



Estimates Committee C

2009

Report to the Legislative Assembly

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Standing Order 167(3) the Legislative Assembly, by Order made on 3 June 2009, referred to Estimates Committee C for investigation and report certain proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill 2009. The organisational units and portfolios allocated to the committee were as follows:

- The Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade;
- The Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women; and
- The Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

The committee held a public hearing on Thursday 16 July 2009. 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.

The Appropriation summary for 2009–2010 for the units being reported on by the committee is in the following table:

Minister	Vote 2009-10 \$'000
Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, and Minister for Trade	1,094,404
Minister for Community Services and Housing, and Minister for Women	2,350,443
Minister for Infrastructure and Planning	309,335

THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY AND MINISTER FOR TRADE

Key financial data for the portfolio of the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade is set out in the tables below:

Natural Resources	Budget 2008-09 \$'000	Est. Actual 2008-09 \$'000	Estimate 2009-10 \$'000
<i>Controlled items</i>			
State Contribution	133,716	223,216	396,232
Equity Adjustments	(8,188)	(8,296)	59,700
<i>Administered Items</i>	2,888	2,888	75,191
Total Budget Allocation	128,416	217,808	531,123

Mines and Energy	Budget 2008-09 \$'000	Est. Actual 2008-09 \$'000	Estimate 2009-10 \$'000
<i>Controlled items</i>			
State Contribution	134,195	109,255	166,759
Equity Adjustments	38,108	50,306	26,325
<i>Administered Items</i>	485,349	555,078	342,140
Total Budget Allocation	657,652	714,639	535,224

Trade Queensland	Budget 2008-09 \$'000	Est. Actual 2008-09 \$'000	Estimate 2009-10 \$'000
<i>Controlled items</i>			
State Contribution	9,373	10,623	28,057
Equity Adjustments	0	0	0
<i>Administered Items</i>	0	0	0
Total Budget Allocation	9,373	10,623	28,057

Key **highlights** of the 2009-10 Budget for the portfolio of the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade include:

- \$0.9m to employ an additional 10 Wild River Rangers;
- Extension of wild rivers' protection to South-West Queensland's channel country and a further eight river basins on Cape York Peninsula;
- \$4.9m over four years (including \$1.9m in 2009-10) to support the installation and replacement of water meters throughout Queensland;
- \$7.3m in 2009-10 (from \$46.5m over 5 years) to support bore rehabilitation work in Western Queensland;
- \$12m in 2009-10 for the Smart Mining-Future Prosperity program to implement the Queensland Exploration Development Initiative;
- \$3.9m in 2009-10 for the *Carbon Geosequestration Initiative* to help locate, assess and evaluate sites suitable for the safe, long-term underground geological storage of carbon dioxide;
- \$47.7m for Energex Ltd and the Ergon Energy Corporation to initiate a range of energy conservation and peak-electricity demand reduction measures;
- \$4m to complete construction of a drill core facility at Mount Isa to accommodate drill core samples from surrounding areas and promote mining and exploration in the North West Queensland Mineral Province; and
- \$28.1m assistance to Trade Queensland to further implement the whole-of-government export strategy – *Driving Export Growth for Queensland: 2006-11*.

Issues canvassed at the hearing included:

- The combined capacity of South-East Queensland (SEQ) dams, construction of a \$9 billion water grid for SEQ and the upgrade to, and construction of, eight water treatment plants;
- The Gold Coast desalination plant;

- The capacity of the *Western Corridor Recycled Water Project* and purified recycled water scheme;
- The water metering program;
- The Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Fund;
- The Northern and Eastern Pipeline Interconnectors and Southern Regional Water Pipeline;
- The Hinze, Wyaralong and Traveston Crossing Dams;
- The establishment of bulk water businesses – SEQWater, LinkWater and WaterSecure;
- The budget of the Queensland Water Commission;
- The performance of bulk water grid entities;
- Climate resilient water sources;
- Investigation of potential desalination sites;
- Subregional water cycle planning;
- The Pascoe Report into the North Pine flouride dosing incident;
- Preservation of wild rivers, wild rivers declarations and the creation of wild rivers ranger positions;
- The World Heritage listing of Cape York;
- Training opportunities for indigenous people;
- Aurukun bauxite leases;
- The Statewide Landcover and Trees Study and endangered regrowth vegetation;
- Regrowth mapping;
- Advances in spatial information;
- The Somerville review into the electricity distribution sector and the delivery of electricity in Queensland;
- Expansion and upgrades to the electricity network;
- Distribution of Home EnergyWise kits;
- Queensland Competition Authority determinations in respect of electricity retailers;

