. Please stop your interjecting.

Mr KRAUSE: There are six words in there, Chair.

Ms JONES: Sorry, I thought he was quoting from the SDS, which is the practice of estimates committees. You are not?

Mr KRAUSE: Minister, I am referring to your tourism investment guide, which is put out, with your foreword in the front of it on one of the early pages, by your department. I am asking why there is not a reference to Aquis in there and did you consult with the Treasurer about not putting it in there?

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, is there a reference specifically to the Appropriation Bill?

Mr KRAUSE: Chair, there is no need for a reference to an SDS to be made.

CHAIR: There is, member for Beaudesert.

Mr KRAUSE: No, there is not. I am referring to the minister's portfolio of tourism and her tourism infrastructure investment guide. I understand she may not know what is in there because we are up to version 5. There have been four versions pulped before.

Ms JONES: And I have worked out that you are the 20th junior minister.

CHAIR: Minister, one moment, please.

Mr KRAUSE: It is page 4, Chair.

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, stop interrupting the chair. I will make it very clear to you: the purpose of estimates is to examine the Appropriation Bill. You need to direct your questions during the entire hearing to the Appropriation Bill. Is there a reference?

Mr KRAUSE: Page 4 of the SDS.

CHAIR: Member for Beaudesert, could you highlight specifically where on page 4?

Mr KRAUSE: 'Attract and coordinate government support for the delivery of major events' and also 'work in partnership with industry to increase the ability of the tourism sector to be more competitive in global and domestic markets'. This guide is put out to attract investment in those markets. I still have not had an answer to my question, Chair.

Ms JONES: He was ruling on whether it was appropriate, and I am happy to answer it, but if you want to be the chair as well as the shadow minister for events you can take on all three jobs.

CHAIR: Minister, I do not need your assistance.

Ms JONES: The guide highlights and showcases a number of different opportunities here in Queensland. The guide has demonstrated a number of examples of the investment being made in Queensland, and that was decided through the tourism department.

Mr KRAUSE: Did you consult with the Treasurer about the decision to leave Aquis out of your tourism infrastructure investment guide?

Ms JONES: I do not know why I would. It was developed by my agency to showcase tourism investment in Queensland. I am the Minister for Tourism. I do not need approval from the Treasurer for what I do in my portfolio. I make decisions for my portfolio. That is why I am sitting here answering questions about my portfolio.

Mr NICHOLLS: I want to ask some questions of Ms Coddington in relation to attracting and securing events for Queensland. Ms Coddington, can you provide us with a list of the major events to receive funding from TEQ in the 2015-16 and 2016-17 financial years separated by the event and the amount? I am comfortable, if that is a fairly lengthy list, for you to take that on notice and provide it to us a little later.

Ms JONES: We have already provided that answer in question on notice No. 18.

Mr NICHOLLS: I would like to ask a question about the comments made by the minister just a moment ago in relation to events and event funding. I notice that, in terms of the Queensland tourism events guarantee, most of that funding—over \$47 million—is way out in the forward estimates, in 2019-20. How does that provide you with certainty for the current year, the next year and the year after that?

Ms JONES: Can I please answer this? No, you have to answer it; he directed it to you.

Ms Coddington: We have a \$100 million budget for Tourism and Events Queensland in each of the forward four years. That additional funding was in the fourth year, so we have certainty of funding all the way through.

Mr NICHOLLS: How does that provide you—

Ms JONES: Because they are getting \$100 million a year, each and every year.

Mr NICHOLLS: Kate, if you would like to ask and answer your own questions, go right ahead. I am sure it would be illuminating!

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield! Minister, please allow members to ask their questions before you launch into your answer. Member for Clayfield, do you have a question?

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Chair. In terms of that funding, which is not available until four years hence, of \$47.2 million, despite the minister's moans and groans to you, can you tell us what additional events you expect that funding to cover in 2019-20? \$50 million in 2019-20 is a lot of money. What events are you proposing for that year?

Ms Coddington: With the money that we receive, we work on negotiating events now for the forward four years, and we continue to do that over the period of time. For events that we negotiate in the future, obviously we are confidential about those until we secure those events, but the funding that we have enables us to continue to work with event proponents in good faith to bring those events to Queensland.

Mr NICHOLLS: Having that funding in the budget allows you to secure those events; is that your proposition?

Ms Coddington: Yes.

Mr NICHOLLS: I want to take you back to my first question. I asked about funding for the 2015-16 and the 2016-17 financial years. The minister is correct: the funding for 2015-16 was in the questions on notice. Have you got details for 2016-17, which was the second part of my question?

Ms JONES: We can get that.

Ms Coddington: We can get that information for events up until now that have been secured, for the first few months of this year.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy to take that on notice?

Ms JONES: Yes. The point is that we are still in negotiations for other events. There are a number of events—which is going to the heart of why you put forward funding in—that are three-year or five-year contracts. That is why it is really important for the member for Clayfield, a former treasurer, to understand that having funding allocated in the out years means that you can negotiate an event for three to five years—

Mr NICHOLLS: Chair, I do not recall asking the minister a question in the last two minutes or so. If we are going to have statements—

Ms JONES: I find it startling that you do not know why we filled the funding gap that you delivered in the fourth year.

CHAIR: Order, Minister and member for Clayfield!

Ms JONES: Startling!

CHAIR: Minister, we have taken that on notice now. I invite the member for Clayfield to ask another question.

Mr NICHOLLS: I would like to make a statement if I could, Mr Chair, given the minister's predilection for going down that course without having a question directed to her. Ms Coddington, in relation to the V8 Supercars event, can you advise how much the government is proposing to spend on the V8 Supercars races for Townsville and the Gold Coast until 2019?

Ms Coddington: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I mentioned earlier when asked a question about the funding, our contracts are commercial-in-confidence and therefore I am unable to provide that answer.

Mr NICHOLLS: Ms Coddington, that is the invariable practice and requirement when you negotiate these deals—for example, in terms of Rugby League, you are unable to say how much that is. That is also the case in relation to the V8s?

Ms Coddington: Yes. Every major event that we negotiate is commercial-in-confidence. It is the practice that has been maintained over a long period of time—

Ms JONES: Including when you were treasurer.

Ms Coddington:—and it is the practice across the country as well. It maintains a sense of competitiveness for us against our other competitor states.

Mr NICHOLLS: In those circumstances, can you explain how in the 2014-15 budget the V8 Supercars funding was expressly provided as a budget measure providing \$2.9 million in 2014-15—

Ms JONES: That is your budget. 2014-15 was your budget.

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield, I will redirect you—

Ms JONES: You were the treasurer! You tell me why you put it in there. It was 2014-15.

CHAIR: Minister! Member for Clayfield, your questions need to be on the current budget.

Mr NICHOLLS: My question was in relation to the costs of the V8 Supercars. The answer was that the details are not released. It was the advice that the details are continually not released. It was the practice of the previous government and other governments not to release it. My simple question is: how is that the case given that in the last budget before this government funding of \$12.3 million to V8 Supercars—

Ms JONES: You were the treasurer at the time—

Mr NICHOLLS:—was put in the budget measures as expenditure but now cannot be disclosed because of some confidentiality agreement? Is it not the case that the people of Queensland need to know how much is being paid to a multimillion dollar organisation for expenditure—

Ms JONES: We are not debating the 2014-15 budget papers last time I checked; it is 2016. I know you would prefer to go back to 2014.

CHAIR: Minister! Member for Clayfield, we have had the answer to your question.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Chair—

CHAIR: Just wait until I have concluded my statement. You have had the answer given to that particular question that it is in confidence and cannot be released and will not be released.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Chair, I am entitled to probe and I am entitled to ask questions about the expenditure of the government this year in relation to these events.

CHAIR: Correct.

Mr NICHOLLS: I have pointed out that the answer given in relation to the question I asked and the explanation given do not hold water because the details have been previously released in previous budgets. I think taxpayers are entitled to know how much of their money is being spent on an organisation in order to bring two races to Queensland over the next three years. I am simply asking how much money is there, and is it not the case that in previous years the funding has been released, contrary to what has been provided in evidence to a committee of this parliament?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Clayfield.

Ms Coddington: I thank the honourable member for the question. My understanding of the time, which was before I was CEO of the organisation, is that that was a special allocation that was made by Treasury to the organisation to secure that previous contract and it was a portion of the total budget. It was not disclosing the total contracted amount. The contracted amounts that we secure major events with are treated as commercial-in-confidence.

Mr NICHOLLS: In terms of the funding for V8 Supercars, and given that the funding arrangement and the agreement was reached at the death knell, on 30 June by all reports, where is the funding for this project? Is it included in the funding that you have already referred to and referenced—that is, the funding of your budget over the forward estimates? It comes out of that funding pool, does it?

Ms Coddington: Correct.

Mr NICHOLLS: That is all we wanted to know—where the money is coming from. We did want to know how much it is.

Ms JONES: It comes with the events budget. That is because it is a major event.

CHAIR: Next question, please, member for Clayfield.

Mr NICHOLLS: Ms Coddington, how are events progressing in terms of the Ipswich race? Is that something that you are involved in, or is that something that is only going to be dealt with by the City of Ipswich?

Ms Coddington: In recognition of Ipswich City Council's desire to establish a long-term contract directly with the V8 Supercars, TEQ and Ipswich City Council have agreed that Ipswich City Council will lead negotiations with V8 Supercars to secure the Ipswich SuperSprint into the future. As such, the event will no longer form part of TEQ's agreement with V8 Supercars from 2017 and TEQ will work with Ipswich City Council regarding future marketing support for the event.

Mr NICHOLLS: I now turn to something slightly different from V8 Supercars. I refer to page 36 of the SDS and the role that TEQ plays in attracting and securing major events to Queensland. Can you confirm that the funding for Brisbane Baroque was originally provided through Arts Queensland and has subsequently been provided by Tourism and Events Queensland?

Ms Coddington: The Brisbane Baroque was funded by Tourism and Events Queensland.

Mr NICHOLLS: Not previously by Arts Queensland? You can come back to us if you want to.

Ms Coddington: I would have to clear that answer.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy to take that on notice?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Mr NICHOLLS: You have confirmed that it is funded by Tourism and Events Queensland. Can you tell us how much funding is provided to Brisbane Baroque for their three-year contract, as I understand it, by Tourism and Events Queensland?

Ms Coddington: Similar to previous answers, that contracted amount is commercial-in-confidence.

Mr NICHOLLS: In terms of that contract, have you or TEQ been in contact with the executive director, Mr Jarrod Carland, about what is happening including reports of artists and performers not being paid for their work some number of months after they were due?

Ms Coddington: It has been publicly reported that Brisbane Baroque is under threat of being discontinued after the company failed to pay creditors following the second year of operation in April 2016. TEQ currently has a contract in place until 2017, and due diligence was undertaken prior to the contract. TEQ is currently reviewing that contract, and details, as I said, of the event investment are commercial-in-confidence.

Mr NICHOLLS: Has anyone from TEQ attempted to contact Mr Carland in order to find out what is happening with the unknown amount of money which has not been paid to an unknown number of creditors?

Ms Coddington: TEQ has no financial authority over the event. Our responsibility is to ensure that our contract with the event is fulfilled and that it is managed in the appropriate way, which is what we are doing. We will make the appropriate contact with the event organiser to pursue that in the right way. As I said, we are currently reviewing the contract.

Mr NICHOLLS: I will go back to my question. Has any attempt been made to contact the event organiser to ascertain what is happening in terms of making sure that artists have been paid given that the Queensland government has funded, through TEQ, the provision of this event including, I would think, some component—although we do not know—of ensuring the artists receive their due recompense? I say, in doing so, congratulations to all those artists who won at the Helpmann Awards last night. They need to know though, more than their recognition, that they are going to get paid.

Ms Coddington: As I said previously, our responsibility is to ensure that the contract that Tourism and Events Queensland has with the event is managed in the appropriate way. We are currently reviewing that contract. We have made attempts to talk to the event organiser and the people who run that event. We will, in due course, deal with that contract in the appropriate way.

Mr NICHOLLS: If I go back to my question, it is the case then that you have said you have made attempts to contact the organisers—

Ms Coddington: We have made attempts.

Mr NICHOLLS:—but have been unsuccessful so far? Are they refusing to contact you? Are they refusing to take your calls?

Ms Coddington: From what I understand, there are personal issues with regard to the event organiser which makes it impossible for him to be in contact with us at this point in time.

Mr NICHOLLS: Can I ask when will you receive a proper accounting and acquittal for the taxpayers' funding that has gone into the Brisbane Baroque Festival paid to Brisbane Baroque Limited?

Ms Coddington: As I said, we are currently working through the contract and reviewing it. In due course we will work through that contract.

CHAIR: Member for Pumicestone.

Mr WILLIAMS: With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the minister outline how the government is leveraging partnerships with airlines to attract more visitors to Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is in relation to how we are working with Qantas in regards to the work that they are doing. I met with Qantas yesterday and I can announce to all members here that we are entering into a new \$10 million partnership with Qantas in regards to promoting Queensland to the market. In particular, there is going to be a focus on their strong markets—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Ms JONES: That is right, because this is an event. Now that I have taken that interjection, let me answer this. We just saw the member who was the former treasurer of Queensland who delivered the 2014-15 budget ask questions about the 2014-15 budget in which he gave a special allocation from the Treasury directly to Tourism and Events Queensland. That was Tim's decision. Here he is asking me about his budget.

Mr NICHOLLS: I know more about your budget than you do.

Ms JONES: I do not know anything about the 2014-15 budget except for that it cut thousands of Public Service people who ended up voting for me at the next election because you promised them that you would not cut their jobs and they would not be under threat.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Let's come back to the question asked, please.

Ms JONES: I took an interjection which was the relevance. With regard to our Qantas partnership deal, what we said was that we would continue to work with Qantas. They are an extremely well respected company in Australia, recognised internationally, globally and here. This MOU builds on the strong MOU that we already have with Qantas to promote Queensland. This is in line with what other states are doing and also with Tourism Australia. We believe that this will generate many thousands of visitors choosing to come to Queensland. I support it and I look forward to continuing to work with Qantas.

Mr SAUNDERS: Minister, with reference to page 36 of the SDS, how is Tourism and Events Queensland using digital marketing to grow tourism?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. Digital marketing is one of those issues that has been a real focus of our government. The statistic is that less than 16 per cent of people overseas can book online with many of the Queensland tourism businesses and offerings that we have here. In order to grow the opportunity, particularly for people in those Asian markets where we are seeing that record growth, we need to work with industry to build our digital presence in those communities. For example, in China we know that the bulk of people book their overseas holidays by researching online using Weibo, for example, and other devices to try to decide their holiday destination. When you consider that only 16 per cent of tourism businesses at the moment are even visible to this international market online, we believe that partnering with industry and working to build that digital capability is a really strong way that we can once again grow international visitors choosing to come to Queensland. Explicitly, we have said in relation to our aviation attraction fund that we would focus on digital. This is something where I expect we will see significant growth.

CHAIR: Minister, with reference to page 3 of the SDS, which mentions ecotourism investment, what is the government doing to deliver ecotourism opportunities in Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am a firm believer that not only in addition to building our digital capability but also in regard to the unique offering that we have here in Queensland—and I know the former minister for national parks is also a big believer in this—ecotourism in Queensland is going to be a growth industry for us in this state. As a former minister for national parks myself, we opened the door on saying that we wanted to allow for the very first time a greater investment of commercial activity on national parks. I am very pleased to see that this week the national parks minister and environment minister has just announced a new opportunity in regard to the Turner

family and the Scenic Rim opportunity there. The Turner family have said that they welcome the opportunity to work with the government and the community to implement long-term land management efforts that will protect and preserve this national asset for the future while allowing more people to enjoy it. As you know, we believe that, unlike the former government that spent 2½ years talking about it, we finally now have a major step forward on delivering the first new—

Mr DICKSON: Point of order. Mr Chairman, I would like clarification relating to the minister's statements about the previous government taking 2½ years to deliver this. I know that this government now is delivering all of the hard work that we put in place—

CHAIR: Member for Buderim, what is your point of order?

Mr DICKSON: We are grateful for that outcome.

Ms JONES: Thank you. I withdraw anything he finds offensive. I think we are at one in saying we want to see more investment in ecotourism. We saw the announcement on Friday that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has now given the green light to the Turner family, owners of the Spicers Group, to move forward with their proposal of the Scenic Rim trail. In my view this is heralding a new era of working with the ecotourism industry to deliver high-quality, sustainable tourism experiences that showcase the beauty of our state. This is proof that when industry and government work together we can provide new opportunities for investment in ecotourism. I expect that we will continue. There are a number of other projects that our officers are working with because I have made it very clear, as the minister with experience of having been an environment minister previously, that providing new opportunities on or adjacent to national parks will deliver additional tourism experiences. I welcome this major step forward on Friday with the Turner family.

