



# Estimates Committee B

## 2005

### Report to the Legislative Assembly

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#### INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Standing Order 167(3) the Legislative Assembly, by Order made on 11 May 2005, referred to Estimates Committee B for investigation and report certain proposed expenditures contained in the *Appropriation Bill 2005*<sup>1</sup> Organisational units within the portfolios of the following Ministers were allocated to Estimates Committee B:

- Minister for State Development and Innovation
- Minister for Police and Corrective Services
- Minister for Child Safety

The committee held a public hearing on Wednesday, 6 July 2005. A transcript of the committee's hearing is on the Internet at:

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Hansard/>

Prior to the public hearing, the committee put 20 questions on notice to each minister. Responses to all the questions were received.

The committee has considered the estimates referred to it by examining information contained in:

- the budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- oral evidence taken at the hearing
- documents tabled at the hearing
- answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing
- additional information given in relation to answers.

Answers to questions on notice and questions taken on notice at the hearing, together with minutes of the committee's meetings, are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

#### STATE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

The Department of State Development and Innovation provides business and market development services as well as infrastructure and project facilitation.

The 2005-06 budget provides for a 62.8% increase in the department's operational budget to \$286.8 million.<sup>2</sup>

The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2005-06 compared to the previous financial year.

	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Departmental Outputs	172,625	279,419
Equity Adjustment	9,704	7,221
Administered Items	85,259	59,514
<b>Vote Total</b>	<b>267,588</b>	<b>346,154</b>

Key elements in the 2005-06 Budget include:

- \$128 million for the Innovation Building Fund
- \$60 million over four years for the Innovations Project Fund
- \$12 million for the Innovation Skills Fund over four years
- an additional \$20 million for the Smart State Research Facilities Fund (SSRFF)<sup>3</sup>
- \$7 million over two years for the Queensland Scale-Up Manufacturing Facility
- \$7.3 million for the Ethanol Industry Action Plan over two financial years
- \$18.8 million to implement the \$25 million Western Hardwoods Plan
- an International competitive bidding process for the development rights for the Aurukun Bauxite Resource

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<sup>1</sup> The Order was amended on 12 May 2005 changing the organisational units and portfolios allocated to Estimates Committee B by omitting 'Attorney-General and Minister for Justice' and adding 'Minister for State Development and Innovation'.

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<sup>2</sup> This includes \$7.388 million of own source revenue.

<sup>3</sup> The additional funding will bring the total funding that has been available as part of the SSRFF to \$170 million

- completion of the Burnett River dam and transfer of ownership to SunWater
- implementation of the government's 'coal infrastructure program of actions'

Issues canvassed in questions on notice and at the hearing included:

- State Development and Innovation Centres at Cairns, the Sunshine Coast, Springwood, Mackay, the Gold Coast and Brisbane
- initiatives to encourage the participation of women in business
- initiatives to assist developing knowledge based industries in regional Queensland
- on-line initiatives to assist small businesses
- actions to assist Queensland companies to become involved in bidding for work on major projects
- grants and incentives allocated by the Department of State Development for the 2004-05 financial year
- funds expended to allow for the operation of the Gladstone Economic and Industry Development Board
- internal, operational, technical and clinical audit processes of the Department and its agencies
- conferences, workshops, training sessions, seminars, and symposiums conducted by the department, agencies or associated portfolio entities in the 2004-05 financial year for public service employees
- reserve, contingency and emergency funding expended at the discretion of the Minister or Chief Executive Officer
- grant and investment schemes/programs/funds administered by the Department for the 2004-05 financial year
- the Biostart Investment Fund delivered through teQstart Pty Ltd
- ICT industry development
- the Department of State Development's grant to Citibank after its relocation to the Philippines
- the number of applications to the department under the various business assistance schemes and programs
- the incentive grant to Panbio
- the innovation start-up grant to Peplin Ltd
- the grant to Farmacule BioIndustry Pty Ltd
- the PNG gas pipeline
- the Ethanol Industry Action plan