- Queensland Competition Authority review of the retail gas market;
- New regulatory pricing determination made by the Australian Energy Regulator;
- Retail electricity prices and the Consumer Price Index;
- Staffing levels of the Mines and Energy Corporate Communications team and the Office of Clean Energy;
- Financial assistance to Collingwood Park residents with subsidence damaged properties;
- The *Smart Mining-Future Prosperity Program* and related exploration projects;
- Mining related sponsorship funding;
- The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme;
- The ZeroGen project;
- The Clean Coal Council;
- Establishment of Queensland resource industry ambassadors;
- Streamlining of the state's mining and petroleum exploration and development approval processes;
- Clean Coal technology and legislation;
- Low-emission coal technology demonstration projects, the Callide OxyFuel project and ZeroGen;
- The Carbon Geostorage Initiative and the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute;
- Renewable energy and the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program;
- Consultants appointed to oversight the implementation of the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program;
- Upgrades to, and maintenance of, the Energex electricity network;
- Community service obligation payments to Ergon Energy;
- The Loganlea to Jimboomba powerline;
- Carbon reduction by Government Owned (Electricity) Corporations and the commercialisation of low-emission coal technologies;
- The trial use of alternative energy in isolated communities;
- Energy conservation and demand management reduction programs;
- Queensland Renewable Energy Fund renewable energy targets;
- The Birdsville geothermal power station, the Mackay Sugar cogeneration project, the CSIRO SolarGas project and the coastal geothermal energy initiative;
- Greenhouse gas emission reduction;
- *Trade Queensland* export targets;
- Key performance indicators for Trade Commissioners and their deputies;
- Trade missions, trade delegations and buyer missions;
- *Trade Queensland* assistance to Queensland companies seeking overseas markets; and
- *Trade Queensland's* Export Advisory Service.

THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Key financial data for the portfolio of the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women is set out in the table below:

Minster for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women	Budget 2008-09 \$'000	Est Actual 2008-09 \$'000	Budget 2009-10 \$'000
<i>Controlled items</i>			
departmental services	...	510,596	1,023,361
equity adjustment*	...	129,782	1,095,201
<i>Administered Items</i>	...	301,005	231,881
Total Budget Allocation	...	941,383	2,350,443

* 2008-09 equity adjustment of \$129.782m for Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women excludes non-appropriated equity withdrawal \$21.897m.

Key **highlights** of the 2009-10 Budget for the portfolio of the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women are:

- Expansion of the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre in Townsville (investment of \$70.2m in 2009–10 of \$170.7m over four years);

- Boosted funding for the Youth Justice Conferencing (diversionary) program to address increased demand;
- \$0.5m in 2009–10 of a total \$1.8m for an initiative to improve economic and social outcomes for young people who have recently entered the youth justice system and are at risk of further offending or homelessness;
- \$1.1m in 2009–10 (of \$2.7m) for a Rockhampton trial program of an integrated approach to preventing domestic violence by case management of service delivery/support;
- \$2m in 2009–10 for Lifeline for an extension of its financial counselling services;
- \$1.8m for the Seniors' Legal and Support Service;
- A \$1.447 billion capital works program to build 1601 rental units, begin construction on 1742 rental units and upgrade existing social housing, to help alleviate social housing shortages and provide statewide employment opportunities in the building and construction industry;
- \$196.1m to improve the standard and supply of housing in Indigenous communities by adding 194 rental units, replacing two units, upgrading 1311 rental units and conducting maintenance on 4336 rental units. Seventy rental units in non-Indigenous communities will also be acquired;
- A matching by the Queensland Government of the expected \$24.5m additional investment for 2009-10 by the Australian Government under the Homelessness National Partnership Agreement. Inclusive of the previously announced *A Place to Call Home* initiative, the investment will be used to implement a range of initiatives for people who are chronically homeless or at risk of becoming homeless;
- The Office for Women will provide ongoing policy advice, coordination and implementation across a range of issues affecting women; and

- Development of a new strategic direction that supports implementation of the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Strategy, and facilitates women's leadership and engagement activities statewide.

Issues canvassed at the hearing included:

- Funding for youth justice conferences and youth detention centres;
- Funding for legal and support services for seniors;
- Funding of a pilot program for an integrated approach to preventing domestic violence;
- Housing and homelessness services funding;
- Funding for statewide construction of new social housing;
- Funding to build and upgrade housing for Indigenous people in remote communities;
- Street-to-home initiatives for people who are chronically homeless;
- Assistance for people leaving protection services and correctional and health facilities;
- Housing construction, repairs and upgrades in remote Indigenous communities;
- WaterWise Garden Awards for social housing tenants;
- The social housing register;
- Sales of social housing to tenants;
- Social housing evictions;
- The Sustainable Tenancies Opportunities Project;
- The RentConnect Advisory Service;
- Social housing for seniors;
- The Valuing Volunteers policy, volunteering initiatives such as Golden Gurus and related funding;
- Seniors' support services, including - the Seniors' Legal and Support Services, the Older People's Action Program, the 60 and Better Program, the Elder-Abuse Prevention Unit and the Time for Grandparents Program;