Mr WILLIAMS: With reference to page 39 of the SDS, can the minister outline the benefit of the four-year tourism funding guarantee?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question because this gives me an opportunity to outline and answer some of the questions that the former treasurer did not feel comfortable asking of me, which is why is it that we have put in additional funding in the 2019-20 year of \$48 million and how is that going to impact on the next two financial years? The answer is simple: every major event negotiation that I have seen since I have been the minister—and I imagine as the shadow minister for major events and also as the former treasurer, he would be fully aware that a lot of major events happen over a three- to five-year time frame; some are two years, but the bulk are multiyear agreements that are done—we put that money in the outyear. I am happy to table them again. I tabled them last estimates and I have tabled them in the parliament, so I thought everybody would be familiar with them.

When you look at the forward estimates under the former government for tourism and events funding, it has been around \$100 million a year until after the 2014-15 year, where it goes like this. That was never disclosed to the people of Queensland before we went to the ballot box in 2015. In actual fact, we had a government going to the ballot box saying that they were prioritising tourism and that tourism was a pillar of their government only to discover that that pillar was really just a couple of bricks this high because the funding was actually falling away like that. It falls like this, which is why it started here and over the outward estimates it goes down like this. We have had to inject funding up like this to cater for that growth, to get us to the \$100 million a year. That is why in the forward estimates you see a scaling up of the funding in the outyears as we fill the gap created by the former treasurer when he was treasurer, which went down, down, down and down.

I am very pleased that now I am sitting here before you as a Minister for Tourism that takes tourism seriously, that I am part of a government that does not just talk about tourism but puts our money where our mouth is and that I am part of a government that has a Treasurer who actually says that when we are going to have a four-year funding guarantee, 'Hey, guess what we do? We put it in the forward estimates.' It is real money in the forward estimates, unlike what the former treasurer did, who uncharacteristically has been very silent because he knows that what I am saying is absolute fact.

Secondly, we have put the funding back into the forward years so that Tourism and Events Queensland can do their job. Leanne Coddington and her great team—and I acknowledge a number of her staff who are here today—can go out there and negotiate and bring new events to Queensland like the rugby World Cup. They can go out there and market Queensland to a growing international market of people who want to travel around the world. We are out there with the dough to say, 'You know what? Come to Queensland, the best holiday vacation destination and business destination in the world.' That is why we can negotiate with people like Qantas to say, 'You know what? Let's do a three-year funding agreement,' so we can work in partnership and leverage off both of our brands to

get more international visitors to our state. That is why we went to the election very clearly saying that we were going to deliver a four-year funding guarantee—and that is exactly what we have done. I am excited about it. I am proud of it and I will sing it from the rooftops any opportunity I get.

CHAIR: I have a question for you. Page 36 of the SDS refers to strengthening Queensland's events calendar. Can the minister please outline what new events have been secured for 2015-16?

Ms JONES: Once again, because we have the four-year funding guarantee we are securing major events for Queensland. Events are key drivers of visitors to our state. We know that every dollar that we spend on events returns \$15 to Queensland. That is why we are looking forward to attracting new events to our state.

In 2015-16 TEQ supported over 45 major events including the Gold Coast Airport Marathon, which drew a record number of entries this year, including my brother who came up from Victoria and joined my husband and me to compete. He got a PB, as did my husband. I am just going to embarrass him on the record and say that my husband got a personal best as well. I did not run; I just did the starter gun and met them at the finish line. There were more than 3,000 competitors from more than 59 countries and it is estimated that more than 7,000 international visitors travelled to the Gold Coast for this event. I had the opportunity of being down the Gold Coast during this time. I am sure the member for Broadwater would say that it is a hive of activity. It is a really exciting time to be on the Gold Coast during the Gold Coast Airport Marathon event.

The Brisbane International was held earlier this year. I had the pleasure of welcoming Roger Federer to Brisbane for the tournament, which attracts more than 1,000 attendees. We have also had the NRL double-header, which was a sold-out event, drawing more than 52,000 fans to Suncorp Stadium. That was a huge event. We saw lots of economic activity across Brisbane as people came to join in that.

As the chair knows, in Townsville we have also had the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville and in Cairns we have had the Great Barrier Reef Masters—two major events in North Queensland. As we have already talked about here today, there has also been the supercar events across Queensland. As you know, last month I did join with the supercar CEO, James Warburton, to announce that our government will continue, through Tourism and Events Queensland, to secure these events for the next three years at the Gold Coast and Townsville. We believe that these events alone will attract around 200,000 visitor nights and generate more than \$80 million in economic benefit each year.

There are 79 destination events as well including the Bleach Festival on the Gold Coast, which I know that Gold Coast members are very familiar with—it is a popular event—and the Scenic Rim Eat Local Week, which I know the opposition spokesperson for tourism is a major fan of. This year I have also announced that Queensland has secured new major events which will be added to our calendar. One that I know honourable members will be very keen to be part of is the Ironman Asia Pacific Championships in Cairns, so members have time to train and participate in that. As a proud Queenslanders I was especially pleased that this year we won this event from Melbourne, where it has been hosted since 2012. This is a good example of how we have worked closely to secure a new major event for Queensland. What is exciting about this is that we are seeing many more Asian countries wanting to participate in the ironman, particularly the Chinese, so we think that having it in Cairns is a good fit to grow visitors to that part of Australia.

Earlier this month I announced that Queensland will host the Rugby League World Cup. As I said, this will generate millions of dollars for the Queensland economy and is a huge coup for Queensland. I wish I had brought to estimates Saturday's *Daily Telegraph* in that regard, which demonstrates that someone had leaked it, so there you go. If the accusation at the beginning of estimates was that I leaked it, the question is: why on earth would I leak it to the Sydney press? This is a major coup for Queensland and will focus the attention of millions of Rugby League fans on Queensland. The games at Suncorp Stadium are expected to sell out. It will attract tens of thousands of visitors from interstate and internationally and we expect around 120,000 visitor nights. As the member for Broadwater would know, we announced the Blues on Broadbeach Music Festival. It has been confirmed as the largest festival after delivering record visitor numbers in 2016. As you can see, we are delivering major events right across this state.

CHAIR: I will now take questions from the member for Clayfield.

Mr NICHOLLS: I return to Brisbane Baroque and the line of questioning we were following there. I direct my question to Ms Coddington. I was asking questions about steps being taken to contact Mr Carland in relation to reports of non-payment and those types of things. You indicated that there

were personal matters around that. I noticed, though, that Mr Carland's business partner was actually physically able to be at the Helpmann Awards last night to receive awards; Mr Schofield, the artistic director, refused to do so. Has any effort been made to contact Mr Shannon Pigram in relation to that so that we have an answer to these outstanding questions and so that artists can be paid?

Ms Coddington: I can confirm that TEQ has been in contact with the event representative, Shannon Pigram.

Mr NICHOLLS: Has he been able to provide satisfaction to TEQ about the acquittal of their funds? What questions have they asked of him to ensure that artists are paid?

Ms Coddington: As I have said earlier, TEQ has no financial authority over the event. We are working through our contract and we are reviewing that contract, and in due course we will make a decision on that contract.

Mr NICHOLLS: In the event that you do not receive satisfactory answers, will Brisbane Baroque be on the events calendar for next year?

Ms Coddington: We will continue to work through the contract and use our best efforts to ensure that that event has a future here in Queensland. It has been very successful, as you mentioned earlier, with the Helpmann Awards it has received.

Mr NICHOLLS: It has certainly been successful in an artistic sense. I think you would have to say that in a financial sense, with unpaid artists and an unpaid artistic director of the calibre of Leo Schofield, and with TEQ using it, if you like, as a showpiece for events here in Queensland, it is not unreasonable to expect that TEQ would say, 'Pay the artists and pay the money that is due, otherwise we are not going to give you money for next year.' Is that an option that is live under the existing contract?

CHAIR: Member for Clayfield, I find that your question is hypothetical. Can you rephrase the question, please?

Mr NICHOLLS: Does the contract contain a clause that allows you to terminate it for non-performance, and is that something that you can do?

Ms Coddington: As I said, we are reviewing the contract currently and we will do what is right for TEQ and the Queensland government with regard to that contract, and then we will pursue appropriate events for the future if required.

Mr NICHOLLS: With respect, that is not the question I asked. The question was in terms of the expenditure of funds. Does the contract allow for termination by TEQ for non-payment of funds or for failing to acquit or for reputational failure?

Ms Coddington: We contract with the event proponent to deliver certain aspects for that event and, as I said, we are reviewing those aspects against the contract and in due course we will make a decision as to the future of the contract.

Mr NICHOLLS: In terms of the negotiations, have you sought assurances from the organisers of Brisbane Baroque—at least the one that you have been able to contact—that they will be able to deliver the performance next year? Are they financially in a position to deliver it to your satisfaction?

Ms Coddington: In the first instance we need to work through the delivery of the current year and what has happened this year, and then we will look at next year's performance. We need to look at this year's performance first.

Mr NICHOLLS: I understand that. My question is: in terms of the expenditure of the funds and the allocation of the funds from within your budget, have you sought assurances from Brisbane Baroque that they will be able to financially provide a performance next year that is worthy of the support of TEQ under your contract?

Ms Coddington: We would do that prior to continuing the contract into next year.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes. You have a three-year contract underway now.

Ms Coddington: We review every year's contract.

Mr NICHOLLS: Have you sought assurances from them that they are in a financial position to do so?

Ms Coddington: We have not yet got to the stage of talking about next year's event. We need to close this year's event first.

Mr NICHOLLS: When did you become aware that people were not being paid and that action needed to be taken?

Ms Coddington: I cannot tell you exactly the date that we would have been aware of that, but at the same time that that was in the public realm we would have been made aware around the same time.

Mr NICHOLLS: Newspaper and other reports are around about 15 July. Would it be earlier than 15 July, do you believe?

Ms Coddington: I am unable to answer that question at this point.

Mr NICHOLLS: Is it the case, then, if I put this to you, that at this stage you have only been able to contact Mr Pigram; you have not yet sought financial assurances that they will be able to deliver the third year; and you are not yet sure of whether the artists who are owed money will be paid. Is that correct?

Ms Coddington: That is not quite what I said.

Mr NICHOLLS: I know this is difficult, but this is important.

Ms Coddington: We obviously have contract obligations that we need to work through. We are working through those contract obligations as we speak. Obviously, we have no financial authority over the event. The work that we understand is being done to assist the artists is work that is being done by various people associated with the event. With regard to our contract, our obligation is to ensure that that contract is delivered appropriately, and that is what we are focusing on now. We will make a decision in the near future as to the future of the contract. With regard to the question you asked earlier about Arts Queensland, we are advised that Arts Queensland provided support, but details of that support would have to be raised with them.

Mr KRAUSE: Minister, I refer to page 10 of the SDS for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, in particular in relation to the 2015-16 year, which is shown in this year's SDS, and I ask: why was there an underspend of almost \$50 million for tourism and events development in 2015-16?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. The bulk of that money is associated with the Commonwealth Games. The Commonwealth Games are included in the tourism and events budget. The Commonwealth Games minister will be appearing later this week and you can ask him that.

Mr SAUNDERS: Can the minister outline how Queensland's participation in the Australian Tourism Exchange aligns with the objectives of Tourism and Events Queensland as mentioned on page 36 of the SDS?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. One of the huge events that happened that year for tourism in Queensland was the Australian Tourism Exchange. I attended the one in Victoria last year, but I have to say that it was a hell of a lot better here in Queensland. The Australian Tourism Exchange was held on the Gold Coast, and can I say that I think it was the largest tourism exchange they have had in a number of years, or ever. I sound like Tom Tait. Tom Tait says it is the largest ever, so let's go with what Tom Tait said publicly. It is a massive win for the Gold Coast and the Gold Coast community. Even Tourism Australia's managing director, John O'Sullivan, agreed and is on record as saying that this is a massive opportunity for the Gold Coast. We saw a number of delegates, and delegates I spoke to at ATE extended their stay at the Gold Coast because of the Broadwater festival that was happening the weekend after. It was very exciting to be there. ATE delegates definitely got a taste of the Gold Coast, which is famous for fun, and it perfectly pairs with the marketing that is happening at the national level with regard to shining the spotlight on Australia's coastal and aquatic environments. In the longer term it will build future tourism, as international buyers got a firsthand experience of the destination there.

It was very exciting for us from a whole-of-government perspective to have literally 2,300 delegates, including up to 800 international travel buyers from over 30 countries around the world, come to the Gold Coast and get a taste of the Gold Coast leading into the Commonwealth Games in 2018. This was a great success and it was really well attended. We even had Thor pop in—Chris Hemsworth—because through Commonwealth Games funding and working with Warner Bros we were able to secure the new sound stage, which I believe went up in July, which meant that we have been able to attract new films and re-enliven the film industry on the Gold Coast. I know that is something the Premier is very passionate about because not only does it create jobs for people working in the film industry, particularly on the Gold Coast and across South-East Queensland; it means we get the

exposure that having international superstars here in Queensland brings. Most people would know that Taylor Swift has been holidaying on the Gold Coast recently. There you go, Amy: I worked in Taylor Swift for you.

The benefits for Queensland tourism are huge. For example, we had some 80 first-timers, like Kaylene Whitley from Rainforest Tours, who said that she has experienced nothing like ATE before. This is an event which delivered an amazing result for this growing Queensland tourism business heading into the event and set her expectations going forward.

Mr WILLIAMS: With reference to page 5 of the SDS, what have been the achievements of the Tourism Investment Attraction Unit in 2015-16?

Ms JONES: Thank you so much for the question, because I really want to talk up the great work that the Tourism Investment Attraction Unit is doing. In actual fact, I will give credit where it is due. Despite the fact that 20 per cent of the DTSBI workforce were cut under the former member for Clayfield, I will acknowledge that the staff took it upon themselves to be forward thinking. They quarantined the investment unit—not at the direction of the minister, not at the direction of the Treasurer and not at the direction of the Premier. They were quite happy to say on the one hand that it was going to be a pillar, but then they cut 20 per cent of the workforce with the other. To their credit I acknowledge the public servants today. They knew, thinking forward, that they had to protect the number of staff working in the tourism attraction unit, and I thank them for their leadership—leadership that was failed by the LNP. That has delivered, as we know right now, more than \$12 billion worth of tourism investment which is either underway or in the pipeline for new capital works and investment here in Queensland. I am so excited that as a consequence of that we are seeing many people choosing to visit Queensland to work with our Tourism Investment Attraction Unit to deliver new infrastructure here. That is why this is a unit that is punching above its weight, and the SDS clearly talks about it.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with the committee some of the significant tourism infrastructure projects that have been progressed this financial year: the opening of the new Rydges RNA, a \$50 million investment led by the Denwol Group; and the opening of the \$100 million Ibis Brisbane on Elizabeth Street that I was proud to be part of. This is where our unit did make a difference, so they are doing a great job. I am happy to work with them, and I want to thank them publicly for their work.

CHAIR: The time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the areas of responsibility administered by the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events has expired. On behalf of the committee, Minister, I thank you, your directors-general and officials for their attendance. The transcript of this session of the hearing will be available on the Hansard page of the parliamentary website within two hours. I think there are some questions taken on notice. I remind you that the deadline for questions taken on notice and clarifying material is by 5 pm on Thursday, 28 July.

Ms JONES: Thank you, Chair, members of the committee and also all of the support staff who have worked today during our time at estimates. I thank you for your work and support.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. The committee will now adjourn for afternoon tea. The hearing will resume at 3.30 with the examination of estimates for the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business.

Proceedings suspended from 3.15 pm to 3.30 pm

**ESTIMATES—EDUCATION, TOURISM, INNOVATION AND SMALL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE—INNOVATION, SCIENCE, DIGITAL ECONOMY AND SCIENCE****In Attendance**

Hon. LM Enoch, Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business

Mr S Gay, Chief of Staff

Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation

Mr J Merrick, Director-General

Mr E Hill, Chief Change and Operations Officer

Mr D Short, Chief Finance Officer

Ms I Violet, Assistant Director-General, Queensland Shared Services

Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

Ms M Houghton, Director-General

CHAIR: I declare the estimates hearing for the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee open. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which parliament stands. I am Scott Stewart, member for Townsville and chair of the committee. Miss Verity Barton, member for Broadwater, is the deputy chair. Other committee members include: Mr Mark Boothman, member for Albert; Mr Steve Dickson, member for Buderim; Mr Bruce Saunders, member for Maryborough; and Mr Rick Williams, member for Pumicestone. The committee has resolved that non-committee members be given leave to attend and ask questions during the hearing. Those members may be present over the course of the proceedings. Visiting members include: Mr Tim Nicholls, member for Clayfield; Deb Frecklington, member for Nanango; Jeff Seeney, member for Callide; Tracy Davis, member for Aspley; Jon Krause, member for Beaudesert; John-Paul Langbroek, member for Surfers Paradise; Tarnya Smith, member for Mount Ommaney; Scott Emerson, member for Indooroopilly; and Jo-Ann Miller, member for Bundamba.