- the Burnett River Dam
- creation of jobs through financial and non-financial assistance
- developments in Queensland of unmanned aerial vehicles
- assistance to Queensland companies to compete for parts of the federal government's air warfare destroyer contract
- common user facilities at the Port of Gladstone
- developing land in industrial precincts
- assessing whether grant recipients are achieving the objectives of their projects
- the grant to Leisure Pools Manufacturing Pty Ltd
- the Queensland Investment Incentives Scheme
- promoting science and biotechnology
- initiatives to assist small business in Queensland
- the development of Queensland as a major aviation hub for the Asia-pacific region
- the Queensland cruise shipping industry
- the feasibility of a cruise-shipping terminal on the Gold Coast

## POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES

### *Queensland Police Service*

The Queensland Police Service has four outputs: community safety and engagement; crime management; traffic management; and professional standards and ethical practice.

The QPS operating budget for 2005-06 is \$1.178 billion, an increase of \$132.748 million (12.7%) over the adjusted 2004-05 budget.

The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2005-06 compared to the previous financial year.

	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Departmental Outputs	1,068,590	1,153,314
Equity Adjustment	34,874	89,380
<b>Vote Total</b>	<b>1,104,270</b>	<b>1,243,070</b>

Key initiatives funded in 2005-06 include:

- \$90 million over the next four years for new and upgraded police stations, watchhouses, police beats and police housing across the State
- \$8 million over four years to enhance the Service's building maintenance program
- continued enhancement of information and communications technology
- \$1.9 million for planning and business development of a Public Safety Network
- \$13.4 million for the continuation of traffic operations as part of the whole-of-government Road Safety Initiatives Program
- \$10 million to enhance non-labour resources for operational police officers
- an additional 228 new police positions
- an additional 50 Juvenile Aid Bureau officers
- the establishment of Community Patrols in Cairns, Townsville and Mt Isa

Issues canvassed in questions on notice and at the hearing included:

- the number of sworn officers
- the establishment of an Office of the Director of Child Safety, additional Juvenile Aid Bureau Police Officer positions and positions to support the new SCAN model
- the Weapons Licence Renewal Scheme and the General Firearms Amnesty
- funding for road safety initiatives
- strip searches in Police facilities
- internal, operational, technical and clinical audit processes of the Department and its agencies
- grievances relating to acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment and discrimination in the 2004-05 financial year
- reserve, contingency and emergency funding expended at the discretion of the Minister or Chief Executive Officer
- police motor vehicles
- recruits posted to each region in Queensland
- the establishment of a tactical crime squad operating from the Brisbane Central district
- funding for the processing of DNA crime samples at the John Tonge Centre
- drug related samples as a proportion of the total number of cases at the John Tonge Centre
- investigations and prosecutions by the State Drug Investigation Group

- supervision and investigation of registered offenders to ensure compliance with the *Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004*
- arguments for and against the purchase of a dedicated police helicopter
- the Queensland Police Service's capital works program
- funding for additional crowd control equipment for tactical crime squads in Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa
- NATA accreditation
- funding to the Sexual Crimes Investigation Unit
- DNA person and crime scene sample profiles on the National Criminal Investigation DNA Database
- the extradition of Dr Jayant Patel to Queensland
- the replacement of the district headquarters and the police station at Longreach
- expenditure of monies allocated for resourcing support
- the timing of the inquest into the death of Senior Sergeant Perry Irwin
- police attendance at taxi ranks
- review of the Queensland Police Service's radio communications and computer aided dispatch system
- enforcement of alcohol management plans in indigenous communities
- police involvement on Palm Island
- the deployment of the bench charge sheet initiative
- exit and retraining programs for sex workers
- dog squads
- the status of the government's commitment to set up 25 new police beats

**Department of Corrective Services**

The Department of Corrective Services provides correctional services delivering containment, supervision and interventions for offenders.

The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2005-06 compared to the previous financial year.