- Essential services concessions (electricity, gas and rail travel) for pensioners, seniors and veterans;
- The Home and Community Care Modifications Program to help the frail, aged or disabled remain at home for longer;
- Home modifications under the Spinal Cord Injuries Response Initiative;
- Homelessness services in regional areas;
- Wage rates for community service workers;
- The Rural Womens' Symposium;
- The *Women in Hard Hats* project;
- The *Women on Boards* strategy;
- Smart Women-Smart State Awards;
- International Women's Day;
- Redress payments for victims of institutional child abuse and neglect;
- The *Kids Under Cover* initiative;
- Youth homelessness;
- The Youth Bail and Accommodation Support Service;
- Completion rates for rehabilitation programs in youth detention centres;
- Educational, literacy, numeracy and job skills programs for juvenile detainees;
- Security arrangements for the offices of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian;
- Youth offending, youth justice services and youth justice conferencing;
- New Zealand boot-camp diversionary initiatives for young offenders;
- Northern Outlook adventure based activities;
- The Logan-Beenleigh Young Persons' Project;
- Services for victims of domestic and family violence, including safety upgrades to private residences, a framework for welfare-reform in Cape York communities and a review of domestic/family violence laws;
- Domestic Violence Orders and Temporary Protection Orders;

- The statewide *Suicide Prevention Strategy*;
- Recovery assistance packages for victims of natural disasters; and
- The Indigenous Youth Parliament and Indigenous representation in Parliament.

THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING

Key financial data for the portfolio of the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning is set out in the table below:

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning	Budget 2008-09 \$'000	Est. Actual 2008-09 \$'000	Estimate 2009-10 \$'000
Controlled items			
State Contribution	110,041	138,670	122,309
Equity Adjustments	40,410	(277,909)	176,926
Administered Items	32,776	30,957	10,100
Total Budget Allocation	183,227	(108,282)	309,335

Key **highlights** of the 2009-10 Budget for the portfolio of the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning are:

- \$15m to acquire a 70 km long and 200m wide corridor between Callide and Gladstone State Development Area to accommodate the co-location of liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipelines to Curtis Island;
- \$171m in 2009-10 for the \$348m Wyaralong Dam project, for commencement of major dam construction works and the upgrade of the Beaudesert to Boonah Road;
- \$121m to complete the 38km Toowoomba Pipeline that will link Wivenhoe Dam to Cressbrook Dam in Toowoomba;
- \$211.5m to construct the 48km Northern Pipeline Interconnector Stage 2 extending from Eudlo to Cooroy on the Sunshine Coast;
- \$75m for environmental measures and community projects in relation to Traveston Crossing Dam, including establishment of a freshwater species conservation centre, habitat and vegetation rehabilitation, and catchment management initiatives;

- \$174.9m to acquire land for the continued development of the Airport Link toll road linking Brisbane City with the Brisbane Airport;
- \$8.1m to acquire land for the Stanwell to Gladstone Infrastructure corridor;
- \$4.7m for industrial projects in/around Townsville;
- \$4m to upgrade the Whitsunday Coast Airport;
- Continued implementation of The Coal Infrastructure Program of Actions;
- \$35m allocation under the Queensland Water Fluoridation Project to secure the phased-in fluoridation of most public water supplies;
- Facilitated delivery of the *Northern Economic Triangle Infrastructure Plan 2007–2012* to advance critical infrastructure and planning initiatives for Mount Isa and Townsville, to develop an industrial precinct at Bowen and to support competitive energy supply for Mount Isa and the North West Minerals' Province;
- Progressing of the *Southport Broadwater to Southern Moreton Bay Marine Infrastructure Master Plan*, to identify marine infrastructure opportunities for the marine industry and recreational boating sectors in the Gold Coast and southern Brisbane;
- Progressing of the draft Inskip Peninsula Master Plan (part of the Great Sandy Region Management Plan) that aims to identify land areas and establish uses consistent with national parks, Indigenous uses, and consolidated residential, tourist and commercial developments;
- Development of the Aurukun bauxite and kaolin mineral resource, including a feasibility study for a bauxite mine at Aurukun and an alumina refinery at Bowen;
- Facilitation of the Townsville Ocean Terminal - a dedicated cruise and military terminal and wharf, with associated integrated residential and commercial development, commercial marina and public open space;
- Proposed construction of the 210km 'Southern Missing Link' between Wandoan and Banana to enable large scale mining and export of thermal coal from the Surat Basin;
- Urban, industrial and economic development, including construction in 2009-10 in Coolumb, Townsville, Amberley, Gladstone, Ebenezer, Crestmead, Mount Isa and South Mackay;
- Identification of options for environmentally sustainable and beneficial use of coal seam gas water in coal mining regions;
- Development of a social infrastructure strategic plan for the Gladstone region;
- Progressing the Galilee Basin infrastructure study to determine the best port and rail development options, to facilitate the export of coal from the Galilee Basin and to align with infrastructure used for resource development in the Bowen Basin;
- Establishment of a Green Building Skills Fund to provide industry participants with green building skills, and to support the Green Door initiative to lift environmental standards for all new homes, offices and government buildings;
- Continued implementation of regional plans;
- Implementation of planning reforms outlined in *Planning for a Prosperous Queensland—a reform agenda for planning and development in the Smart State*, including supporting local government to prepare planning schemes;
- Undertaking of a statewide inventory of land for public recreation;
- Development and implementation of strategies to deliver on the *Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland* 'green' target;
- \$3.6m to develop two regional recreation trails—the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail and the Boonah to Ipswich Trail;
- Continued implementation of the *Queensland Housing Affordability Strategy*;
- Support for local governments to prepare priority infrastructure plans and to develop a framework for state infrastructure policy and contribution; and

- Preparation of a smart city master plan over a three year period to integrate land use, infrastructure and economic activities across the Brisbane inner city precinct and the CBD.