The committee has resolved that the whole of the proceedings of the committee may be broadcast in line with conditions of broadcasters and guidelines for camera operators which are available from one of the parliamentary attendants in the room. I ask that all mobile phones please be either switched off or turned to silent mode. Also, I should remind you that food and drink is not permitted within the chamber either.

This afternoon the committee will examine the areas of responsibility of the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business in the order outlined in the program hearing. The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2016 for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business. The committee will examine the minister's portfolio area of Innovation, Science and Digital Economy from 3.30 pm to 5.00 p.m. and then examine the portfolio area of Small Business from 5.00 pm to 6.00 p.m.

I remind those present today that these proceedings are similar to parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of parliament. I remind members of the public that under standing orders the public may be admitted to or excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules and questions that apply for parliament apply here. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 and, therefore, questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles or argument or opinion.

I intend to guide proceedings today so that relevant issues can be explored without imposing artificial time limits and to ensure that there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee. Where necessary, I will remind ministers, directors-general, CEOs and their advisors that their answers to questions should be finalised so that

other issues can be examined. On behalf of the committee, I welcome the minister and director-general, officials and members of the public to the hearing.

For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time—and only necessarily the first time—when answering questions referred to them by the minister or the director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the area of responsibility of Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Would the minister care to make a brief opening statement? The committee has resolved that ministers may make an opening statement of up to five minutes.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Chair, and members of the committee. As Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy I am proud to lead the Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland initiative, a plan that is diversifying our economy and preparing our state for a prosperous future. Advance Queensland is inspiring people from across the state through programs that are making a difference with more collaborative research, new investment and international partnerships. By linking researchers with industry and supporting great ideas into action, in areas like agriculture, resources, health care and environmental protection, we are ensuring our state can meet challenges it faces now and into the future. Our government has already set an absolutely cracking pace in delivering our Advance Queensland program and I thank the director-general Jamie Merrick and of course all of the team for all their hard work in meeting those expectations in terms of that cracking pace.

The Advance Queensland program has approved 194 grant applications with a financial commitment of just over \$15.5 million in less than 12 months. We have signed five international partnerships worth \$9.4 million with some of the world's best known research institutions and global innovation companies including: Siemens Health Care, Emory University, Johnson & Johnson and YouTube. These partnerships are creating opportunities for Queenslanders to engage with global experts and for Queensland ideas to be translated into commercial successes. In April, the Premier officially announced the \$4 million start-up precinct to be located in the TC Beirne Building in Fortitude Valley. The start-up precinct will open in October this year and provide a central hub for a network of innovation and start-up activity in Queensland. The precinct will bring together start-ups, entrepreneurs, researchers and angel investors to collaborate on ideas and help our state overcome challenges in a range of sectors.

Today I am delighted to announce the first two recipients of the Advance Queensland Ignite Ideas Program funding: Allstate FAQ and Immersive Robotics. They join in total 39 applicants who were successful in the program's first round, representing a funding commitment of \$5.65 million. The Advance Queensland Ignite Ideas Fund provides grants to small businesses in Queensland to bring innovative new products and services to the market and create the knowledge-based jobs of the future. There will be more announcements on the other successful applicants in the coming weeks. An expert panel which I co-chair with the Queensland chief scientist Dr Geoff Garrett—and I must say this is likely to be his last estimates hearing as he is planning on retiring at the end of this year, so I hope he enjoys himself—has been established to advise the government on how to maximise innovation potential in Queensland.

The panel is also using their influence, networks and partners to advocate about the benefits of doing business in Queensland. We also delivered the hugely successful Advance Queensland innovation and investment summit and start-up festival which brought together 1,700 people in Brisbane and 3,000 more from around the state, country and world via live streaming. The summit provided 50 regional entrepreneurs with the opportunity to connect with investors, learn from experienced practitioners and take that knowledge back to their local ecosystem. CEO and co-founder of London based start-up Everledger, Leanne Kemp, summarised much of the positive feedback received from the summit when she said, 'We have seen a tectonic plate shift in attitude and the government has been incredible. This event is absolutely world-class and there is no doubt about it, that Queensland is the place to be.' The summit and festival firmly established Queensland as Australia's start-up state. In this budget or government has turned the \$180 million Advance Queensland innovation and jobs plan into a \$405 million whole-of-government accelerating Advance Queensland innovation agenda.

My department will be responsible for an additional \$25 million under the Accelerating Advance Queensland Innovation agenda. This new funding will allow us to continue to deliver important programs to establish our state as the place to turn great ideas into new industries and commercially successful new products and services. Through new programs, my department will play an important role in

continuing to generate momentum within our state's innovation movement. It will help us build new industries and help our traditional industries remain competitive in global markets, creating jobs now and jobs for the future.

CHAIR: Thank you, minister, for your opening address. I now call the member for Mount Ommaney.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you, minister, for the opening. I refer to page 1 of the SDS in relation to your portfolio responsibilities. What is the total budget that the minister is responsible for?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Our total budget for 2016-2017 is \$7,313,000.

Mrs SMITH: Does that include your small business component?

Ms ENOCH: No, it does not; that is a different department all together.

Mrs SMITH: I refer to page 14 of the SDS. With innovation being such a high profile for this government, can you explain why there was a \$36 million underspend in last year's budget?

Ms ENOCH: As I said in my opening statement, we have absolutely set a cracking pace on this. In terms of the kinds of achievements we have seen with regard to our expenditure, we have launched 12 programs over the last 12 months. These programs have been co-designed with experts from across the field. More than 309 applications were received against those grants: 194 grant applications have been approved with financial commitment of over \$15.5 million; 53 recipients through the research fellowships and PhD scholarships at a value of \$9.84 million; funding to recipients through the Advance Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research fellowships and PhD scholarships to the value of \$360,000; we have funded 79 recipients through the women's academic fund; and we have funded 21 businesses partnering with six universities through the first round of knowledge transfer partnerships. In terms of the Department of Education and Training, the STEM review has been allocated \$500,000. There are 12 programs that we have been able to launch in the last 12 months, a very short period of time. Last year, we budgeted \$37 million in 2015-16 and have spent 91 per cent of the budgeted amount implementing programs under Advance Queensland. So, \$33 million has been committed in 2015-16 and that has leveraged a further \$48.5 million in partner funds. It has been an incredible investment in terms of that very short period of time. As I said, we have committed 91 per cent of that budgeted funding to implement programs under Advance Queensland.

Mrs SMITH: I referred to page 14, to your budget and to what was your actual spend. There is a \$36 million difference. Can you explain that underspend?

Ms ENOCH: The decrease of \$35.1 million is mainly due to the following: Advance Queensland expenditure is \$27.2 million lower than anticipated. We also expect that it will increase significantly during 2016-17 for a number of reasons. The original allocation was evenly spread over four years. As the Advance Queensland Initiative took shape, programs developed detailed funding profiles which have been extended beyond the initial four-year funding profile. Now it is to 2020-21. There has been incredible interest in the programs. We have launched 12 programs over the last 12 months; what an incredible uptake. There was incredible oversubscription to every single one of the programs. That kind of take-up, that kind of interest, much greater than ever anticipated, has slowed down some assessment times. For example, there were 94 innovation partnership applications that were received and there were 354 applications for round one of the Ignite Ideas that came in. I just announced the number that have actually received funding.

There are two key reasons why expenditure has been lower in 2015-16 overall in the budget. Most of the milestones set for contracts entered into in 2015-16 fall in future years. Money has been committed but not spent. As I said, we have committed 91 per cent of the allocated funding for 2015-16 but, as contracts are drawn up, the actual expenditure will fall in these following years. That is why I say there will be an increase in expenditure in 2016-17.

Miss BARTON: On a point of order, with respect, the question was about why there was a specific underspend. I appreciate that the minister is being perhaps particularly detailed, but the minister is not answering the question posed. The minister is talking about what money is being spent on. The shadow minister has asked a very specific question about why there was an underspend. If the minister is unable to provide the answer –

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Chair.

CHAIR: One moment, Minister. I will make a ruling. I find that there is no point of order. The minister is responding to the question, outlining where that money is being apportioned, and may answer the question in whatever way she deems suitable. Thank you, Minister. You may continue.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Chair. As I have said, we have committed 91 per cent of the total expected expenditure.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you.

Ms ENOCH: Obviously, there are a couple of things. One is the milestone for contracts entered into for future years.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you. You have explained it.

Ms ENOCH: That money is already committed—91 per cent of the expected expenditure.

Miss BARTON: We can move on.

Ms ENOCH: In contrast, of course, what we saw from the former LNP government in terms of innovation was that in its very first year, its very first budget, \$50 million was cut from the Innovation and Science and 56—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. We are not talking previous budgets; we are talking about this one.

Ms ENOCH: No, of course not.

Miss BARTON: The shadow minister has indicated that she is happy, that the minister has answered the question. I think it is timely and prudent that we move on and the shadow minister can ask the next question.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater. Minister, you may continue to answer the question in the way you see fit.

Mrs SMITH: I think she has covered it, thanks, Chair.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, I am still talking. I am the chair. I do not need your interjections, thanks. Minister, do you need to continue?

Ms ENOCH: Thank you. Of course, as I was saying, what we have seen is an absolutely cracking pace set by this government in the first 12 months in terms of rolling out Advance Queensland—an absolutely cracking pace, with 91 per cent of all expected funding committed in the first 12 months. On top of that, this is from a very low base, where we have seen cuts to the budget with regard to Innovation and Science in this state—\$50 million cut in the first budget of the Nicholls-Newman government, \$50 million cut from Science and Innovation, 56 full-time—

Miss BARTON: Point of order.

Ms ENOCH: Fifty-six FTEs, rather.

CHAIR: One moment, Minister.

Miss BARTON: First, again, I have raised that we are speaking about this appropriation, not previous ones, but I would also draw you to your ruling only a few moments ago where you said that you were going to be very conscious of long answers. Perhaps the minister is aspiring to be like Howard Stackhouse—I am not sure. However, estimates is not a time for filibustering.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, thank you. We do not need your imputations or your inferences when you are making your point of order. I have accepted what you have said. Minister, we will need to draw to a conclusion your answer, thank you.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you.

Mrs SMITH: With the increases that you said going forward, can you explain, then, why this year's budget for Advance Queensland on the next line is \$17 million lower than it was last year?

Ms ENOCH: What page of the SDS?

Mrs SMITH: Page 14.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. In 2016-17 we are planning to spend \$34.1 million, including \$1 million for the start-up precinct in Fortitude Valley. As I said, the precinct will be home to some of our best and brightest start-up talent and will harness the power of collaboration, boosting the state's expanding and vibrant start-up sector. There is an amount of \$6.22 million to the Advance Queensland Research Fellowships program, building on the success of last year's 42 recipients, and over \$1.6 million to the Advance Queensland Hot DesQ program. This Australian-first program will lure international and interstate start-ups to Queensland to pursue their—

Mrs SMITH: Sorry, Minister, can I refer you to the line that I was talking about, 'Advancing Queensland through innovation'? You said that you are spending more, yet these figures show less. Could you explain that? The 2015-16 budget was \$95.9 million and that is down in 2016-17 to \$75.5 million. Can you just explain that? I am not too sure where you are coming from. We are spending more but it says less.

Ms ENOCH: Just while that information is coming forward, to help the member understand, when we began this process the \$180 million was allocated over the four years. Through a very collaborative co-design process, we are working with absolute experts in the field—people who have been committing their time to the start-up ecosystem in our state, who have been committing their time to ensuring that innovation is at the heart of our moving forward. That is why there has been an expansion of the forward budget and we are seeing those changes reflected in that. Just so that I can provide more detail, I will bring forward the chief finance officer to give you that exact detail so that you understand it from that perspective.

Mrs SMITH: Thanks, Danny. I just want to know: are we spending more or less? These figures are indicating that we are spending less, even though the minister has said that we are spending more.

Mr Short: In reference to the budget for the next financial year, and as the minister has indicated with Advance Queensland, a significant portion of this year's budget has been apportioned across the next five financial years. For example, the underspend that the minister explained earlier—the \$28 million—has been apportioned across five years. For next year's budget, the 2016-17 budget, that has also been apportioned in line with the commitments that the minister has alluded to. On top of that, in regard to the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine, that particular program is coming to a close. Some of those funds are now ceasing during the 2016-17 year and the tail end will finish in 2017-18.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you. I refer to page 3 of the Science, Information and Technology SDS in relation to Advance Queensland. The Premier has talked about innovation and it was your centrepiece in this year's budget. The Advance Queensland program was, as you said, \$180 million last year and it has now been increased to \$405 million this year. Minister, can you tell us how many jobs have been created with the \$180 million investment last year?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. We want the committee to understand—and I think many people understand this instinctively—that the world is changing at an ever-increasing pace. We know that many reports from very well known, renowned bodies have indicated that it is possible that some 40 per cent of all current jobs could possibly be automated within the next 10 to 20 years. These are massive challenges for any government. That is why we need to look at long-term, sustainable jobs for Queenslanders. That is really what Advance Queensland is all about. I am laying those foundations to ensure we have the right set of skills, we have the right conditions, we are supporting those conditions to ensure that we are prepared for the new economies of the future.

On top of that, there has been quite a lot of research that clearly shows that business innovation leads to increased productivity and profitability, which in turn leads to the creation of jobs. The evidence is that innovative businesses are twice as likely to increase productivity and employment, and this is based on ABS findings. Also, the evidence is that, while innovating firms accounted for only 36 per cent of Australian businesses in 2012-13, they accounted for over 60 per cent of employment and sales in the whole economy. Fostering start-ups is another key part of a strong innovation system. Our programs are aimed to increase the rate of start-up formation in Queensland and attract more entrepreneurs to make Queensland their home.

Miss BARTON: How many jobs?

Ms ENOCH: In terms of that evidence, we have seen that, in the UK, just six per cent of high-growth companies generated half of the UK's employment growth. Young firms created over 45 per cent of new jobs in OECD countries in the past decade. Our investment in strengthening our science and research and building our skills to support the new economy will deliver benefits into the future.

Mrs SMITH: Minister, can I just direct you, though, to the actual question, which was: for the \$180 million investment last year, how many jobs—numbers wise—were created?

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, I believe that the minister was answering that question. We do not need the interjections.

Miss BARTON: She was not.

CHAIR: And the same for you, member for Broadwater.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the chair. I think it is important to understand the context in which we have initiated the Advance Queensland agenda in this state. This is from a very low base. We have seen massive cuts from the former LNP government in this space.

Miss BARTON: How many jobs?

Ms ENOCH: In terms of the actual direct jobs, we are building—and remembering, of course, inside this you need to understand that we are barely one year old in terms of the Advance Queensland initiative—

Mrs SMITH: \$180 million.

Ms ENOCH: We are the building of the capacity of our research sector to address the key social and environmental challenges facing Queensland. Eighty-nine full-time-equivalent jobs have been created through the research fellowships program. This is a product of the government's investment and the funding brought to projects by partners and collaborators. Our global partnerships have attracted to Queensland some of the world's top companies in research value to partner with local innovators to develop new products. The partnership with Boeing, for instance, and the Queensland Gas Company, Telstra and local small to medium enterprises to enable broader application of unmanned aerial vehicles in the gas sector will create up to 100 aerospace sector jobs in Queensland over the next five years.

Approximately 27 full-time-equivalent jobs will be created through key international partnerships, with Johnson & Johnson, Siemens and the Emory drug institute. In another example, we have seen 32 jobs to date through the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program, with one job created through each project funded by this program.

These early results are only the direct jobs created. The indirect benefits of stimulating innovation, as we have seen from world-class research, will lead to further benefits over time. That is why we are future oriented in terms of Advance Queensland.

Mrs SMITH: Minister—

Ms ENOCH: We are expanding the skills.

Mrs SMITH: The question was not how many jobs will be created. Out of the \$180 million already invested, how many actual jobs? You have referred to the Boeing one and you said, 'Over five years that will be 100 jobs.' That is in the future. How many jobs have been created in the last 18 months since you have been in government with the \$180 million already spent?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Mount Ommaney. I believe that the minister is answering and citing figures as we go through. Minister, would you like to continue?

Mrs SMITH: They are future jobs; they are speculation jobs.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Mount Ommaney.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order. I have outlined actual jobs that have been created as a result of the funding and remembering that—

Mrs SMITH: Which was the total?

Ms ENOCH: The \$180 million has not all been invested in the first year. Ninety-one per cent of the actual funding that we have allocated has been committed in the first year. In terms of jobs, what we saw from the former government is thousands of jobs removed from the Public Service in a fell swoop. On top of that, in the first budget—the very first budget—the Nicholls-Newman LNP government got rid of 56 FTEs in my own department.