	<b>2004-05 \$'000</b>	<b>2005-06 \$'000</b>
Departmental Outputs	407,957	389,233
Equity Adjustment	(10,201)	11,410
<b>Vote Total</b>	<b>397,756</b>	<b>400,643</b>

Key elements in the 2005-06 Budget include:

- \$21.2 million for infrastructure projects
- \$3.4 million to enhance capacity for delivery of sex offender programs
- \$1.5 million for offender rehabilitation program improvement
- \$1.4 million for Officer safety
- \$4.7 million for Infrastructure maintenance

Issues canvassed in questions on notice and at the hearing included:

- escapes from high security facilities
- the survey of the gambling habits of offenders.
- the provision of DNA samples by offenders on post-prison community based orders.
- local community projects undertaken by offenders
- prisoner appeals and internal reviews
- conferences, workshops, training sessions, seminars, or symposiums conducted by the department, agencies or associated portfolio entities in the 2004-05
- the capacity of Queensland's prisons
- rehabilitation programs for sexual offenders
- perimeter security upgrades
- the number of casual staff employed in Queensland's correctional centres
- funding for the training of prison officers
- sentencing options for people who have committed petty crimes
- the redevelopment of the Sir David Longland Correctional Centre

- expansion of the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the accommodation of prisoners according to risk
- funding to expand rehabilitation programs for sexual offenders, including programs for child sex offenders
- a new 150-bed women's correctional centre in Townsville
- the transfer of offender information between the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Corrective Services
- initiatives to improve the safety of staff in correctional centres
- the purchase of an electronic walking machine as part of a healthy lifestyle program at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre
- mandatory treatment for serious sexual offenders
- in-house drug testing facilities at corrections area offices
- the personal needs of officers overseeing WORC camps
- the future expansion of the Lotus Glen and Townsville correctional centres
- action plans for specific need offenders including those with mental or intellectual disability and the aged
- Queensland compared to other jurisdictions on corrective service matters
- post-release employment assistance programs in south-east Queensland and Townsville

**CHILD SAFETY**

The Department of Child Safety was established in February 2004 following the recommendations of the Crime and Misconduct Commission report *Protecting Children: an Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Foster Care*. The department’s key focus is in child protection activities. Key outputs are services for children and young people at risk, services for children and young people in care and adoption services

The 2005-06 budget provides for a 45.3% increase in the Department’s operational budget to \$394.8 million.<sup>4</sup>

The following table details the appropriations to the Department in the 2005-06 compared to the previous financial year.

	<b>2004-05 \$’000</b>	<b>2005-06 \$’000</b>
Departmental Outputs	266,126	390,453
Equity Adjustment	31,098	53,389
<b>Vote Total</b>	<b>279,224</b>	<b>443,842</b>

Key elements in the 2005-06 Budget include:

- a capital investment program of \$58.76 million
- \$19.6 million in funding to community partners for the continued enhancement of the child safety service sector
- recurrent funding of \$9.4 million for new and enhanced services from Indigenous Recognised Agencies
- \$0.38 million for foster care recruitment strategies
- increased funding of \$13 million for foster care payments and \$9 million for child related costs to cater for the increased number of children expected to enter the child protection system in 2005-06
- \$1.4 million to strengthen planning partnerships across the government and non-government sectors
- an additional \$28.8 million for frontline and support staff

- \$25.3 million ongoing investment in the Information Renewal Initiative (IRI)
- \$25 million over two years for new or enhanced accommodation for Child Safety Service Centres

Issues canvassed in questions on notice and at the hearing included:

- improving the skill base for up-and-coming child protection workers
- individual case plans for children in care
- inter-country adoptions
- placements for children and young people not suited to the traditional foster care system
- education plans for children and young people in care
- avenues for people who wish to make a complaint or receive further information from the Department
- training and support for foster carers
- the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) system
- caseloads for Child Safety Officers
- tracking of the whereabouts, status and histories of children relinquished to the Department
- calculating workloads and projecting future staffing numbers
- reviews of case plans
- internal, operational, technical and clinical audits
- employee grievances relating to acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment and discrimination in the 2004-05 financial year
- conferences, workshops, training sessions, seminars, and symposiums conducted by the department, agencies or associated portfolio entities in the 2004/05 financial year
- ATSI recognised agencies for Child Safety
- development of a screening process for foster carers
- departmental record keeping and information management
- industrial action in child safety service centres
- notifications of child abuse and neglect
- mental health disability support and education support services to children in care
- early intervention and prevention strategies
- the implementation of the integrated client management information system
- the re-abuse rate in Queensland
- the executive reporting system and 24-hour responses

<sup>4</sup> In addition to an appropriation of \$390.453 million, the operating budget includes \$4.324 million of own source revenue.

- the growth in funding to the Department
- measures and policies to help families manage when children are forcefully removed from their natural parents
- safe reunification of children and young people with their families
- recurrent funding for additional places in non-family based care
- the effect of machinery of government changes on the Department
- financial support for carers
- funding for community based agencies

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the *Appropriation Bill 2005* for the organisational units and portfolios allocated to it, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Julie Attwood MP

Chair

July 2005

#### **Committee Members**

Mrs Julie Attwood MP, Chair

Mr Vaughan Johnson MP, Deputy Chair

Mr Michael Choi MP

Mrs Peta-Kaye Croft MP

Mrs Liz Cunningham MP

Mrs Rosemary Menkens MP

Ms Barbara Stone MP

#### **Secretariat**

Mr Rob McBride (Research Director)

Ms Stephanie Catlin (Executive Assistant)

*Statement of Reservations Estimates B Committee 2005*  
*Department of Child Safety*

The Queensland Nationals are seriously concerned the current state of administration of the Department of Child Safety. This concern has been exacerbated by the estimates debates process for the reasons that can be summarised as follows.

- Failure of the Minister to provide the Committee with key performance data regarding the operation of the Department
- Failure of the Government to implement of the recommendations of the Crime and Misconduct Commission “Protecting Children” Report.
- Ongoing complaints regarding the operation and culture of the Department
- Admission that Management lacks access to key management data.

Despite the CMC making key recommendations about the impact of caseloads of the performance of the Department the Minister refused to provide the Committee with the current case loads for Child Safety Officers.

Curiously then the Minister himself admitted during the hearing that one of the main reasons for failure of the previous Department was that staff were overwhelmed by workloads while continuing to fail to provide any indicative data to the Committee.

To demonstrate the significance of the problem facing the Department, within a week of the Ministers evidence, staff at the Toowoomba office of his Department walked off the job for 24 hours because the office now held over 700 cases of children considered to be at risk of harm that were waiting to be investigated. One caseworker had a caseload of 57 cases.<sup>1</sup>

During the hearing the Minister repeatedly assured the Committee that case loads were being reduced to the 15 per caseworker that had been recommended by the CMC but then claimed not to have such data available. The example of the Toowoomba Office indicates that either the Minister has no idea of what is happening in his Department or if he does, his failure to reveal case loads to the Committee have far more serious implications.

I am seriously disappointed that the Minister has abandoned the hard working staff of the Department by refusing to recognise the reality of their caseloads and the implications of them on their ability to carry out their duties effectively.

The Minister also made reference to the implementation of the recommendations of the CMC report. He indicated that as at the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2005 45 of the 100 recommendations had been implemented. An examination of the CMC report shows that at that date at least 82 recommendations had been due for implementation by that date. This failure of the Beattie Government to carry out their promise to implement the recommendations of the CMC in line with the “Forster Blueprint” should be condemned by the Committee.

Again despite evidence to the Committee to the contrary it is clear from media reports that cost in implementing the CMC recommendations has become a reason for the delay in implementing them. In relation to the failure of the Department to deliver a carer directory by February this year as required by the “blueprint” the Department has advised that “Due to costs for delivery of some requirements, a range of alternative options are being explored

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<sup>1</sup> Toowoomba Chronicle 12/July/2005 page 3 “Child Safety Officers strike over workload”

for delivering component parts of the Integrated Client Management System project within the available budget."<sup>2</sup>

Compare this statement with the Ministers statement to the Committee that "The funny thing about this is that this is not about money."<sup>3</sup> Which of these statements are untrue? Again if it is the Evidence given to the Committee the consequences are serious. Suffice it to say that the reference in the media is attributed to a published departmental progress report.