Issues canvassed at the hearing included:

- The South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2009-26;
- The Sustainable Planning Bill 2009;
- The South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-31;
- The Building Australia Fund and funding for the Ipswich Motorway, the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project, the Bruce Highway Cooroy-Curra upgrade, and Brisbane inner-city rail;
- Job creation in the liquefied natural gas industry;
- The Airport Link project;
- The Northern Busway;
- Airport roundabout upgrades;
- The Pool Safety Committee, pool safety laws and pool fencing;
- Regional pool safety roadshows;
- The Gold Coast desalination plant;
- The Southern Moreton Bay Marine Infrastructure Master Plan;
- The Northern Pipeline Interconnector;
- Bulk pipe procurement;
- The Greenfield Land Supply Action Plan;
- The 2007 Queensland Housing Affordability Strategy;
- The Toowoomba pipeline;
- Wyaralong Dam;
- Stamp duty reductions for first home buyers; and
- The Urban Land Development Authority.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2009 for the organisational units and portfolios allocated to it, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.



Mr Evan Moorhead MP

Chair

August 2009

Committee Members

Mr Evan Moorhead MP (Chair)
Member for Waterford

Mr Jeff Seeney MP (Deputy Chair)
Member for Callide

Ms Peta-Kaye Croft MP
Member for Broadwater

Mr David Gibson MP
Member for Gympie

Mrs Betty Kiernan MP
(from 27 July to 5 August 2009)
Member for Mount Isa

Mr Steven Kilburn MP
Member for Chatsworth

Mrs Rosemary Menkens MP
Member for Burdekin

Ms Lillian van Litsenburg MP
(from 3 June to 26 July 2009)
Member for Redcliffe

Secretariat

Ms Renée Easten (Research Director)
Ms Jenny North (Executive Assistant)

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE C
2009

STATEMENTS OF RESERVATION

Member
Mr Jeff Seeney MP Shadow Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Member For Callide
Mrs Rosemary Menkens MP Shadow Minister for Community Services and Housing and Shadow Minister for Women Member For Burdekin

DISSENTING REPORT

Member
Mr David Gibson MP Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Member For Gympie

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

**In relation to the Portfolio of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the
Portfolio of Trade**

Estimates Committee C

I refer to the draft report for Estimates Committee C and submit a statement of my reservations about the proposed expenditure of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and some general comments on the process of Estimates Committees hearings.

General comments on the Estimates Process

The Estimates Process is the greatest opportunity for parliamentary scrutiny of Government appropriations in a unicameral system and it is unfortunate the process does not allow for well considered deliberations by parliamentary committees such as this one.

The inherent processes of the Estimates process fail to provide the level of scrutiny of the Government's use of taxpayer's money.

The limited number of questions without notice allocated to each Minister fails to ensure that committee members have the opportunity to prepare adequately for the Committee's hearings particularly in areas where the budget papers provide very little information.

The limiting of information to these Estimates Committees, both in terms of the limited useful information in the Budget Papers, as well as the limited number of questions on notice does not in any way assist the committee's work.

In addition to the information available to the committee prior to the committee's hearings there is limited time for members of the committee to gain detailed information from Ministers during the process.

During this session there has been a continuance of the disturbing trend of Ministers failing to answer specific questions from some committee members, instead giving a very general answer, which had been pre-prepared, about Government directions or policies.

As a result I have very significant reservations about how informed the Committee's report is in relation to the proposed expenditure.

Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

With consideration complete for the Natural Resources, Mines and Energy portfolio the following reservations are held –

WILD RIVERS DECLARATIONS

In relation to SDS 3 at page 201, I would like to express my concern that the Minister was unable to provide any justification for expenditure on this policy area. The budget documents appear to have a direct conflict between assistance in building stronger Indigenous communities and the proposed Wild Rivers declarations.

I am genuinely concerned that the Minister is failing to reach an agreement which balances all of the stakeholders and their interests in the Cape York region. Indeed it appears, as Noel Pearson has outlined, that a deal has been struck by Labor with the Wilderness Society to create a quasi-national park over the 50 per cent of the land that was set aside in the early 1990s as Aboriginal land.

The answers given by the Minister appear to show that he has failed to fully understand and allow for all of the issues, including the fact that he has not budgeted for any proposed court action by the related Indigenous parties.

Numerous other pieces of legislation impact upon the area – including the *Vegetation Management Act* and the *Mineral Resources Act*. The Minister could not answer my direct question of precisely what the wild rivers is protection from, nor the actual threat to the associated rivers.

I believe that the answers given by the Minister clearly indicate that he does not fully comprehend of the total economic impacts resulting from the wild rivers declarations and is trying to force his way through an issue that will have far reaching consequences to northern Queensland.

BUDGET OF THE WATER COMMISSION

In relation to SDS3 at page 242 I express my concern that it appears that the budget figures are intentionally misleading, in that the proposed budget cuts are, in fact, simply budget figures that have not increased.