Miss BARTON: We are not talking about the previous government; we are talking about yours.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater.

Ms ENOCH: Nine hundred and 50 jobs over the three years were removed from DSITI. In terms of job creation, we are well and truly on track in terms of our expenditure and our investment in the Advance Queensland initiative.

Mrs SMITH: Point of order.

Miss BARTON: That is clearly a reflection on the chair.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, thank you.

Mrs SMITH: Mr Chair, can I just get the figure of the jobs that have been created, not the future jobs?

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to.

Mrs SMITH: Was it 32, did you say? Are they full-time jobs? Are they part-time jobs?

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to say them again if you want to add them up as I go: 89 full-time-equivalent jobs created through the research fellowships program; 27 full-time-equivalent jobs created through key international partnerships with Johnson & Johnson, Siemens, Emory drug et cetera; 32 jobs to date through the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program—and that will increase as rounds 2 and 3 are announced. There are some 100 jobs already created. I am happy to add them all up for you.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you. That would be great.

Ms ENOCH: Of course, in terms of what we have seen, from a base of thousands of jobs missing from our economy as a result of the decisions of the former government, the fact that we are reinvesting in the innovation space, in the science space, to bring those great thinkers, those great minds back to our state, keep them here in Queensland and create the new jobs of the future, setting the foundation for where we are headed in 10, 20 years from now, this is about forward thinking. This is understanding that, as a state, we need to be focused on where the new jobs will be. That is why we are investing now. That is why the federal government invested in that space. That is why this state government is investing in this space—unlike the former government, which sacked thousands of people all at once.

Mrs SMITH: If I can take you up on adding up those jobs for me that would be wonderful, thank you.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to get a calculator out for you.

CHAIR: 148.

Ms ENOCH: There you go. Over 140 jobs, member for Mount Ommaney.

Mr WILLIAMS: In reference to page 3 of the SDS and in relation to the Advance Queensland agenda, could the minister please provide an overview of research fellowships that have been allocated to date?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. The Palaszczuk government established the Advance Queensland Research Fellowships to support Queensland's brightest research minds. This program offers early career fellowships of \$180,000 over three years and mid-career fellowships of \$300,000 over three years. Each successful applicant will have to spend at least 50 per cent of their time working alongside their industry partners to assist in moving research from the lab into the real world. This will help to develop our capability to translate research into commercial success and create jobs of the future.

This is an important part of the Advance Queensland initiative. We are very fortunate that there was an incredible investment in the Smart State era where \$4.9 billion was invested in research infrastructure. We have been very good at research; now it is time to focus our attention on commercialisation. That is why in terms of our research fellowships we are ensuring that that translation is part of the overall package. During the Newman-Nicholls LNP government there was a funding vacuum for research fellowships, with just 14 research fellowships awarded in the entire three years of the former government. Only 14 in three years! In contrast, the Palaszczuk government has committed \$9.3 million to support 41 fellowships—25 early career and 16 mid career. There is no starker difference or contrast between the two: 14 in three years, 41 in just 12 months.

Research is allocated in universities and research organisations across Queensland including Townsville, Bundaberg, Toowoomba, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. Funding has been allocated to investigate new disease management practices, such as research by Dr Emma Bolderson from the Queensland University of Technology's Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation. Dr Bolderson's research aims to develop new drugs that will kill cancer cells while having fewer side effects that many of the current chemotherapy treatments have. The University of Queensland's Dr Nasim Amiralian and Dr Pratheep Annamalai have each received funding to develop the use of spinifex nanofibres in making stronger and more flexible rubber products, including rubber gloves and condoms.

The fellowships support some outstanding partnerships with existing industries to deliver practical outcomes, including the University of Queensland's Dr Hong Peng's partnership with Rio Tinto to develop better ways of accessing bauxite ore deposits. As the committee can see, collaboration is key to driving outcomes from this important research.

Mr WILLIAMS: Following on from the previous answer, again the reference is on page 3 of the SDS, could the minister provide the committee with information on the Phd scholarships that our government has awarded as part of the Advance Queensland initiative?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. The Advance Queensland Phd scholarships support university students to undertake a significant research project that will benefit Queenslanders to secure a Phd qualification. Under round 1 of the program, \$540,000 was awarded to support 12 future scientists in developing their research careers by supporting them to complete their Phd degrees. The scholars must spend at least half of their scholarship time located at an industry organisation to give them a greater understanding of the real-life application of their research. One example is Mrs Rena Louise Cruz in conjunction with Hear and Say who will undertake her Phd with the Queensland University of Technology's Institute for Health and Biomedical Innovation. Mrs Cruz will develop innovative 3D bioprinting approaches to produce rapid, low-cost customised treatment options for children with microtia. That is a congenital disorder that affects the formation of one or both ears and can result in impaired hearing. The close engagement between Hear and Say and children with microtia means that the project's research will target the specific needs of the affected children leading to translatable and effective clinical solutions.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Phd Scholarships program offers funding of up to \$120,000 over three years to a Phd student to complete an original research project at a Queensland university. Troy Meston from the University of Queensland received the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Phd scholarship to investigate the use of digital technology to create classroom experiences tailored to the educational and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These are exciting studies that Queensland Phd candidates are investigating in partnership with industry. Advance Queensland is not simply funding research for research sake. Advance Queensland is creating the foundation for a brighter shared future and producing real outcomes for Queenslanders and developing the jobs of the future.

Mr SAUNDERS: Minister, I refer to page 5 of the SDS. Can you please inform the committee how you are encouraging entrepreneurs to look globally and stay locally in Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. The \$405 million Accelerating Advance Queensland innovation agenda supports a suite of programs that provide investment and capability building to attract and retain world-class entrepreneurial talent for Queensland. The Global Partnership Awards support Queensland innovators to connect with and learn from international experts by engaging with overseas start-ups, entrepreneurs and research communities. The first agreement under the Global Partnership Awards initiative is the Create Queensland partnership with YouTube. This partnership is supporting aspiring and established digital creators to improve the quality of their content, expand their global presence, learn from experts and make connections with the film industry. The Ignite Ideas Fund is empowering Queensland start-ups and small to medium sized enterprises to think globally by supporting the development of new or improved products, processes or services, to secure investment, launch into global markets and grow business. This program received a huge response, as I have already said, with 354 applications received for the very first round of funding. I was delighted to announce some of the first recipients of that support from the fund today.

Advance Queensland, in partnership with Brisbane City Council, is also supporting the Visiting Entrepreneurs Program. This links Queensland based start-ups with successful and highly experienced international entrepreneurs to provide mentoring, education and assistance. In the past 12 months Advance Queensland has supported six leading international entrepreneurs to spend time in Queensland to inspire and mentor local start-ups and the small business sector. In June this year I signed an agreement for Queensland to become a member of the Open Worldwide Innovation Network, or OWIN as it is referred to. Established by Texas A&M University in 2013, OWIN is a not-for-profit innovation network seeking to promote market access, entrepreneurship and technology commercialisation. This agreement will provide Queensland innovative businesses and entrepreneurs with access to international partners and markets. Advance Queensland is providing opportunities for Queensland entrepreneurs to turn their great ideas in global reality.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, I am just a bit interested here. In relation to Advance Queensland there is \$180 million over three years, which is around about \$60 million per year, and you answered that so far there is about 148 jobs—that is what it was calculated to be.

Ms ENOCH: Direct jobs.

Mrs MILLER: Yes, direct jobs. That works out so far to approximately \$405,000 per job. That seems awfully expensive. Would you like to comment on that?

Ms ENOCH: This is one of the things that if you put it in context the \$180 million is not for just this year that has just occurred, it is over a period of time.

Mrs MILLER: I know it is over three years. I know that. It is \$60 million per year.

Ms ENOCH: Currently what we are doing is setting up all of the right programs, initiatives et cetera to create the right environment in which we are going to be able to support start-ups and innovation in our state. As I said, we have already committed 91 per cent of the funding that was allocated for Advance Queensland in 2015-16. That has already happened. In terms of that commitment, the expenditure against that is now in line as those contracts are detailed and signed off on, but that is committed funding already. Right now we have got more than 100 jobs direct. Of course, the indirect jobs that are attached to that are numerous in terms of the knock-on effect. When you think about some of the big international partnerships that we have been able to attract to our state—big international partnerships—they have massive global reach and to be able to support our small businesses, our start-ups to be part of that global supply chain is incredible. The opportunity for them to grow their own businesses as a result of that connection to these global supply chains is quite remarkable.

Mrs MILLER: What is the multiplier?

Ms ENOCH: In terms of the multiplier, these are figures that we are still working on, but right now those direct jobs that we have been able to create—remembering it is 12 months that we have been into this and we have committed 91 per cent of our expenditure, our budgeted expenditure. There are still many ways that we are going to need to be able to evaluate those knock-on effects, those indirect jobs that are being created as a result of the work that we are doing. We are very fortunate we have an expert panel of incredibly talented people who are putting their minds to that. We have got buy-in from people across the start-up sector and industries that are absolutely clamouring to be part of this conversation into the future and I think we are seeing that. In the 12 programs that we have been able to release already—and, as I said, it is a cracking pace to be able to get that out—we have had massive oversubscription. There is an incredible appetite in terms of innovation in this state from small business and from medium sized enterprise and it is also creating an opportunity to bring big international players into our state to help small businesses be part of those international supply chains.

Mrs MILLER: Would the director-general have an idea of the multiplier or could you take that on notice?

Mr Merrick: Just to come back to the figures that you cited there, it really is important to say that the \$180 million and then the additional money is profiled across a number of years.

Mrs MILLER: Three years.

Mr Merrick: Four years initially and then with some reprofiling a slightly longer period. What it is important to say though is in terms of then dividing that by—it is actually 121 jobs already created.

Mrs MILLER: No, 148.

Mr Merrick: That was the chair. I am slightly correcting the chair, if that is okay, in terms of those that have actually been created today. There are a further 27 that are going to result from the partnership with Emory and UQ.

Mrs MILLER: Can I just ask—

Mr Merrick: Sorry, if I can just finish, through the chair?

Mrs MILLER: How many jobs exist as of today?

CHAIR: Member for Bundamba, just one moment.

Mr Merrick: Of the 121 jobs that have been created to date, that comes off the back of the expenditure of \$8.29 million. In terms of the figures you cited, that was relating them to the full \$180 million expenditure which will occur. It really is important to note as well, in terms of some of the programs that we are now seeing run out, that the jobs benefits will accrue over significant time. If we take, for instance, the program the minister has just announced this afternoon, the Ignite Ideas, the equivalent program in the UK although bigger has created some 3,000 jobs on the base. If we look at equivalent figures that may generate from that they will be very significant going forward, but you really do have to evaluate these programs after the expenditure has occurred and companies have taken forward the projects that they are being funded to see the real impact. The multipliers will vary by program.

Mrs MILLER: Can you get me some examples of the multiplier? If you can take that on notice?

Mr Merrick: We are happy to take that on notice for equivalent programs that have happened elsewhere.

CHAIR: Minister, are you right to take that notice?

Ms ENOCH: Yes, happy to take that on notice, but it will be equivalent programs that have happened elsewhere because obviously as we are rolling these out we will see the effects of those.

Mrs MILLER: Okay.

Mrs SMITH: Minister, with unemployment increasing in Queensland, and we have heard that the unemployment figures have continued to increase over the last five months, would you accept that Queenslanders do not want to talk about the jobs for the future, they actually want to know about jobs now? What is the Queensland government doing through Advance Queensland to create jobs for Queenslanders now?

Ms ENOCH: What SDS page is the member referring to?

Mrs SMITH: I am talking about Advance Queensland, so let us go to page 3.

Ms ENOCH: Which part of page 3 are you referring to exactly, with regard to that question?

Miss BARTON: Perhaps where it says that science, innovation and the digital economy—

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, thank you. The question is from the member for Mount Ommaney, who does not need your assistance.

Mrs SMITH: That is the point: 'helping to foster job creation and a diverse economy by driving innovation-led growth'.

Ms ENOCH: In terms of understanding Advance Queensland in the broader economic conversation, Advance Queensland is part of many initiatives that are occurring in this government in terms of ensuring we are looking at jobs now and jobs for the future. We have seen already 36,600 jobs created since the last state election, for instance.

Mrs SMITH: How many?

Ms ENOCH: 36,600 jobs created in Queensland since the last state election.

Mrs SMITH: Really?

Ms ENOCH: Those are the latest figures that I have been given.

Mrs SMITH: Because unemployment is going up every month.

Ms ENOCH: I am not going to debate that.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney—

Mrs SMITH: I wanted to make sure she was clear on her answer so that it is not misleading and she gets herself into trouble.

CHAIR: That is fine.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy—

CHAIR: One moment, Minister. I understand that the minister is capable of responding with accurate figures, so we do not need the interjections. Minister, would you like to continue your answer?

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to make it even clearer. The Premier answered this very question last week in her estimates hearing. She advised—

Since the state election, 36,600 extra jobs have been created according to the latest ABS labour force data released last week.

...

The recent lengthy federal election campaign may not have provided an ideal climate for job creation, but our policies do.

That was a quote from the Premier last week in her estimates hearing.

This is part of a bigger story in terms of what we are doing to ensure we are creating jobs in this state. We know that the economy is shifting, that it is resetting itself. Anybody in this room and anybody who might be watching will understand that some of our traditional industries are changing quite dramatically. In terms of our mining industry, we have seen a different phase now being entered into. There are things that we need to be putting in place to diversify the economy. There are multiple approaches to do that. Diversifying our economy means that we need to create the right environment in which new industries, new start-ups, can be prepared for, to help us prepare for the new economies of the future.

We are supporting innovators across the state—industries, regions, businesses and researchers who are doing great things to build our economy and improve our quality of life. We are backing new platform technologies by partnering with the gas industry, SMEs and Boeing, which I announced just this week with the Premier, in a \$4.3 million project to use drones and sensors to better manage gas fields, with the potential to use this model more widely. We are strengthening regional innovation by co-investing \$500,000 in a Townsville firm, JESI, which is developing new technology to improve safety in journeys to work. We have committed \$300,000 to work with James Cook University on groundbreaking research to fight coeliac disease, by developing new medications to help sufferers. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships funding has been provided to Airtime Holdings to employ a Griffith University graduate to undertake research and development of online calculators that will help high-rise owners and building managers identify where and how they can reduce carbon emissions and save money. The list goes on.

We have committed \$4 million to a start-up precinct in Fortitude Valley. In this budget we are accelerating Advance Queensland to build that momentum of innovation, to ensure we have all of the right ingredients to build those new industries so that we as a state can diversify our economy into the future. This is really about future focused foundation work that we are doing. It is so important. Every single economy across the world is realising this very quickly. We are in a race with the rest of the world in terms of ensuring that we are prepared for the new economies, that we are diversifying quickly enough to ensure we have all the right skills and the right environment, that start-ups are attracted here and want to start here. These things are absolutely crucial.

Mrs SMITH: I get that. The answer is that, at the moment, when unemployment is going up, Advance Queensland produced 121 jobs, basically. Would that be right: yes or no?

Ms ENOCH: Let us understand that in the context that since the last election 36,600 jobs have been created.

Mrs SMITH: But I asked about Advance Queensland.

Ms ENOCH: In terms of Advance Queensland—

Mrs SMITH: Advance Queensland—

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, please allow the minister to answer the question without interjection, so that she can answer the question that you asked.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you, Mr Chair, but I do think the answers are becoming long and are not relevant. Can we rely on standing order 115?

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, please allow the minister to answer the question.

Ms ENOCH: I am trying to give as much detail as possible, because I know that the shadow minister is new to this area, it is very complicated and there are a lot of complexities to it. I am being as detailed as possible to help you understand what is happening.

Mrs SMITH: I appreciate that. Can we move on, thank you.

Ms ENOCH: This is an incredibly complex space. It is something that every economy and every government in the country and across the world is trying to grapple with.

Miss BARTON: I raise a point of order. Mr Chair, the minister has answered the question. You have already issued a directive at the start of these proceedings with respect to long answers. Whilst I appreciate the minister's somewhat patronising comments to the member for Mount Ommaney—

Ms ENOCH: It is actually very genuine.

CHAIR: Minister, one moment. Member for Broadwater, we do not need your imputations through your interjection. Either move to the point that you wish to make or I will overrule and we will continue with the minister.

Miss BARTON: The minister has answered the question and I think it is time that we move on.

Mrs SMITH: I have another question and I am happy with that answer.

CHAIR: Minister, you may continue.

Ms ENOCH: I make the point that this is actually very genuine. I want you to understand how this works in terms of our future as a state, so that you fully understand what is needed.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you. I appreciate your response. I do have to say that a lot of it is in the future, maybe, if, possible, hypothetical.

CHAIR: Is there a question there or a statement?