Despite the Opposition's serious reservations at the Ministers failure to adequately address the matters raised at the hearings, the confirmation that key management advice is unavailable to senior management gives cause for serious concern at the ongoing administration of the Department.

Perhaps the most serious manifestation of this integral failure relates to the administration of 24 hour responses which apply to the most serious of concerns regarding the safety of a child. During testimony the Minister confirmed<sup>4</sup> that senior management is not able to ensure that these references are acted upon with the required time frame. Whilst the Minister claimed that it would be impractical for senior management to be provided with details of every referral the simplicity of exception reporting appears to have escaped the Ministers attention and that of his senior management. A simple email regarding any cases of failure to comply with the required timeframes would ensure that senior management would know and could be held accountable. This may well be why such a simple reporting system has not been implemented.

Given these endemic and ongoing deficiencies in Management information and accountability then it is not surprising that the Opposition continues to receive representations regarding the handling of cases. These concerns have been confirmed by the advice provided to estimates Committee A by the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Child Guardian that it had received 250 rating one issues from Community Visitors.

In conclusion I am personally disappointed that the government has taken a decision to move away from its previous decision, endorsed by cabinet to implement the recommendations of the CMC as detailed in the Forster blueprint. The Opposition provided an opportunity for bipartisan support for the implementation of these recommendations. Unfortunately the Government has decided to withdraw from this bipartisan support. This decision is going to have very serious implications for the safety of some of the most seriously disadvantaged people in our community.

Rosemary Menkens  
Member for Burdekin  
Shadow Minister for Child Safety

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<sup>2</sup> Courier Mail 20 June 2005 page 7 "Foster care fix too expensive"

<sup>3</sup> Hansard 6 July 2005 Estimates Committee B Child Safety page 4

<sup>4</sup> op cit page 12



Statement of Reservations Estimates Committee B  
State Development and Innovation

**Howard Hobbs**  
**Shadow Minister for State Development**  
**and Innovation**

A strong weakness in the Estimates Hearing process for the Department of State Development and Innovation was demonstrated in both the receipt of replies to Questions on Notice less than twenty-four hours prior to the actual scheduled hearing as well as the grossly inadequate amount of time allocated to the hearing – just 90 minutes.

Given the Department of State Development and Innovation is proposing to distribute an estimated \$152 million in grants and subsidies in 05/06, over twice the Estimated Actual level of expenditure in the 2004/05 Budget, the Opposition contends all Committee Members would have appreciated a greater period of time in which to have the Minister and his Departmental officials explain certain aspects of the Department's operations.

In particular the Opposition would have appreciated more time to further explore the processes and procedures put in place with regard to the initial allocation of State Government funding as well as the follow up procedures put in place to ensure taxpayers receive the maximum possible benefit from their investment.

Given that since the last Estimates Committee Hearing Beattie Labor Government decided to both overturn the ruling of the former Information Commissioner and amend the Freedom Of Information Act so as to restrict the Opposition's ability to explore details of the lucrative State Government grants offered to firms to relocate to Queensland, it was disappointing to the Opposition to see details of such grants remaining undisclosed in the Minister's response to Opposition Questions On Notice.

The fact details relating to one of these grants was actually released to the media by a spokesman for one of the companies concerned (IBM) really does make a mockery of the Government's contention that this is some state secret that must be protected under the veil of 'commercial-in-confidence'.

Further, the Minister's contention that in tabling the details of thirteen firms that subsequent to receiving a grant been either placed into liquidation or an administrator appointed the Opposition was engaging in "theatre" was an insult to the Committee as a whole. The Opposition contends the processes surrounding the on-going monitoring of the effectiveness of grant and incentive schemes needs to be a rigorous one which meets the expectations of taxpayers, and the Estimates Hearings are one of the rare opportunities available for a full exploration of this issue in detail.