This subversive manipulation of the budget details needs to be assessed and corrected.

QUEENSLAND WATER COMMISSION

In relation to SDS3 at page 239, I noted to the Minister that at dot point 2, one of the duties of the Water Commission was monitoring performance of South-East Queensland bulk water entities against their contractual obligations.

However it appears from the Minister's regular monthly report published on the Commission website that none of the 'major projects' (as defined under the regulations) have met their contractual obligations.

This causes me a great deal of concern, given the very large sums of money committed to these projects.

ELECTRICITY TARRIFS

In relation to SDS2 at page 11, I note that the Minister talks about reducing electricity bills for Queenslanders. When Premier Beattie, back in 2006, spoke about the deregulation of the electricity industry, the public was assured that they would be 'no worse off'.

However as was confirmed to the committee electricity prices since then have risen by 40 per cent.

The Minister's response about the costs reflecting the 'true cost of generating, transmitting, distributing and retailing electricity' were unconvincing and lacked any substantive evidence.

Given that many of these businesses are government owned corporations from which the Government strips any profit, I find the Ministers response to the committee difficult to accept.

I also find it disturbing that the Minister could not give any assurances that the public would be 'no worse off' following demand side management of tariffs.

CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME

In relation to the proposed Federal Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, the Minister would not acknowledge that the program would have a devastating effect on Queensland and industry as a whole, and instead reverted to the letter sent by Premier Bligh to the Federal Government.

This is particularly disappointing given his responsibilities for this portfolio.

The Minister could not outline the precise amount of money being contributed to Clean Coal projects such as ZeroGen and Wandoan. I note with interest that, in

response to the Questions on Notice prior to the Estimates proceedings that the Government stated there was only one project such as ZeroGen. Now it appears that the Wandoan project, a direct competitor, has also been approved which will certainly split the amount of available funds for the projects.

Also, it would appear that the Minister was manifestly incorrect in his memory when he said that he thinks he has attended 'three Clean Coal Meetings' since taking on the portfolio. Information provided to me would indicate that there has only been ONE such meeting, on the 11th of June 2009, since December 2008. The reason for that is that the Government deferred all meetings until after their election campaign.

CONSULTANTS

I would like to express my concern in relation to the employment of Mr Miley, a consultant engaged by the Office of Clean Energy for the sum of \$1500 a day.

The Minister was not aware of the process of his engagement – indeed the Minister stated that “The selection process would be a standard selection process based on the particular skills that were being sourced from the market.”

This is blatantly incorrect. As the Director-General, Dan Hunt, expressed, the gentleman in question was engaged via a 'departure from normal process, I believe, (which) was justified on the grounds of urgency and the specific skills that Mr Miley possessed at the time that were required to quickly implement an election commitment of the government'.

This circumnavigation of the well reasoned rules for engagement is astonishing, particularly given the importance of the role (as highlighted by the Minister) and the sum of money per day that Mr Miley will be paid.

The committee was provided with no reasonable explanation of this \$1500 per day contract and that raises a whole range of questions about the Governments use of contractors and consultants not only in this Department but across all Departments.

I remain concerned that considerable amounts of public money being spent on contractors and consultants by the State Government remains poorly understood and not properly reported in the budget process.

GENERAL SUMMATION

1. I have reservations about the budgetary process given that insufficient detailed information relating to the portfolio is available in the budget papers. Indeed it appears that the issues are blended across several reports in order that the true situation is made more difficult to gauge.
2. I have reservations about the level of knowledge of the proposed Departmental expenditure displayed by the Minister to the Estimates committee.
3. I have considerable reservations about the policy outcomes that have been used to justify the proposed expenditure with many of those policy outcomes being misdirected and poorly developed. Some, such as the wild rivers proposals, have been shown to be politically motivated with no established basis in science and no demonstrated need.
4. I have considerable reservations that some of the proposed expenditure cannot be justified and is not being managed in an appropriate manner. In particular the proposed expenditure on consultants and contractors requires much greater scrutiny and justification.

TRADE -

With consideration complete for the Trade portfolio the following reservations are held –

FAILURE TO PROVIDE FULL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

It was disappointing that the Government chose not to provide a full answer to Non-Government Question on Notice #9. Having to take up the limited time allocated to non-Government questions to ask for information that the Government has failed to provide demonstrates a serious lack of commitment to the estimates process. The Minister's glib excuse that they "just tried to be as accurate as possible" by withholding information specifically asked for is an insult to the parliament and the estimates process.

FAILURE TO CONFIRM VALUE FOR MONEY

The information provided by the Minister's department clearly demonstrated that Trade Commissions in areas such as Riyadh provided a far greater return for every Queensland dollar spent compared to locations such as Los Angeles. The Minister's rejection of these figures as a demonstration of a Trade Commission's value for money is clearly inconsistent with his later statement that the most

important thing to him was having a system in place to measure the performance of each of these offices and that those assessments are conducted on a regular basis to ensure we get value for money.