Mrs SMITH: There is a new question. Last week you made the announcement regarding the company TimeLooper. Minister, it is a multimillion dollar company based in the United States. Do you think a valuable way to spend taxpayers' money is by providing handouts to a million dollar international company?

Ms ENOCH: I will have to go into detail again, so that the shadow minister understands why this is an important plank in terms of ensuring we have all the right ingredients to be prepared for the economies. I will go into a bit of detail. Some of that detail has already been provided to the former government through some recommendations from the Lerner review, which was commissioned by TIQ under Tim Nicholls himself. One of the recommendations of that review was to create a Start-up Chile program.

Miss BARTON: Yes or no—

CHAIR: No interjections, thank you.

Ms ENOCH: I am sorry, Chair, but I have to explain this so that the members understand exactly why we are doing this. It is absolutely crucial. This particular report made a recommendation about creating a Start-up Chile program in Queensland. In building our innovation ecosystem we should welcome outside perspectives, bringing insights here to Queensland to help our entrepreneurs learn how to best turn their ideas into commercial reality. The Hot DesQ program is a great example of this. It is based on that highly successful Chilean example—the one that was a recommendation from the Lerner review, commissioned by TIQ under Tim Nicholls. This program brings start-ups from other countries to Queensland to help grow their business and share their experience with the local start-up community. TimeLooper, the first Hot DesQ recipient, is a tourism tech start-up. This committee has considered the vital tourism industry today, and I understand that. I think it is fantastic that we have a successful start-up with founders from New York, Turkey and London choosing to come to Queensland and base themselves at Creative Enterprise Australia at QUT.

Mrs SMITH: Minister, how does that actually benefit Queensland and how many jobs will that create?

Ms ENOCH: Again, I have to explain this step by step—

Mrs SMITH: You are not doing a very—

Ms ENOCH: I am explaining it step by step—

Miss Barton interjected.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, please.

Mrs SMITH: I am getting more confused by your explanation, in all reality.

Ms ENOCH: That is very telling, Chair.

CHAIR: Minister, I do not think we need that.

Miss BARTON: I do not think that is an appropriate comment—

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, you will cease your interjections. I have reminded you several times. Cease your interjections. Minister, I do not think that was an appropriate comment.

Ms ENOCH: I withdraw that.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Ms ENOCH: TimeLooper was selected from around 1,000 start-ups at TechCrunch Disrupt in the US earlier this year. They have been incredibly successful. As part of their grant, they will spend time with local start-ups, discussing how to raise capital and how to develop a successful tech company.

Mrs SMITH: But they raise capital through you. They are coming out here. They have a \$2 million venture capitalist behind them already. They are going to stay here for six months. It is a nice feel-good app, but at the end of the day how does that benefit the majority of Queenslanders and how many jobs will their coming out here create? If it is to tell people how to attract investment, they have just taken the investment away from a local business, because you have given it to them.

Ms ENOCH: Let me explain it again.

Mrs SMITH: Please.

Ms ENOCH: On the Start-up Chile program, there was a recommendation from Josh Lerner to do something similar in Queensland. That is what Hot DesQ is. It is responding to that recommendation

from the Lerner review, which was commissioned by TIQ under Tim Nicholls at the time. This is a response to that. It is an understanding that, to mature your ecosystem, you have to be able to bring in other players, to bring their expertise, to bring their connections globally into our ecosystems to grow them here—and not just in the south-east corner but also across 13 locations in Queensland. The Hot DesQ program allows start-ups to be attracted to 13 different locations across Queensland, helping to build regions. This one in particular has chosen to headquarter itself at QUT's Creative Enterprise Australia—

Mrs SMITH: At free rent?

Ms ENOCH: That is the partnership that QUT has entered into. TimeLooper had a choice of 13 approved hosts. Anna Rooke, the Creative Enterprise Australia CEO, says she is absolutely honoured that the start-up picked them. They are absolutely thrilled. That is what Anna Rooke told StartupSmart. TimeLooper CEO Andrew Feinberg said that when the company was looking to expand beyond its London and New York offices the Queensland government's offer was irresistible. He said—

When considering expansion ... we sought a market with a robust tourism ecosystem, rich pool of talent, and proximity to the booming APAC region.

Queensland provides each of the above in abundance and the Hot DesQ program does a wonderful job of bringing the pieces together ...

Mrs SMITH: With all due respect, Minister, if I was offered \$50,000 to come here, I would find that irresistible, too.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, what is your question?

Mrs SMITH: The question goes to what is the benefit, at the end of the day, to Queenslanders when we have invested money into a multimillion dollar company.

Ms ENOCH: Because TimeLooper is a tourism tech start-up, it helps all tourism businesses and destinations in terms of delivering on new tourism products. It can attract new visitors. It can encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more in our state. Ultimately, this is about ensuring we have a maturing ecosystem. That is why we are looking at international evidence that proves that these are the right moves forward. We welcome start-ups. We want ex-pats to come back to Queensland—those who left Queensland in droves during the LNP government. In droves they left.

Miss Barton interjected.

Ms ENOCH: A whole heap of people moved away from our state and took their investment and their great ideas somewhere else, so that somebody else is benefitting from them.

Miss Barton interjected.

Ms ENOCH: We are wanting to attract ex-pats back into this state.

CHAIR: Excuse me, Minister. Member for Broadwater, I have warned you. Should you continue to interject, you will be warned under standing order 185(1). Minister, I know that you are very passionate, but the length of your answers is exceeding what would be expected by the committee.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for your guidance, Chair.

Mrs SMITH: As a last question on this issue, would the Hot DesQ program allow companies such as Apple, Microsoft, Facebook or Google to be eligible for grants?

Ms ENOCH: No, it would not. There are very clear criteria in terms of who is eligible for that funding. No, they would not. I would very much welcome Apple, Google and others to come to our state and invest in our state. We are open for business in this state. We do not want to close down those opportunities. I would absolutely welcome them to come to our state.

TimeLooper was a TechCrunch winner. There are a number of other TechCrunch winners that have gone on to be multimillion dollar companies that have invested in particular ecosystems—Dropbox, Fitbit and Yammer. Yammer is a software that we use in this state. To be able to attract those start-ups to our state, to invest in our ecosystem, to help us mature very quickly so that we are competitive with the rest of world is fantastic. It is evidence based.

CHAIR: We move to government questions.

Mr SAUNDERS: On page 4 of the SDS it makes reference to digital skills required to nurture Queensland as a global innovation hub. How are you providing these skills to Queenslanders?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. Equipping people with the skills to embrace the digital work is absolutely crucial to Queensland's future prosperity and wellbeing. In 2015

it was estimated that 15 billion devices were connected to the internet globally and that number is rapidly increasing.

Global technology company Intel predicts that by 2020 this will rise to 200 billion devices. That is personal devices and also devices located in factories, businesses and workplaces. When I refer to devices, I am talking about phones, tablets et cetera. This kind of connectivity unlocks new ways to manage our homes, schools, hospitals, infrastructure and businesses. The internet also allows companies to reach new customers, both locally and globally. Existing business models are already being disrupted by new tech savvy entrants in sectors ranging from recruitment to banking, finance and accommodation.

Through the Advance Queensland initiative it is a whole-of-government priority to provide accessible, digital education and ICT training to ensure that Queenslanders have the opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and capabilities. My department is working on programs to assist businesses develop their awareness of the benefits of digital technologies and build confidence in their digital capabilities which will, in turn, contribute to improved business performance and resilience.

We are also collaborating with regional, rural and remote councils to develop local digital economy strategies by supporting the development of digital literacy skills in their communities. We are working with the Queensland Digital Business Collaboration Group and the digital economy hub to provide businesses with valuable information and resources so they can participate in the digital economy.

By partnering with Digital Careers we are encouraging students to consider a wide range of IT related careers by providing extracurricular programs on computational thinking, coding and robotics. Our membership of the Queensland STEM reference group is also contributing to the Department of Education and Training's coding and robotics initiatives in schools to support the government's broad agenda for digital transformation. Being able to bring all members of our community along in terms of their digital capacities is important in terms of where we are going to see that interaction into the future.

Mr WILLIAMS: Page 5 of the SDS refers to start-ups in Queensland. Can you advise the steps you are putting in place to strengthen Queensland's start-up ecosystem?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable for this very important question. There are a number of factors that contribute to a strong and vibrant start-up ecosystem, including building capability, attracting talent from outside the ecosystem, securing champions and partnering and collaborating. Queensland is already being recognised as Australia's start-up state.

The Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland initiative is providing targeted funding to strengthen this position by developing and supporting our flourishing start-up ecosystem. For instance, \$8 million over four years has been provided for the Australian first Hot DesQ start-up attraction program. This program is designed to encourage international and interstate start-ups to establish in Queensland for a minimum of six months, attracted by financial incentives of between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

Hot DesQ recipients are based in 13 locations around the state. We know that there are a growing number of start-ups in regional Queensland in particular. We will support their growth and connect them with businesses and industry wanting to innovate through our Regional Innovation Hubs program. Initially budgeted at \$1.5 million over three years, we have committed an additional \$6 million to widen and deepen our support for regional innovation start-ups.

To help drive our innovation agenda and feed the momentum in our start-up ecosystem, the position of Chief Entrepreneur has been created, to contribute to government policy and advocate on behalf of the sector. The Chief Entrepreneur will be based at the start-up precinct in Fortitude Valley, which is due to open in October. With a funding commitment of \$4 million over four years, the precinct will be part of a statewide network of innovation hubs designed to increase collaboration, connections and partnerships between start-ups, investors, corporate clients, community groups and service providers.

There is also \$1.2 million over four years for the Queensland Startup Events and Activities Fund, providing matching funding of up to \$25,000 for organisations to deliver training or events to build capability in Queensland's start-up ecosystem. This is a comprehensive suite of initiatives to ensure that we are creating the right environment for start-ups to commence here in Queensland, to be attracted to Queensland and to be able to grow into the future.

Mrs MILLER: I refer to page 49 of the SDS in relation to Shared Services, and particularly the part that talks about payroll solutions. Which departments and agencies is Queensland Shared Services looking at in terms of payroll solutions?

Ms ENOCH: I will bring the DG forward on this because it is operational in nature. Shared Services provide an incredible service. They deal with a huge number of transitions. They ensure that people are paid on time and all the rest of it. They are doing an incredible job. I will refer the question to the DG in terms of the operational nature of your question.

Mr Merrick: I thank the member for the question. In terms of Queensland Shared Services we provide a payroll service for around 60,000 public servants. It covers in excess of 20 agencies across government. The only two agencies we do not really provide that for is Health and Education. We provide it for the great majority of agencies across government.

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I know, but I want to know which of those agencies are you looking at payroll solutions for in the 2016-17 financial year? This is in the SDS at page 49.

Mr Merrick: In terms of the work we have done to date, it is probably worth saying that we transitioned eight agencies last year as part of the first stage of the finance system futures project from legacy financial systems to new financial systems. In terms of payroll systems upgrades, what I might do is invite the assistant director-general for Queensland Shared Services to come to the table and talk through the work we are doing in this period.

Ms Violet: With the payroll projects, as the director-general mentioned, we have approximately 24 agencies that we deal with at the moment. There are a number that we are working for in terms of the consolidated payroll solution. That is an enhancement project that we are doing at the moment. It is not a legacy system upgrade, per se. It is a functionality improvement. We are also working with the Public Safety Business Agency in terms of their payroll solution as well.

Mrs MILLER: Is one of them the Lattice system?

Ms Violet: Correct. That is for the Public Safety Business Agency.

Mrs MILLER: I still have not got an answer to the question. I want to know which agencies or departments relate to the payroll solutions? Is it all 24?

Ms Violet: Correct.

Mrs MILLER: All 24?

Ms Violet: Yes.

Mrs MILLER: Can you take naming the 24 on notice?

Ms Violet: I am sorry, I do not have all the specifics.

Mrs MILLER: I know that. That can come on notice. I am happy for that to be taken on notice and I get the information back.

Ms ENOCH: We are happy to take that on notice. Obviously that is a significant list.

Mrs MILLER: It is 24 names.

Mr Merrick: In terms of the question specifically about Lattice that covers Queensland Corrective Services, Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Inspector-General Emergency Management. A first stage pilot has taken place to move the IGM already in that system. It is four agencies in terms of the Lattice upgrade.

Ms ENOCH: The member would be aware that that is long overdue and very much called for from those particular agencies. We are responding to that.

Mrs MILLER: I am not being critical at all. I just want to know the detail.

CHAIR: Page 5 of the SDS refers to Advance Queensland delivering services in North Queensland. Can you please highlight for the committee what you have achieved there?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I know that he is very interested in the Townsville region. Townsville is well placed to grow through innovation. Where there are particular challenges there are also incredible opportunities. The regional start-up ecosystem report published at the beginning of this year highlighted that Townsville start-ups had the largest proportion of gross domestic product of all the regions that were mapped.

Townsville is home to one of our most successful start-ups in this state—SafetyCulture, founded by Luke Anear. He is a member of the Advance Queensland expert panel and a very valuable

contributor. Next month I also look forward to attending the opening of the city's new co-working space—Innovate North Queensland, led by Joe Hoolahan who is the founder of JESI, another local success story in Townsville. This new co-working space will enhance Townsville's growing reputation as a hub for start-up activity.

Advance Queensland is also backing Townsville Engineering Industries, a 50-year-old firm, to develop new sensor technologies for the mining and sugar industry through the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program. The Queensland Startup Events and Activities Fund is supporting potential growth of North Queensland start-ups through investments by funding activities in Cairns, Townsville and Charters Towers.

North Queensland researchers have long been at the forefront of cutting edge research and Advance Queensland funding is supporting them to be world leaders in their field. For example, researchers at James Cook University are being funded to research microbial indicators for water quality and environmental stress assessment.

In order to build on these initial investments, the Palaszczuk government has increased its commitment to regional Queensland through the acceleration of Advance Queensland budget announcements. Key initiatives under a \$6 million investment in regional innovation hubs will leverage existing regional effort and seek to deliver greater collaboration between entrepreneurs, start-ups, industry, universities, business groups and councils. Through Advance Queensland the Palaszczuk government is supporting the growth of innovation and knowledge based job opportunities in regional Queensland.

CHAIR: We move to non-government questions.

Mrs SMITH: I refer to the minister and Premier's announcement yesterday regarding Boeing, which we have been speaking about at estimates today. For the benefit of the committee I seek leave to table the media release.

CHAIR: Leave is granted to table the document.

Mrs SMITH: In regard to that announcement yesterday, were Queensland companies given the opportunity to be considered with regard to the million dollars going to the multinational company Boeing?

Ms ENOCH: What SDS page is the member referring to?

Mrs SMITH: You mentioned in estimates Boeing and the announcement of \$1 million in the media yesterday. I am guessing it is under one of your Advance Queensland projects—the \$1 million. We will take our pick. Let us go for page 3 where we refer to Advance Queensland. It is a bit of a lucky dip. It is about Advance Queensland. Did a Queensland company have an opportunity to be considered?

Ms ENOCH: In terms of the acceleration of the Advance Queensland initiative—that is, the whole-of-government \$405 million agenda—there is a particular area where my department has responsibility and that is platform technology. We have committed \$10 million around platform technology. This partnership with Boeing, who already have over a thousand workers in Queensland, enables us to be able to partner not just with Boeing but with the Queensland Gas Co. and Telstra to ensure we have further opportunities to explore technology with regard to unmanned vehicles.

Mrs SMITH: Minister, would it surprise you, then, to know that a small electronic company in my electorate called RF Technologies had been doing the scoping and similar work of drones for Boeing? Max Rose and his wife, Rosemary, have been in business for 23 years. Would it not have been a smarter direction from the government to probably invest in that Queensland company? They employ 23 people. They have done that type of work for Boeing. As I said, it is in a local electorate, employing locals. Would that not have been a smarter way to have invested that \$1 million?

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to answer the question.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, it sounds as though you are seeking an opinion. Can you rephrase it so it is not an opinion based question, please?

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to take it as a question. One of the things that we can be very proud of is that in this state we have seen some incredible work happening in terms of drone technology. The Boeing agreement may mean that that company that the member for Mount Ommaney is referring to may actually be part of the work going forward. They will get the opportunity not only to potentially continue their relationship with Boeing but obviously to be able to tap into the global supply chain with regard to the development of this technology. This is huge deal in terms of a great international

partnership that will open up a whole heap of opportunities in particular for small- and medium-size enterprises in our state.

Mrs SMITH: I put it to you that they were already doing business with Boeing. The government now has paid that \$1 million to a multinational company, whereas I think my question was: shouldn't we be supporting the small Queensland businesses instead of giving a million dollars to a multinational? They have to compete worldwide and that is getting harder and harder for small, mum-and-dad businesses?