The Ministerial Program Statement (MPS) output statement estimates overall targets business will achieve under the Business and Market Development Services and Innovation Program. Yet, when questioned on this matter the Minister refused to take on notice a question relating to the terms, conditions and targets set for each

company/corporation/entity receiving State Government support and assistance through the Department of State Development.

The fact the MPS makes glowing references to the number of jobs created, the expected output and capital investment flowing from such assistance really does make a mockery of the Minister's response that it is too onerous a task to provide such information. If the information is on-hand to formulate the MPS, then how could it within the space of one month, all of a sudden become too hard a task for the Department to complete?

It is also important to note through Opposition questioning of the Minister that the Department of State Development and Innovation would appear:

- not to have in place satisfactory due-diligence processes to determine if grant recipients are complying with the legal guidelines and requirements of other State Government Departments;
- to be solely reliant on the honesty of individual's resumes or statements of pecuniary interest in ensuring that the members of bodies such Departmental Advisory Committees do not receive a benefit from a recommendation to the Department;
- not to have in place satisfactory processes to determine if grant applicants have not already applied for or received a grant or assistance measure from another Department or State Government entity.
- not to have in place satisfactory due diligence processes to determine if government-owned corporations such as the QIC already have a significant investment in a firm applying for or receiving a grant from the Department.

Submitted by

Rosemary Menkens  
Member for Burdekin  
Estimates Committee B Member

## **STATEMENT OF RESERVATIONS**

### **ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B**

**Vaughan Johnson MP**

**Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services**

**Member for Gregory**

The process of Estimates Committee B Hearings on 6 July 2005 in relation to the Ministerial Program Statement for the Department of Police and Corrective Services highlighted the following matters on which the response of the Minister was unsatisfactory:

- The concession by the Minister that the Government is struggling to clear the backlog of DNA crime scene samples at the John Tonge Centre, which continues to rise, despite the budget allocation of \$3 million this year. It is concerning that 132 clandestine drug lab samples await testing, which is delaying the process of prosecuting those offenders that have given Queensland the name of the amphetamine capital of Australia.
- Announcement by the Minister that civilians will be employed to assist the State Drug Investigation Group in its work at drug scenes. This concerning revelation indicates the Government isn't willing to provide sufficient police officers and resources to the Group to undertake its important investigations.
- The Minister's blasé attitude toward the purchase of a permanent helicopter for the sole use of the Queensland Police Service, which would be an invaluable tool in the fight against crime and provide our police with the same resources as their interstate counterparts.
- The failure of the Minister to commit to a timeframe for the building of a new police station and district headquarters at Longreach, which has been forgotten about since having funding committed for initial planning in the 2003-04 budget.
- In view of safety implications for our police officers, the lack of urgency shown by the Minister in failing to make representations to the Coroner on expediting the inquest into the tragic passing of police officer Perry Irwin.
- The admission and justification by the Minister of the purchase of an electronic walking machine for executive staff at Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre, while the government is not providing any training for existing prison officers and it only spent \$150,000 out of the \$6 million dollars budgeted in 2004-05 on perimeter security for the State's correctional facilities.
- The inability of the Minister to identify alternative strategies to reduce the growing number of indigenous women in Queensland's correctional facilities. The Government's commitment in the budget to upgrade the

Townsville Women's Correctional Centre shows an unwillingness to address the core issue of alcohol induced violence in these communities.

- The unwillingness of the Minister to consider, let alone acknowledge the first step to increasing completion rates for sex offender rehabilitation programs is through a policy of mandatory treatment for all serious sex offenders. It is extremely alarming for the safety of our children and unacceptable that of the prisoners convicted for serious sexual offences over the last two years, who completed a custodial sentence only 23 per cent had participated in a sexual offender treatment program.

**Vaughan Johnson MP**  
**Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services**

22 July 2005