FAILURE TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The Minister has demonstrated that he has been asleep at the wheel when it comes to monitoring Queensland's future trade opportunities. The Minister indicated a number of times that Latin America is developing as one of Queensland's strongest future markets. The General Manager of Trade Queensland stated that no new office locations have been opened in his 18 months as general manager. If the Minister was truly interested in using Trade Queensland offices to expand the trade opportunities of Queensland businesses, a Trade Commission should have been established in a growing area these past 18 months. The Minister instead is happy to allow Latin America markets to subsidize underperforming commissions such as Los Angeles.

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Seeney', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Seeney MP
Member for Callide
Shadow Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

Community Services and Housing

Secretary of Committee C

I refer to the draft report for Estimates Committee C and submit a statement of reservations on the report in relation to the Community Services and Housing portfolios and some general comments on the process of Estimates Committees hearings.

General comments on the Estimates Process

The Estimates Committee process is intended to be an effective scrutiny of the Government's expenditure, but once again this year has shown major deficiencies in the process.

In general, the limited number of questions without notice allocated to each Minister fails to ensure that committee members have the opportunity to prepare adequately for the Committee's hearings. This is particularly the case given the very low level of specific and program information contained in the Budget Papers and the inconsistent manner in which budget allocations are reported from year to year, making comparative analysis of budget papers problematic.

The result of this is a process that fails to allow any real analysis and scrutiny, curtailing any benefit and effectiveness.

Time limitations on the examination of Ministers were also shown to be harmful to the integrity of the process, and some particularly poor allocations of time were demonstrated in this year's hearings. The short and interrupted questioning times often prevent logical and continuous lines of questioning which could otherwise be followed.

Again, Ministers were often reluctant to answer specific questions with relevant and detailed answers, instead relying on general, and often pre-prepared, statements about their portfolios.

With respect to the portfolio scrutinized by the Committee, the following reservations are made:

In relation to Housing and Homelessness, the Minister would not provide specific answers to a number of questions including the number of young people held in detention because they had no fixed abode, and the reason for decreases in State appropriation for areas of housing allocations.

Of concern in the Office of Women was the expenditure of \$3.6M in running the office, compared to \$600 000 spent on programs by the office.

The amount of time that could be spent analyzing Community Services (1 hour and 15 minutes) was grossly inadequate, and did not pay due attention to each of the components. To divide this time among Youth Justice, Community Organisations and support, the implementation of the redress scheme, the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian, and Seniors issues did nothing but ensure that none of these important areas could be explored adequately.

The lack of profile given to Seniors both in the Estimates Process and the Budget Papers remains a great concern to the Opposition. Seniors now constitute 40 per cent of the adult population, but even their demographic dominance is not recognized in the social and economic priorities of this Government.

The Minister's answers to spending on Seniors failed to alleviate any of these concerns. Questioning on the non-recurrent nature of Seniors Legal and Support Service funding were answered by the Minister with a statement that it would be investigated in the future.

In dealing with the \$414 million fund aimed at alleviating the impost on Non-Government organizations facing massive pay increases following award changes, the Minister would not elaborate on funding prioritization processes, but did acknowledge the fund was not as generous as it could have been.

On Youth Justice issues, the Minister began by stating that detention was not an effective deterrent, and criticizing the Opposition for support of 'boot camps' before seeking a cooperative approach and stating that 'adventure based activities' already existed, and committing to examining options including 'boot camps' cooperatively in the future. The Opposition looks forward to engaging with the Minister together on these issues.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosemary Menkens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Rosemary Menkens
Member for Burdekin
Shadow Minister for Community Services and Housing

Estimates Committee C 2009
Report to the Legislative Assembly

Appropriation Bill 2009

Dissenting Report

David Gibson MP

29 July 2009

Introduction

I have prepared this dissenting report, to record those matters on which I have dissented from the majority of the members of Estimates Committee C (the Committee) with regards to the organisational units and portfolios allocated to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

It was with some reluctance that I decided to prepare a report that dissents from the report of the majority of the Committee. Nevertheless, the approach of the majority of the Committee to such fundamental matters as are raised in this report demonstrates how beholden they the Government members of the committee are to the dictates of the Executive and how they have failed the community by not acting as their representatives in preparing the Committee's report to the Legislative Assembly.

The formal details about the establishment and operations of the Committee are set out in the report by the Committee to the Legislative Assembly.

This dissenting report will deal with three major areas of concern which reveal the extent to which under the Bligh Government there is an apparent absence of concern about the spending of public funds and complete lack of process in implementing decisions.

The areas of concerns are:

- Deficiencies in the Estimates Committee process
- Relevance of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning and
- Poor Infrastructure Planning

Deficiencies in the Estimates Committee process

Whilst the Opposition has over many years expressed reservations with regards to major deficiencies in the Estimates Committee process, with regards to the organisational units and portfolios allocated to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning it is appropriate to draw to the attention of the Legislative Assembly the following specific concerns.

Answers to questions on notice

Standing Order 181(3) clearly states that

“The Minister ... shall provide the committee answers to the questions referred to tin (1) by at least 10.00am on the day before the committee’s allocated hearing day”

At the expiry of the time allowed for questions on notice to be received by the Committee, no documents had been received. Answers to questions on notice from the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning were not received by the Committee until over one hour and 45 minutes after the required time.