Ms ENOCH: In response to that, a key component of this program that is outlined in the detailed business case that is developed by Boeing to support this proposal is that the Queensland government contribution will be spent entirely in Queensland, with at least 40 per cent of the \$1 million to be spent with Queensland based SMEs. It is very possible that the company you are referring to will be part of this broader partnership arrangement. Forty per cent of all of that funding will be spent on local SMEs. That \$1 million that we have invested has leveraged \$3.3 million. For \$1 million we have been able to get an extra \$3.3 million on top of that. That will be spent right here in Queensland. SMEs will be part of that. The opportunity to be part of global supply chains in this advancing technology that will have impact right across a whole heap of industries is a really positive thing for our state.

Mrs SMITH: Going forward on platform technology, I refer to your answer to question on notice No. 3. The answer states—

The Platform Technology program will encourage the development and deployment of platform technologies in existing and emerging industries. A range of technologies will be considered, with a key focus on differentiating Queensland's competitive advantages.

Minister, can you tell me what that means in layman's terms?

Ms ENOCH: Yes, I am happy to. I thank the member for the question. When we are talking about competitive advantages, this is where we are understanding where our industries' strengths are already. There are some vertical industries that we already have some significant maturity in. Platform technologies are really about the horizontal. How do we improve and enhance all of those vertical industries in terms of new technologies that are those platform technologies so that we can strengthen and create some more competitiveness in terms of our competitive edge—I am talking about those industries that we have some maturity in—so that they can remain competitive in a very changing global environment? That might involve sensor technology. That might involve big data, for instance. It could involve, as we have already been talking about, unmanned vehicles, internet of things—all of those platform technologies that will enhance those mature industries that we already have which we refer to as competitive advantages.

Mrs SMITH: Minister, if you and I were to go down and sip on a shandy at the Forest Lake Tavern and we had a few constituents there, do you think they would grasp or understand that answer?

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, I think that is a hypothetical. You are asking for an opinion there.

Ms ENOCH: It is very hypothetical!

Mrs SMITH: Well, I put the challenge out. We will go down and sip on a shandy—

CHAIR: I rule that question out of order because it does contain opinion. Member for Mount Ommaney, do you have another question, please?

Mrs SMITH: My next question is in regard to evaluating all of these programs. Again, we go to initiatives that have been part of the Accelerating Advance Queensland. To question on notice No. 3, the response we received states—

The Queensland Government is committed to adopting best practice evaluation methodologies. This will include a mix of evaluation methods to assess impact and value for money. These methods may include in-depth case studies and interviews, surveys of benefiting firms, econometric analysis, and other low-cost experimental techniques that draw on latest private sector approaches.

That is in your answer to question on notice No. 3. Is this how we are going to evaluate the criteria of whether a program is successful or not successful? What does all of that bureaucratic waffle mean?

Ms ENOCH: What that paragraph means is that we are going to be looking obviously for best practice evaluation methodologies—best practice and innovative methodologies—to ensure we have the right information that consumers and citizens expect to get from a government. That is why we are looking at lots of different ways to create the set of data to support the information that is coming through and give us those good indicators for where we are going next.

Mrs SMITH: I want to ask you about the Home-based Business Grants Program, which was the entrepreneurial home based grant that came out last year.

Ms ENOCH: Through the chair, that is a different SDS to this SDS.

Mrs SMITH: I know but my question to you is: if the evaluation criteria is already in place, wouldn't that already be used? That program went out. It was closed. It is under review. Obviously that has been evaluated. A lot of that work has already been done. It comes under your portfolio of small business.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, this is actually the estimates hearing around Science, Information Technology and Innovation. I do not think it has relevance to the minister's portfolio during this estimates hearing.

Ms ENOCH: It is a completely different SDS. It does not surprise me that the member is reaching for another SDS given that they have no policy in regard to innovation.

Miss BARTON: That is very unbecoming of you, Minister.

Mrs SMITH: Here we were friends and we were sipping on shandies and then you had to go and ruin it.

Ms ENOCH: Hypothetically.

CHAIR: Minister, I do not think that was an appropriate statement to make at that particular time.

Ms ENOCH: Fair enough.

CHAIR: Member for Mount Ommaney, do you have another question?

Mrs SMITH: I do have a couple more questions.

CHAIR: Just one more, thank you.

Mrs SMITH: The time has gone so quickly and we had so many areas to cover. Minister, is the director-general aware of any instances in which the department has been invoiced for the supply of materials or services yet investigations have found the materials or services have not been supplied? I am happy to put that on notice.

CHAIR: Can you repeat the question? Member for Mount Ommaney, can you be more specific?

Mrs SMITH: I refer to page 14 of the SDS in relation to the departmental budget summary, and I ask: is the director-general aware of any instances in which the department has been invoiced for the supply of materials or services yet investigations have found the materials or services have not been supplied? I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr Hills: Through the minister, we will take that on notice.

Mrs SMITH: One quick question because that was a quick answer—

CHAIR: You are stretching the friendship now, member for Mount Ommaney, but I will allow a quick question.

Mrs SMITH: The industry engagement action plan, which was supposed to be released by June 2016, was first reviewed a year ago. We were expecting the report and a refresh to be released by June 2016. When will we be receiving that report?

Ms ENOCH: Could I ask that the member ask the question again with reference to the SDS?

Mrs SMITH: I refer to page 14 of the SDS and the industry engagement action plan.

Ms ENOCH: Are you talking about the ICT Industry Engagement Action Plan?

Mrs SMITH: No. I am talking about your industry engagement action plan that you got around with businesses et cetera. That was supposed to be released in June 2016.

Ms ENOCH: I think the member is referring to the ICT Industry Engagement Action Plan. Either version of what the member is referring to is not on page 14. The ICT Industry Engagement Action Plan I think is what you might be referring to. That was launched in July 2015.

Mrs SMITH: And you were going to do the report and have it released by June.

Ms ENOCH: The plan was co-designed with the ICT industry and targeted improvements in four key areas: communication between government and industry, support for SMEs, streamlining government procurement, and collaboration and innovation. Sixteen of the 37 actions from the action plan are now complete. Two new actions have been added to the original 35 following board discussions. These fall into the collaboration and innovation strategy. Since June 2015, the department has run a quarterly speed networking event called Talk IT Up—IT, a little bit clever. There has been a

great deal of work happening in terms of that particular action plan. In terms of the question about the report, I will just take one moment. I am assuming that is the action plan you are referring to. I cannot see anything else on page 14 that gives us—

CHAIR: No. I cannot see anything on page 14 of the SDS.

Ms ENOCH: In terms of industry engagement—

Mrs SMITH: In terms of your action plan, one of your follow-throughs was that in June 2016 you would release the report of the review and a refresh.

Ms ENOCH: Without knowing exactly which action plan the member is referring to, it is a bit hard to answer that question. In terms of industry engagement, I have just launched the SBIR, the Small Business Innovation Research program, which really seeks solutions on government challenges. That has been very well received by the small business sector and the innovation sector. There are a number of elements. If the member wants to write to me with a more specific question with regard to exactly which industry action plan she is talking about, I am happy to provide those details once I know exactly which one she is referring to.

CHAIR: I have one last question. We will run out of time. In relation to page 5 of the SDS, can you give the committee more information about fostering innovation across regional Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. As we all know, Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia. The challenges of decentralisation also encourage ingenuity, and there is an extraordinary level of untapped entrepreneurial potential and opportunity across the state. Through Advance Queensland, we are delivering programs that aim to harness the ingenuity and creativity of regional Queenslanders to build on our competitive advantages and support innovation led growth.

Innovate Queensland workshops stimulate business innovation and have been held in Cairns, Townsville, Airlie Beach, Mackay, Mount Isa, Redcliffe, Toowoomba, Logan—a number of places. One example—I mentioned them before—is Townsville Engineering Industries, which has been funded through our Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program. Through this \$50,000 funding, the company will work with James Cook University to develop low-cost wireless sensors to monitor equipment and provide real-time information alerts before equipment failure.

This year we have provided funding to 50 regional start-ups to attend the hugely successful Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit to showcase their ideas, learn from the global thought leaders and take learnings back to their local start-up ecosystem. We have also funded start-up activities from Cairns to the Gold Coast and out to Charters Towers and Toowoomba through the Queensland Startup Events and Activities Fund. Regional researchers are also being boosted through Advance Queensland, with awards to researchers at universities across the state, with projects ranging from new therapies for coeliac disease to early detection of crop stressors in tropical cropping systems.


Through the acceleration of Advance Queensland funding we are investing \$6 million in new regional innovation hubs. In terms of programs, we are also supporting initiatives that provide our regions with the tools to turn ideas into commercial opportunities, create jobs and contribute to our enviable quality of life here in Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. It is now five o'clock on the dot. Thank you for that. We shall now quickly—

Ms ENOCH: In relation to the question on notice that we took from the member for Bundamba, we do have the list of the 24 if you want me to table that now or I can provide that information now.

CHAIR: Just table that. That will be fine, thank you. Is leave granted to table that response?

Ms ENOCH: We only have one copy.

 **CHAIR:** We will get copies. Leave is granted. We will very quickly swap over to Small Business please. Minister, we will get started as quickly as we can. Minister, just to let you know, we will run a little over time. We will finish an hour after we commenced. Thank you. The hearing will now continue with the examination of estimates for the minister's portfolio area of Small Business. Minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the visiting members of the committee. When we came to government nearly 18 months ago there was a great deal of repair work to be done in regards to the Queensland government support of small business. During their time in office, the former LNP government stripped away a range of support and services including abolishing the small business commissioner, leaving Queensland without a voice at the national policy table. I would like to

acknowledge the work the member for Ashgrove did in her time as Minister for Small Business to relay the foundations of support for the sector in Queensland including meeting our election commitment to establish the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council. I would also like to acknowledge the Director-General, Megan Houghton and all of the team in the Small Business division of the department for their hard work in relaying those foundations.

Since taking on the portfolio in late December it has been my focus to build on those foundations and create the right environment in Queensland for small businesses to start, grow and employ. I consulted extensively with small business owners and operators, key stakeholders and, of course, the Small Business Advisory Council and the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities small businesses see in Queensland's economy. As a result of this consultation and the hard work of my department, we have created the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20 to put a framework in place for small business to not only survive but to thrive. The Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy has an emphasis on stronger advocacy for small business, enabling small business to access business opportunities with, and connect to, government and empowering small businesses to start, work smarter, grow and employ. The strategy will create an environment to increase Queensland's business competitiveness and make Queensland the state to start and grow a small business.

The Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy has a strong regional focus with initiatives that will build better partnerships with government and regional stakeholders. A key part of the strategy is the establishment of the Office of Small Business, which I am pleased to advise the committee I officially opened this morning. The office will help small business create jobs, drive business growth, harness innovation, build digital capacity and improve coordination of small business initiatives across government. The office will deliver programs such as the small business entrepreneurs grant program to support new small businesses and expand the hugely successful Mentoring for Growth program. It will also provide targeted support for small business to participate in the digital economy through the Small Business Digital Grants program that will provide matched funding of up to \$10,000.

We have also announced that we will appoint a small business champion to bring us in line with other states and return Queensland's voice to the national policy discussion table. The committee may be aware that the small business champion position was publicly advertised on 19 June and applications will close this Friday. A new small business knowledge hub will also be created to research key issues impacting Queensland small business and we will draw on this to inform and influence policy decision-making across the Queensland government.

These initiatives will help small business increase their digital capabilities, presence and sales; ensure a more coordinated approach to service delivery across the government; strengthen support for regional small business; and provide increased advocacy for small business. As the committee can see, the Palaszczuk government is working hard to provide the support small business has asked for and give them the best opportunity to start, grow and employ right here in Queensland.

CHAIR: I now invite questions from the member for Indooroopilly.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you. The question is to the director-general. I see that you are the director-general for the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, a very busy role. What are your priorities, given you have control and responsibility across that entire department over the next 12 months? Give me your top three if you could over the next 12 months, please.

CHAIR: Can I get you to introduce yourself for the first time?

Ms Houghton: Megan Houghton. I am the director-general of the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order. What page is the member referring to in the SDS?

Mr EMERSON: I could refer to any of those pages—page 4, page 1, page 2, page 3, page 4.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, can we be a bit more specific?

Mr EMERSON: That is fine. We can talk about page 4. I refer to page 4 of the SDS.

Ms Houghton: My top three priorities: I need to deliver the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy and ensure that it brings home the economic return that we targeting; I need to provide an assurance role over the Commonwealth Games to ensure that, again, we get the return on investment for the state's investment in the games; and I will continue to promote tourism growth across the state through the advancing tourism strategy that is currently being developed by the department.

Mr EMERSON: In terms of your basic days and your weeks, how much would you divide up between those many roles that you have there? Say, how much would small business take up of your day?

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, I appreciate your question delving into the workload of the director-general, but we are looking at the Appropriation Bill. Are there questions specific to appropriations?

Mr EMERSON: I again point to the fact that it is covering small business. SDS 4 talks about that, so that is why I am interested in it. The question is: how much time do those responsibilities take up, given that you are the director-general for the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games? How much does it take up of your workload?

CHAIR: Again, member for Indooroopilly, I will clarify what I have said before and it is around the Appropriation Bill. Is there a specific line item or something specific? We are talking about time at this stage, so I need you to be specific for the appropriation.

Mr EMERSON: SDS page 6 talks about service area highlights and small business strategy. My question is very clearly to the director-general from the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Mr Chair, I do not see what the problem is in actually asking this question. It confuses me that you are not willing to let me ask it. Here is the director-general. How much of your time out of that workload is taken up by Small Business?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Indooroopilly. I will clarify it for the third time, otherwise I will rule it out of order. I do not think we are debating the amount of time. What we are looking at here is the Appropriation Bill.

Mr EMERSON: Mr Chair, let's be very clear here.

CHAIR: Yes, please.

Mr EMERSON: It is SDS page 6, small business services and you can see the title at the top there. Given the fact that the department director-general is here, in her responsibility as the Small Business director-general—and she has many responsibilities; it is a quite straightforward question—how much, given those responsibilities, is taken up out of her heavy workload? Given that she also has responsibility for the Commonwealth Games, Tourism and Major Events—page 6 is there. How much of her time would be taken up with that area of her responsibilities?

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Indooroopilly. I do see on page 6 it does mention small business services, but apart from that, I cannot see anywhere highlighted in here around time allocations for the specific director-general.

Miss BARTON: Mr Chair, it goes to, if I may, the shadow minister being able to understand the priorities that have been outlined not only in the SDS by the government but also by the director-general herself. It is an immediate follow-on to being able to ensure that those priorities are viable, both with respect to those outlined in the SDS and also with respect to the priorities as outlined by the director-general. Given particularly, as well, that the director-general's time is Queensland taxpayers' money I do think it is therefore quite relevant to the Appropriation Bills.

Mr SAUNDERS: Mr Chair, this is also Queensland taxpayers' money. Can we move on?

Miss BARTON: If we could put the question, we would, member for Maryborough.

Mr EMERSON: Mr Chair, there are 400,000 small businesses out there across Queensland. I guess they would be interested to know how much time the director-general is dedicating to their interests. That is all I am asking. How much time, Director-General, are you spending on Small Business, trying to advocate for those 400,000 small businesses out there, the backbone of the Queensland economy?

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Chair. It is actually 406,000 small businesses. However—

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Minister—406,000. Director-General, how many of those 406,000 small businesses are you advocating for?

Ms ENOCH: I would imagine that the director-general spends just as much on Small Business as the former director-general did under the former government.

Mr EMERSON: Excuse me, Mr Chair. I am directing my question to the director-general. If she cannot answer it, I am happy to move on.

Ms Houghton: I can answer.

CHAIR: Okay, if you are prepared to. Otherwise I will rule it out of order.

Ms Houghton: I have been in the seat as the director-general for the last 11 months. Roughly looking at the time that I have spent on each portfolio, I would say that Small Business has probably had more than a third of the share of my time because we have been so dedicated to developing the new strategy and creating the Office of Small Business.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Director-General. I appreciate the question being answered, Mr Chair. My question now is to the minister. As you said, there are 406,000 small businesses across Queensland, which are the backbone of this state, and I appreciate that you know those figures. Can you tell me how many people are employed in those 406,000 small businesses.

Ms ENOCH: Again, through the chair, which SDS page are you referring to?

Mr EMERSON: Small business, again, page 6.

Ms ENOCH: Is that the actual question?

Mr EMERSON: Small business, page 6, service area highlights, service area description, Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy. Since you were quite happy to mention the 406,000 small businesses that are in Queensland, how many employees would they have?

CHAIR: Minister, I will—

Mr EMERSON: I am happy for you to take it on notice, Minister, if you do not know the number.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to take that on notice—

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Minister.

Ms ENOCH:—for the specifics because it is—

Miss BARTON: Point of order. She has taken a question on notice. I think we can move on to the next question.

CHAIR: Just one moment. I think the minister is clarifying taking it on notice.