With only 24 hours available for examination this failure to adhere to the requirements of Standing Orders seriously impacts on the ability for the proper consideration of these answers, thereby reducing the effectiveness of this estimates committee process and could be taken as showing contempt for this committee.

Recommendation: That the Committee expresses its reservation that its deliberations could not properly examine the Infrastructure Budget Estimates.

South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2009-26

The cavalier attitude by which Minister released the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP) at 12.30pm on the day of the Committee hearing and the subsequent tabling of the report during the hearing demonstrates how arrogant and irresponsible these Ministers have become in undertaking their duties.

When questioned on the timing of the release of SEQIPP the Minister indicated that *“the timing of the launch of the plan was all to do with providing an opportunity to make sure that SEQIPP was provided in this context of the budget process and the estimates process.”*

According to the Minister SEQIPP 2009 an estimated investment of \$124 billion, and will generate 900,000 jobs in South-East Queensland to 2026. However there is no reference to SEQIPP neither in the Budget Papers nor in the answer

to the non government question on notice regarding planning undertaken by the department.

In response to questioning, it became clear that the timing of the release of such an important document as SEQIPP had been made to avoid any detailed examination by the estimates committee process;

Mr HINCHLIFFE: ... Indeed, my reason for tabling it here is to allow the committee to consider and use that document in its deliberations. When we had a budget that was focused on the Renewing Queensland Plan it was important and appropriate that the SEQIPP document, which has in the previous two years been released with the budget, be released at a separate time. At the end of this month, in the next few weeks, the final version of the renewed South East Queensland Regional Plan will be released. It was particularly appropriate that SEQIPP 2009 was informed by the content of the South East Queensland Regional Plan as it is close to finalisation.

Mr GIBSON: I struggle to believe that by tabling a document here before this committee we would then have time to be able to peruse it. Even accessing it online from the midday announcement it still does not leave the committee much time to peruse the document. My question to you now is: I note in your press release today that SEQIPP talks about 900,000 jobs under this plan. Could you advise the committee how this figure is calculated?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Through you, Chair, I want to thank Mr Gibson for his question and in the first place reiterate that I do think the committee has a process beyond this hearing and I encourage the committee to use SEQIPP in its deliberations and how that then reports to the parliament as a whole. I think Mr Gibson should appreciate the importance of the role of the whole of the committee process and not just a day in the sun like this afternoon might be.

Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg69

A document of such as significance as SEQIPP requires a suitable level of examination which is not possible when it is released to the Committee on the hearing day. In past years SEQIPP has been released before the estimates committee process. The only conclusion that can be drawn from the release of SEQIPP on the Committee hearing day is that under the Bligh Government spin and arrogance have taken over from aspirations to good governance.

The Opposition would also like to place on record their concerns regarding the formula used to assert 900,000 would be created by SEQIPP. Following much questioning the Minister admitted these jobs were cumulative to 2026. This is yet another example of the Queensland Government's flexibility with the true impacts of their investment program and reinforces that their election promise of 100,000 new jobs was a sham.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I appreciate Mr Gibson's interest in the very important and significant figure of 900,000 jobs that are provided for as a result of the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program over its life. Those job figures are calculated using a non-dwelling construction index provided by the Office of Economic and Statistical Research extrapolated over the period of the plan. Job numbers are estimated on a year-by-year basis. That is a normal process when it comes to particularly these sorts of infrastructure and construction jobs. **The program job target of 900,000 is a cumulative**

assessment of the job numbers based upon the total spend of the program from 2005 to 2026 which is the nature of the total of the program.

Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg70

I also note the Minister's definition of a job defers from the Premier and Treasurer's definition of one hour per week, instead Minister Hinchliffe defined a job as below;

Mr GIBSON: *With regard to SEQIPP's 900,000 jobs and what we have seen here with the proposed projects—that is, 57,000 jobs—can you provide the committee with the definition of a job?*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *I thank Mr Gibson for his question. As the Premier said on Tuesday, if you were paying attention, Mr Gibson, with regard to the broader capital program and the range of other things that we talk about in terms of the jobs target, there are people who are employed, in construction projects in particular, and who continue to be employed because we continue to invest in projects rather than scrap them. For consistency, what we do is use the industry standard, which is job years. **When we talk about a job we talk about job years. One year on the job equals one job. In essence, the reference to jobs in the SEQ Infrastructure Plan and Program is a reference to 900,000 job years.***

Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg77

The Minister's answer appears to confirm a job of one day a week would be counted in the 900,000 jobs cumulative each year.