Ms ENOCH: It is a moving figure obviously. We have just heard the member for Indooroopilly talking about—

Miss BARTON: That is not clarifying.

Ms ENOCH:—small business and 400,000—

Mr EMERSON: Minister, you were very clear—

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, thank you. You have asked the minister a question. She has indicated that she will take it on notice, but she is actually clarifying—

Ms ENOCH: I just want to clarify that. It is not an easy figure to obtain so it will be a difficult task for the department to get that. We will endeavour to provide an answer to that question, but it will be difficult to gather that information.

Mr EMERSON: My next question is to the minister. You mentioned earlier in your opening statement about the Small Business Champion. Where did the concept for the Small Business Champion come from?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question and I thank the member for his interest in the Small Business Champion. As he would be well aware, the former LNP government abolished the small business commissioner very early in its time in government and it created a situation where Queensland was not present at the national table—the only mainland state that was not present at the national table in terms of having a voice for small business around regulation, policy and program design at the national level. In consultation with the Small Business Advisory Council in the development of the Advancing Small Business Strategy, the Small Business Champion was one of a number of initiatives that we discussed with the Small Business Advisory Council, and that is where the Small Business Champion initiative arose. We also had conversations with Kate Carnell, the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, and she gave some advice as well in terms of the requirements to sit at that national table.

Mr EMERSON: I notice that in your statement about the Small Business Champion—I again refer to the SDS at page 6—in terms of small business and the Advancing Small Business Queensland strategy, some of the roles for that Small Business Champion are engaging with peak bodies representing small business and advocacy at all levels of government on matters of concern to small business. Minister, is that not your job as small business minister?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. There are many roles to play in this. The Small Business Champion also needs to fill that national level position for us. As I said, Queensland has been missing for the past three-and-a-bit years in terms of being part of that national table, and that has been a big concern for small businesses. They have certainly made that clear to me.

Mr EMERSON: I understand what you are saying, Minister, but is it not your job to advocate at all levels—small government to local government to federal government—on behalf of small business? Is that not your job as the Minister for Small Business? Rather than appointing someone else as a Small Business Champion, are you not supposed to be the champion?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the follow-on question. I certainly take seriously my role in the cabinet, and that is why I have championed the development of the Advancing Small Business Strategy. It is a little bit rich for those opposite to be talking about advocacy, when the former LNP government stripped all advocacy for small business with regard to our national presence.

Mr EMERSON: Have you been doing your job advocating for small business at a level since you became the minister?

Ms ENOCH: I represent small business in cabinet, which is something that we have also seen is no longer present at the federal level. We have seen the federal government remove small business from the inner cabinet. That is not the case in the Queensland government. I am representing small business in the cabinet.

Mr EMERSON: Why do you not do more than just advocate in cabinet? Should you not be advocating across-the-board rather than with your Labor mates in cabinet? Should you not be advocating for small business across-the-board rather than appointing another bureaucrat to do it for you?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I have already explained the role of the Small Business Champion. Again, Kate Carnell actually said that the more voices we have standing up for small business the better. She looks forward to working with the Small Business Champion—

Mr EMERSON: My concern is—

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked the question. The minister is in the midst of answering that question. Please cease your interjections.

Ms ENOCH: Kate Carnell also said that the more voices we have standing up for small businesses the better. She is looking forward to working with the Small Business Champion out of Queensland to do all we can to ensure businesses in Queensland have every opportunity to innovate, expand and employ. There are a number of measures in place. My role in terms of advocating on behalf of small business in the cabinet and beyond, the role of the Small Business Advisory Council, the role of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council, and now the role of the Small Business Champion—all of these roles together will be able to bring more voices to advocate on behalf of small business, which is something that we were sadly missing from the former government in terms of the small business commissioner.

Mr EMERSON: Why did the Queensland Chamber of Commerce & Industry oppose the appointment of a Small Business Champion?

Ms ENOCH: What page of the SDS is the member referring to?

Mr EMERSON: I am talking to your advancing Queensland strategy, which is what it involves, on page 6. Why did the CCIQ oppose it?

CHAIR: I am searching through page 6 to determine—

Mr EMERSON: On page 6, as the minister has indicated, part of their small business strategy is the appointment of a Small Business Champion. I ask again: why did the CCIQ oppose the appointment of a small business advocate, as indicated?

Ms ENOCH: What evidence is the member referring to? Right now the CCIQ have representation on the Small Business Advisory Council and on the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council.

Mr EMERSON: That was not the question. Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: The minister is answering your question. We do not need the interjections. Do you have a point of order?

Mr EMERSON: My point of order is that the minister is not answering my question. I asked her why the CCIQ opposed it. She has not answered that question. It appears that she is not aware of that.

CHAIR: The minister may answer the question in any way she sees fit. I invite you to answer the question that has been asked of you, Minister.

Ms ENOCH: As I said, the CCIQ have membership on the Small Business Advisory Council. There was consultation that occurred around the actual title and the role of the Small Business Champion, and that is how we landed on this particular way forward.

Mr EMERSON: Point of order, Mr Chair. My question to the minister is very clear: why did the CCIQ oppose the appointment? That is a very simple question. I am just asking the minister. If she has not read their submission I accept that, but if she would just say that I will move on.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Yes, I have seen the submission. If you have the submission in front of you, you would know that there were concerns about whether that would impinge on their role in terms of how they advocate for small business. As I have said, through consultation with the Small Business Advisory Council and directly with CCIQ leadership, this is where we landed in terms of the role and the responsibilities of the Small Business Champion, including the title. That is where we landed after some ongoing consultation and negotiation with CCIQ to ensure there was not any overlapping role.

Mr EMERSON: I asked earlier if you had read the submission by the CCIQ.

Ms ENOCH: I have read many submissions on many occasions on many different topics. I have had one-on-one conversations with members of CCIQ with regard to their concerns and obviously their input to the overall strategy. There have been a number of exchanges, including the declaration that—

CCIQ is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with the State Government and other stakeholders to ensure the ongoing success of small business in Queensland.

...

The Queensland business community is pleased to be afforded due recognition by this strategy

That is a direct quote from correspondence with CCIQ.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, do you agree with their submission where it is said that this strategy effectively sets up a taxpayer funded duplication of activities that is already occurring?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the follow-on question. As I have said, since that submission there has been ongoing consultation with CCIQ one-on-one with myself directly, with members of my team and of course with the director-general and inside the broader Small Business Advisory Council. Since that submission we have been able to land where we are now in terms of the Small Business Champion.

Mr EMERSON: You are saying that the CCIQ now supports the appointment of a Small Business Champion?

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked this question several times.

Mr EMERSON: Just a simple yes-or-no answer from the minister would be great.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked this question several times. I believe the minister has answered your question satisfactorily.

Mr EMERSON: Point of order, Mr Chair. What the minister has said is that they have landed somewhere. I am just clarifying that for the sake of this estimates hearing. Does the CCIQ now support the appointment of a Small Business Champion?

Ms ENOCH: Through the chair I am happy to answer. The CCIQ has made it very clear that they support the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy, of which the Small Business Champion is a component. They have been engaged in the consultation with regard to the development of the strategy, including that component, and they have made it clear that they support the strategy overall.

Mr SAUNDERS: Minister, page 6 of the SDS refers to ensuring that businesses can seamlessly interact with government. Can you tell the committee what you are doing to ensure this happens?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. In my travels around the state as minister I have heard from countless Queensland small businesses. They have told me that they want government to work in a more coordinated and connected way to deliver outcomes that matter to them. We have listened and we are acting. As the member knows, the Palaszczuk government is committed to small business in our state. That is why we are investing \$22.7 million to support Queensland's small businesses through the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy and why this morning I was so delighted to open the new Office of Small Business.

The Office of Small Business will drive the strategy, facilitate a coordinated approach to the development and delivery of programs, lead small business policy development and advocate for small business to give them a strong voice in government. The office will not duplicate programs already in place, but it will work proactively with other agencies to achieve better coordination and targeting to better enable small businesses to succeed. Importantly, the Office of Small Business will drive implementation of the strategy across the Queensland government and deliver the majority of programs in the strategy, including three great new grant programs and the expansion of the highly successful Mentoring for Growth program.

As I mentioned, advocacy will be a key role for the office, and that is why we are recruiting a Small Business Champion, who will listen to the views of small business and existing industry advocacy bodies like CCIQ to ensure their voices are heard by government. The Office of Small Business will provide support to the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council and the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council to assist them in providing advice to the government on key existing and emerging issues of importance to small business. The office will also be delivering the government's business services online through Business Queensland online, which was formerly known as the business and industry portal, and I look forward to working closely with the new Office of Small Business to ensure that Queensland is the premier place for small business to start, grow and employ.

Mr WILLIAMS: I refer to page 3 of the SDS. Minister, can you outline how the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy will help small businesses in Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am incredibly proud of the work my department has done in collaboration with the small business community and in consultation with the Small Business Advisory Council to develop this Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy. As part of the \$405 million whole-of-government Advance Queensland initiative, the strategy will focus on making Queensland the place for small business to start, grow and employ. The Palaszczuk government, as I said, has allocated \$22.7 million in the 2016-17 state budget to implement the strategy. This includes funding for new and expanded grant programs to help people start a new business, to help them through that crucial first five years and enable them to better embrace digital technologies, which is incredibly important.

A key part of this implementation will be aligning the work done under the strategy with the whole-of-government Advance Queensland agenda. This in itself is a positive step for small business. The strategy will connect small business to the innovation agenda, unlocking new ways of working and new partnerships to help small businesses create jobs, drive productivity and harness innovation. By creating an environment for small businesses to increase productivity, PwC's *Small business: digital growth report* found that Queensland small businesses can unlock an additional \$11 billion of private sector output over the next 10 years from better use of internet and mobile technology.

Whether a business owner is starting or running a business or wanting to grow from a small business into a medium-sized business, the programs offered under the Advancing Small Business Strategy have been designed to help Queensland businesses succeed. New and expanded grants programs include: the Small Business Entrepreneur Grants, formerly the Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Program, which will see \$2 million per year over three years; the Accelerate Small Business Grants Program, a \$1 million investment per year for three years; and \$2 million per year for three years for the Small Business Digital Grants Program. The Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy is a comprehensive plan for supporting small businesses in the way they told us they wanted to be supported. We are creating the right environment for small business to start, grow and employ right here in Queensland.

Mr WILLIAMS: Page 6 of the SDS refers to the Expanding Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Program. Why have you chosen to do this?

Ms ENOCH: The Palaszczuk government is committed to creating the environment where Queensland is the place for small business to start, grow and employ. I was pleased to announce the expansion of the program as part of the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy. The program more than achieved its objectives, with 93 per cent of applicants reporting improved work-life balance now or in the future and 97 per cent of applicants reporting they expect their revenue to grow. While expanding the program, we have also taken the opportunity to re-name it, based on valuable feedback from participants. We now will refer to it as the Small Business Entrepreneur Grants, which I think better reflects the intention of the funding. In developing the Advancing Small Business Strategy, we reviewed the existing programs and identified what we had learned and how we could deliver an even better program to benefit small business. The demand was extremely high and demonstrated that businesses

saw benefit in what the program was trying to achieve. This need has been reinforced by my own contact with grant recipients. I have heard first-hand the impact the grant has had.

One example is Kerri Abbott, a naturopath and grant recipient in Buderim, who said, 'The best thing I learnt was how to construct a business plan and more importantly an action plan to ensure changes happen. This grant has been a great initiative for small business, I have learnt so much and can see my business growing in the future because of it.' What a great endorsement for what this program is achieving, which is why we are expanding it. This expanded program will have four elements: Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program; New Business for Tomorrow Program, including new ideas forums and workshops; Advancing Women in Business Program; and Advancing Indigenous Business Program.

The design of the expanded program has commenced and we will be launching progressively throughout 2016-17. The success of the program has been absolutely phenomenal. I look forward to sharing future success stories from the expanded program.

Mr WILLIAMS: Can the minister give us further examples of how the grants are helping small business?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for that question. I love sharing stories, because they demonstrate just how impactful these grants can be. Let me tell you a bit about Shannon Lee Hawkes, a floral artisan who has received an Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow grant. Miss Hawkes loves to see the joy she brings to people through her love of creating artistic floral arrangements. She courageously gave up her full-time role in real estate to pursue her passion of becoming a florist. Miss Hawkes was one of two small businesses on the Capricorn Coast region to receive support from the Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow home-based business grants program. Miss Hawkes said the money was extremely helpful, allowing her to launch her new business to the wider community. Miss Hawkes said, 'I love the creative side of it and seeing something you have worked on all come together. I'm working on building my studio from home. Going through the workshop process with the business consultant was great, because it forced me to think about the business from different perspectives, which helped to identify areas of opportunity and risk that I hadn't previously considered. Engaging a consultant to assist with these thought-provoking processes is probably not something I would have done without the financial assistance provided by this grant.' Miss Hawkes now has the knowledge she needs to grow her business because of the support the Queensland government gave her. That is what we are doing: backing small business and small business entrepreneurs who have the courage to back themselves.

Mr SAUNDERS: Page 6 of the SDS introduces us to measures of businesses assisted by small business programs that report after 12 months. There is a 10 per cent increase in employment, turnover or profitability. Why was this measure changed?

Ms ENOCH: The government recognises that small businesses face a range of challenges and has developed a dedicated agenda to address their needs and help them to succeed and grow. The majority of small business owners work so hard in their business that it is difficult to find the time to work on their business. That is why we have aligned the Advancing Small Business Strategy with the Working Queensland and Advance Queensland agendas and, based on feedback from small businesses, expanded our grants programs. That is why the SDS measure has changed. Going forward, it needs to incorporate not just the incredibly successful Mentoring for Growth Program but also the new and expanded grant programs to be delivered via the strategy. These include the new Accelerate Small Business Grants Program, the new Small Business Digital Grants Program and the expanded Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program, as I said, formerly known as the Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow home-based business grants. Indicators of the overall success of programs in the strategy include: more small businesses in Queensland surviving their first five years, which is a massive challenge for small businesses; an increase in the adoption of digital technologies, again a very important aspect of the ability for small business to compete into the future; more small businesses growing to medium-size businesses; and of course client outcomes and satisfaction levels.

Measuring for Growth has an exceptional record on all of these measures, and we look forward to the new programs delivering results for small businesses across the state. A detailed monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed by the new Office of Small Business aligning to the Queensland government's program evaluation guidelines. Program participants will be surveyed to measure their level of satisfaction and expected outcomes. When surveying participants, the number of jobs created and increases in revenue and turnover obviously can be identified, which is an important opportunity for us to gather that kind of data. Annual surveys are already in place for Mentoring for Growth. It is

very clear that Mentoring for Growth has been a huge success. I look forward to seeing the new programs achieve the same excellent results for Queensland small businesses.

Mr SAUNDERS: Can the minister give us any examples of a business that has benefitted this way?

Ms ENOCH: I would very much like to share some successes of these programs that we run. Let me refer to All Purpose Coating, a family-owned specialist floor coating products manufacturer. Charmaine Ashford contacted the Queensland government Mentoring for Growth Program because her business needed help with their continued growth. They had implemented everything within their level of knowledge but needed guidance on how to move forward. Miss Charmaine Ashford said, 'I was very excited to learn that our business had been selected for the Queensland state government program called Mentoring for Growth. Following our first meeting, I came away feeling extremely positive about the kind of support available for a small businesses such as ours. I no longer feel isolated, and appreciated all of the information, expertise and contact.' Recently they returned for a second mentoring panel session to explore options for the future expansion of All Purpose Coatings and Ms Ashford said, 'Continued growth from both our companies has allowed us to purchase our own factory at Sumner Park whereby we can manufacture and formulate our epoxy flooring products. Our future goal is to be known Australia-wide as the brand to turn to for quality flooring solutions, training and advice.'

With the assistance from Mentoring for Growth, All Purpose Coatings have been able to double the number of staff they employ and to purchase new and enlarged premises. They have commenced work on establishing a national distribution network which will include warehouses in each major interstate market. These are the kind of successes that Mentoring for Growth produces. Mentoring for Growth has been incredibly successful. But let us not forget that the former LNP government actually cut all funding to this particular program, a program that produces clear results and increased profit, employment and turnover for small businesses. We are restoring that and expanding it to ensure that small businesses are able to benefit from what is an incredibly successful program.

Mr EMERSON: I refer to page 6 of the SDS and to implementation of the Queensland Small Business Strategy. Page 2 of that strategy mentions the annual update on red-tape reduction. I understand that there has been no update at this stage; is that correct?

Ms ENOCH: There is a report that is being finalised by the Red Tape Advisory Council.

Mr EMERSON: I understand there is a draft report that has been completed. It has been handed to government now; is that correct?

Ms ENOCH: Yes, that is right.

Mr EMERSON: Can you give us some insight into what it indicates about the government's effort and successes or otherwise in terms of red-tape reduction? Does it show that red tape has been reduced?

Ms ENOCH: For the member's benefit, one of the things that we need to understand is that not all regulation is bad regulation. I am happy that the meal that I got at lunch time was prepared safely and that I am able to sit here and have these questions posed to me, because there are regulations in place to ensure that food is prepared safely. There is regulation in place to ensure that lighting fixtures are installed safely so that we are not at risk of being engulfed by fire.

Mr EMERSON: On a point of order, the question was pretty straightforward. Will the minister indicate whether red tape has been reduced in that report?

Ms ENOCH: I am talking about regulation and that not all regulation is bad. How we comply with regulation is where the real rub is for small business. Let me just make this clear—this report is really about three particular areas that the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council had identified as areas that they wanted to focus on in their first year. They finalised that review on the regulatory environment for three industry sectors: agriculture, with a key focus on fruit growing; manufacturing, with a focus on light metals; and hospitality, with regards to cafes and restaurants. That will report to the Queensland parliament by September of this year, with recommendations for priority action and reform.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you for that answer. You say that will come back to the parliament by September; is that correct?

Ms ENOCH: As part of the election commitment, the agreement was that one year after the formation of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council the report would be tabled to parliament. That report is now receiving feedback from across government agencies to ensure that an action plan is attached to it.

Mr EMERSON: It will go to parliament by September. When do you expect it to be actioned by the government? There are draft reports before the government at the moment. It is July, it will go to parliament in September. When do you think that you would actually act on the recommendations of that report? It seems to be taking a very long time, that is all.

Ms ENOCH: I appreciate the member's concern, but obviously we are taking the expertise of that Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council, which has been incredibly generous with their time. That report will be finalised in terms of what actually comes to the parliament and that will come with an action plan about how government agencies will respond to the recommendations of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council.

Mr EMERSON: Back to that question I asked a bit earlier—and I appreciate your answers so far—but I have not really got the answer to the first question I asked: has it identified if red tape has been reduced? Was that the result of the report?

Ms ENOCH: I should make clear that the actual report did not identify necessarily whether there has been reduction over the last however many years.

Mr EMERSON: What is the point of the committee then if it has not identified any reductions?

CHAIR: The member for Indooroopilly will allow the minister to answer. I have given the minister a bit of latitude.

Ms ENOCH: I was trying to make a point about compliance, but anyway—

Mr EMERSON: The rissoles might be safe, Minister, but what other regulations might have been reduced?

CHAIR: I remind the minister to keep her responses brief.

Ms ENOCH: I refer the member to the answer to question on notice No. 13 which has outlined some of that already. I am happy to read that out for you.

Mr EMERSON: In terms of the draft report, just to clarify, you have mentioned the draft report as being received by the government. You have received it. It is being assessed. Just correct me here, but, from what I understand from what you have said, that committee has not identified any reductions in red tape so far?

Ms ENOCH: What that committee had committed to was developing this report that would say, 'These are the pain points in these particular industries.' They focused on these three industries and they said, 'These are the pain points that we want to address in terms of reducing red tape.' In the meantime, obviously, the government has continued to work on reducing red tape through the introduction of various pieces of legislation, including amendments to the Retail Shop Leases Act, for instance. Those amendments have improved the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the act and include the range of benefits for small business tenants, including increased flexibility regarding the landlord disclosure period.

Mr EMERSON: I think that was a process that was begun by the member for Kawana when he was last in office.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Indooroopilly. I do not think we need a commentary of who introduced what. The question is specific for the minister.

Mr EMERSON: Point of order—

CHAIR: One moment, please, while I continue. What you have asked the minister is now responding to—about what is contained in the report. Is there a point of order?

Mr EMERSON: Point of order, Mr Chair. She has not mentioned what is in the report; she is talking about other committees and what is in other documents, not what is in the report itself.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Chair. I am referring to the fact that there have been other pieces of legislation that have assisted with reducing red tape across different fields and, of course, the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council has been privy to those.

Mr EMERSON: I might move on to another question, if that would help you.

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr EMERSON: Again I mention page 6 of the SDS and the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council. I note that one of the council's tasks is to respond to requests from the minister identifying small business issues. Can you indicate what requests you have made to that council, please?

Ms ENOCH: Yes. I have been the chair of that council since the end of last year. I have chaired three meetings of that council. During those three meetings I had been very much focused on the Advancing Small Business strategy and I have brought various iterations of that to that council for their feedback, guidance and advice about what should be included in that particular strategy going forward and drawing on their expertise, obviously.

Mr EMERSON: I really ask the question, Minister, because in question on notice No. 10 I asked specifically for the minister to identify specific issues that she had requested the Small Business Advisory Council to address. There was no list provided at all. The answer was not given to that very simple and straightforward question. Can you clearly say to me the specific issues that you have requested the Small Business Advisory Council to address, please, given that it was not answered in the question on notice?

Ms ENOCH: As I have said, in the three meetings that I have chaired I have been very much focused on the finalisation of the small business strategy, which the members of the council have been consulted on. I have brought back various versions of that strategy. There have been numerous conversations between the department and members of that council to be able to finalise the wording et cetera. I thank those council members, who have been incredibly generous with their time to ensure we have a strategy that really fits what Queensland small businesses are asking of the government.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Minister. Again with reference to page 6 of the SDS, in terms of advancing small business, can the minister confirm whether she supports the proposed changes to the effects test as proposed by the federal government?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Obviously, the effects test is part of the recommendations from the Harper review. It took some time for the federal government to make up its mind in terms of whether it was supporting it or not. Of course, it is a federal government report, the Harper review. The Queensland government has obviously made submissions to the Harper review.

Mr EMERSON: The federal government has said that it is going to implement the effects test. Do you support the implementation?

Ms ENOCH: It is a staged process as well.

Mr EMERSON: The question was very straightforward. Does the minister support the implementation of the effects test? Yes or no?

Ms ENOCH: Can I just make it clear that, obviously, this is a whole-of-government approach in terms of being able to ensure our support of the recommendations or otherwise.

Mr EMERSON: I would love the minister to make it clear, Mr Chair: yes or no. That is all I am asking: yes or no.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked the question.

Miss BARTON: She is not answering it.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, please cease your interjections. Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked the minister for an answer.

Mr EMERSON: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: The minister may choose to answer the question in any way she sees fit. I believe that the minister is answering the question that you have posed. Thank you, Minister. Please continue.

Ms ENOCH: To make it crystal clear—

Mr EMERSON: Excellent.

Ms ENOCH: The Queensland government will form a position on all proposed changes to the CCA following further consultation on the exposure draft legislation.

Mr EMERSON: So you do not know?

Ms ENOCH: There is exposure draft legislation and we will need to be able to form a position on that in its entirety.

Mr EMERSON: Just to be clear, Minister, you are saying that you have not come to a conclusion yet. Let us be crystal clear, to use your words: you have not come to a conclusion yet?

Ms ENOCH: Of course the Queensland government will establish its position. I think that is fair. I think every state and territory is also looking at the draft legislation—the exposure legislation—to form their opinions on that.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, given that, what concerns do you have about the effects test?

Ms ENOCH: Through the chair, what page of the SDS is the member referring to?

Mr EMERSON: The SDS, advancing small business—as you have already mentioned, advancing small business. This clearly refers to small business. You have indicated already that you are a small business advocate yourself in terms of small business and talking about national approaches as well. You have indicated that previously in your earlier evidence.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, we have indicated to the minister that her responses need to be short and concise.

Mr EMERSON: I am just trying to guide the minister; that is all. I am trying to give her some help.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, the minister does not need your assistance. Can I suggest—

Miss Barton interjected.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, if you continue to interject you will be warned. I make that very clear now. I would hate to see it at this time of the evening, but you will be warned if you persist with your interjections. Member for Indooroopilly, can you get to your particular question as quickly as you can?

Mr EMERSON: I will repeat that question. It is very straightforward.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, what concerns do you have? Why would you oppose the effects test?

Ms ENOCH: That is a leading question, Chair. For one thing, I have made my position clear that the Queensland government will form a position on all proposed changes to the CCA following further consultation on the exposure draft legislation. That is a fair process.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Next question, please.

Mr EMERSON: I just want to follow that question up, Mr Chair, because it did not really come to that point. The effects test has been widely canvassed already. The minister has said, crystal clear, that they have not come to a conclusion yet. Do you have any concerns about the effects test?

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, you have asked that question. The minister has responded with her response due to the legal implications.

Mr EMERSON: No, I do not think—

CHAIR: Correct me if I am wrong there, Minister, but it is a legal issue?

Ms ENOCH: Chair, there is—

Miss BARTON: Point of order, Mr Chair. How is this a legal issue? I would be happy to—

CHAIR: I am just clarifying that with the minister.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to clarify it.

Mr EMERSON: The minister is struggling, clearly, Mr Chair.

Ms ENOCH: No, not at all.

Mr EMERSON: It is nothing to do with a legal issue.

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, thank you. We do not need your interjections.

Ms ENOCH: There is exposure draft legislation. Remembering that this is federal legislation, just as every state and territory is ensuring that they undertake appropriate consultation to form their position, there are a number of recommendations in the Harper review that need to be considered, of which one of them is the effects test. It would be inappropriate to make a comment on one aspect of the full exposure draft legislation until the government has prepared—

Mr EMERSON: Minister, why would it be inappropriate?

Ms ENOCH: Until the government has formed its position on all proposed changes.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Mr EMERSON: Point of order, Mr Chair. There was not an answer in that. The minister was saying nothing and she kept on saying nothing. That was the reality of that answer. I still have not had an answer to that question yet.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Indooroopilly. I believe that the minister has answered that question for you. You have asked it twice. She has answered it in similar ways both times.

Mr EMERSON: Exactly. The minister keeps—

CHAIR: Absolutely. The minister has answered the question in similar ways.

Mr EMERSON: She is saying nothing and she keeps saying it.

CHAIR: Move on to your next question, please.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, how many small businesses can take advantage of the payroll tax threshold?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. As the member would know, the government had allocated \$45 million over three years to provide a 25 per cent payroll tax rebate for employers who employ apprentices and trainees. We have seen that increase now to 50 per cent, which provides great opportunities for small businesses and medium sized enterprises to take advantage of that.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, the question was: how many small businesses can take advantage of that?

Ms ENOCH: I will just take a moment, Chair, if you do not mind.

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, I could help you if you like.

Ms ENOCH: No, that is okay.

Mr EMERSON: If you are struggling, I can give you some assistance.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Indooroopilly. Minister, I will get you to respond to the question.

Ms ENOCH: The payroll tax threshold is about a particular payroll turnover. I will take that on notice to get the exact numbers for the member.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. The question will be taken on notice.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Mr Chair. Can I point out, Minister, that, given the payroll tax threshold kicks in at \$1.1 million—

Ms ENOCH: Yes.

Mr EMERSON: Is it not correct that no small business can take advantage of it? In fact, only three per cent of businesses in Queensland pay payroll tax.

Ms ENOCH: As I have said, I am happy to take that on notice and get the specific numbers for you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Mr EMERSON: Minister, is it embarrassing that you are not aware of that being a fact—that small businesses cannot take advantage of that?

CHAIR: Member for Indooroopilly, your question has an imputation in there. Can you please rephrase your question or move on to the next one?

Mr EMERSON: I will ask the director-general, then. Director-General, how many small businesses pay payroll tax?

Ms Houghton: I do not have that number right at hand with me, but we can get that back to you. If you have a look at a wage pay bill, though, of \$1.1 million, hypothetically that could be anything from 10 to 20 people employed. That is still a definition of a small business.

CHAIR: Sorry, Director-General, we cannot have hypothetical responses.

Ms Houghton: Okay. Apologies.

CHAIR: Was that going to be your point of order?

Mr EMERSON: It would have been. Thank you, Mr Chair, for jumping in for me.

CHAIR: I believe that the same question was directed to the director-general as to the minister, which has been taken on notice. Member for Indooroopilly, do you have another question that you would like to ask?

Mr EMERSON: I will come back to the payroll tax threshold. Minister, are you happy with the level of that payroll tax threshold?

Ms ENOCH: We have the lowest payroll tax threshold in mainland Australia. That is a very positive position to be in.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you. Can you indicate to me what that percentage of tax is?

Ms ENOCH: Percentage of tax in terms of—

Mr EMERSON: The payroll tax threshold as a percentage of tax?

Ms ENOCH: As you have already heard, the current threshold is \$1.1 million.

Mr EMERSON: Yes.

Ms ENOCH: In terms of the actual percentage, the payroll tax rate is 4.75 per cent.

Mr EMERSON: Is that also the lowest in Australia?

Ms ENOCH: As I understand it, yes.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I have a question for you. Minister, can you explain how the Small Business—

Ms ENOCH: As I understand it.

CHAIR:—Advisory Council has direct input to government on issues facing small business? That is referring to page 6 of the SDS.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I am proud to be chairing the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council and to be hearing firsthand from small businesses and regional industry representatives on the key issues of concern to small business across the state. The Queensland Small Business Advisory Council is an important forum that brings small business representatives together with government to discuss these issues and to identify practical solutions that will support business growth, sustainability and employment.

Small business issues raised by the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council members at meetings centred around five key themes for small business: vision and strategy, capability, support and connection, regulation and compliance, and opportunities. The Queensland Small Business Advisory Council members have played a key role in the development of the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20, providing input and ideas about the strategic priorities for small business and giving valuable feedback about the types of support that will provide the most benefit to small business during the development of the strategy.

We have listened to the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council members and to other small businesses and industry and government stakeholders through targeted consultation and have delivered a strategy that reflects the priorities of small business in Queensland.

The Queensland Small Business Advisory Council advice was important in the decision to reschedule hosting Small Business Week, for instance, from February to May 2016 to avoid conflicts with other government and industry events. Advice from Queensland Small Business Advisory Council members also reinforced the importance of making it easier for business to interact and do business with government online, providing strong support for the department's business transformation project.

Other topics that have been discussed at the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council include innovation and the Advance Queensland agenda and existing government support programs like Mentoring for Growth and online services. I would like to thank the council again and acknowledge the contribution the members have made through the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council and the commitment they have shown in helping to make Queensland the place for small businesses to start, grow and employ. I value their input and expertise and I look forward to continuing the council's good work.

Mr WILLIAMS: What opportunities will arise for small business from the 2018 Commonwealth Games?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the honourable member for the question. While Minister Hinchliffe is responsible for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, I certainly understand that hosting the Games is a great opportunity for Queensland small business. The Queensland government is working to ensure Queensland businesses benefit from construction projects as well as supply chain contracting opportunities. The games have the capacity to create up to 30,000 full-time equivalent jobs and provide a \$2 billion boost to our state's economy. Indirect spending from the construction phase and the influx of visitors to the region is expected to contribute much, much more.

The Queensland government is working with relevant stakeholders to ensure the Gold Coast's 60,000 small businesses, as well as the greater Queensland small business community, benefit from the games and the influx of visitors to the area. Procurement for a range of goods and services is ramping up, with a significant proportion of procurement and supply chain contracting still to occur and ongoing into 2017. Meet the Buyer forums are providing opportunities for small business to learn about how to win work in major games supply chains. A Meet the Buyer forum was held on 27 June of this year on the Gold Coast at which local businesses showcased products in a bid to supply into the official games range of merchandise. Twenty-eight aspiring sublicensees attended the event, including a number of Indigenous businesses, highlighting the potential for the official Gold Coast 2018 merchandise range to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

One Queensland small business seizing opportunities from the games is Brisbane based Dot Dash. Dot Dash is a world leader in major event wayfinding services. As a small business of 12 employees, size has been no impediment to its success. For sports venues and major event precincts, a clear intuitive wayfinding strategy is an essential element of the design process. Dot Dash director, Despina Macris, said major events such as the games provide diverse opportunities enabling innovative small businesses to identify a niche fill and it will pursue that niche internationally. This is just another example of the positive environment that this government is creating for small business.

CHAIR: Minister, the time has now ended for this hearing.

Ms ENOCH: Through the Chair, can I make a couple of corrections? I just need to correct the record that the Small Business Champion was open for applications on 13 July and closes on 29 July not 19 June. Also in terms of the Queensland Shared Services client agencies that the member for Bundamba had asked for, we just wanted to update that table and resubmit a cleaner version of that—if you like, a correct version of it—so that the committee has the right document.

CHAIR: Thank you. I do remind you that there are some questions on notice. They are due by 5 pm on 28 July. That concludes the committee's hearings on matters referred to it by the parliament. Before I conclude, on behalf of the committee I thank Hansard staff for their outstanding work and the secretariat and attendants for their assistance. Thank you, Minister, and all your directors-general respectively, and also thank you, committee members. Also to our visiting members, thank you for your time. I declare this public hearing closed.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you everybody.

Committee adjourned at 6.05 pm.