In addition the South East Queensland Regional Plan was released by Minister Hinchliffe nearly two weeks after the Department of Infrastructure Budget Estimate considerations. Despite the close relationship between the Budget Papers, SEQIPP and the South East Queensland Regional Plan, this late release resulted in no consideration of the South East Queensland Regional Plan at estimates. This is particularly concerning as the Minister recognised this importance in his evidence to the committee as follows;

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *I thank Mr Gibson for his question. I have spent some time already talking about the importance and role of the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program. Let me go back to taws and make another reference to the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The South East Queensland Regional Plan plays a significant role in providing an overarching planning context for the south-east on behalf of all state agencies, and indeed local authorities and a range of other interested parties including people in the private sector and other interested groups, to plan ahead for the future of Queensland, particularly in the face of, as we have seen, ongoing population growth— population growth which has been unprecedented and unrelenting.*

The South East Queensland Regional Plan, both in its 2026 iteration and in its 2031 iteration that we will see shortly—the draft form that is out there at the moment—provides significant responses to the issues around traffic congestion. As I am sure members of the committee will appreciate, traffic congestion is not entirely solved by building roads. It is not entirely solved by massive injections into public transport infrastructure and services such as we have seen under this government. It is in part solved by better planning—not better planning around developing new infrastructure but better planning around where people are located, where they move to and how they travel within our region. So the containment of communities, better planning and creation of more employment opportunities in the communities where people live, so that people do not have to make the journey across town to go from their place of residence to their place of work, is part of the planning that we need to do. That is what the South East Queensland Regional Plan provides for in some respects.

It also provides for and emphasises opportunities around transit oriented development— development that supports and enhances the use of public transport and the ability for people in the community to shorten journeys and take the pressure off our congested roads and other transport infrastructure. I would encourage the committee in its consideration and deliberation of these issues to consider the fundamental nature of the South East Queensland Regional Plan to the planning work that the state does throughout South-East Queensland and also the way we are using these regional planning documents across the rest of the state.

Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg70

Recommendation: That all major government plans are released to estimates committees at the time of the release of the budget papers.

Relevance of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning

There has been no clear delineation of a chain of responsibility between the Ministers of Transport, Main Roads and Infrastructure for the long term planning and coordination of transport infrastructure in Queensland. This lack of ministerial leadership was clearly evident in the recent damning Auditor General's Reports.

We note that the department of Infrastructure has been in existence for just under three years. It is disappointing that the Department has not taken the initiative and responsibility as the lead agency for infrastructure planning and coordination.

It is evidenced by the ongoing serious and endemic criticisms and independent assessors that this role has not been filled.

The Beattie/Bligh Government has a record of making big promise on infrastructure but being unable to deliver on time or on budget. The Estimates Committee process for all departments identified serious problems across the board in the delivery of infrastructure. Given the failure of this Labor Government to properly plan and deliver infrastructure over the past 12 years there is no reason to believe that this government will be able to deliver on the announced ambitious program without the Department of Infrastructure taking a greater lead role than has been evidenced to date.

Recommendation: That the Committee recommends that the Queensland Government;

- **ensures the Minister for Infrastructure and the Coordinator General to take a leadership role in infrastructure coordination and planning, and**
- **clearly define the Ministerial responsibilities of the Ministers for Infrastructure, Transport and Main Roads.**

Poor Infrastructure Planning

Two recent Auditor General Reports have been critical of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. Indeed the report to Parliament 4 of 2009 stated that *“Infrastructure projects can only be considered successful if they deliver intended benefits at an acceptable cost.”*

In Audit Report to Parliament No. 3 for 2009, Transport network management and urban congestion in South East Queensland, the Auditor General identified four key areas of concern:

- *“the leadership at the state level for managing the transport network and urban congestion is not coordinated effectively and makes it more difficult for government agencies to drive a strategic response in an integrated and coordinated manner*
- *due to a systemic weakness in integrated planning across entities, there is no certainty that the agreed responses will achieve the optimal mix between the different elements of an urban transport network, such as land use, transport infrastructure, demand management and intermodal options*
- *the continued use of out of date key transport documents and plans may result in decisions that are based on obsolete data and assumptions and not effectively address the current challenges*
- *inconsistencies in data collection and reporting might have significant impact on the entities’ ability to base their plans on accurate, complete and timely data, as well as to report on outcomes achieved.”*

These findings are damning of both the Queensland Government and the Department of Infrastructure in its role of coordinating infrastructure. Indeed it was clear from the findings of the report that the Department of Infrastructure does not take a leadership role on such transport infrastructure planning.

The Auditor General found;

“There is a negligible formal and documented focus on urban congestion by DIP in its planning, management and reporting processes.

The following areas have been identified for improvement:

- *document how the concerns and issues underlying the recommendation of developing a SPP for transport and land use integration is effectively addressed through existing policies and processes*
- *develop and publish TOD guidelines across the community, industry, state and local government entities to ensure awareness and consistency*
- *implement the integration of land-use and transport co-ordination to incorporate a greater focus on urban congestion.*

Audit also identified that there is an opportunity to leverage from DIP’s co-ordination expertise and planning and management input to develop a coordinated strategy for managing urban congestion.”

Recommendation: That the Committee recommends that the Queensland Government immediately implement all recommendations of the Auditor General Reports No 3 and 4.

Northern Pipeline Interconnector Stage 2

During estimates the Committee asked a series of questions relating to the Northern Pipeline Interconnector Stage 2 (NPI-2).

Mr GIBSON: Minister, in response to a question on notice asked by the member for Waterford, you provided reasons for progressing NPI stage 2 ahead of any approval for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam as it is a stand-alone project to connect the Noosa Water Treatment Plant with NPI stage 1. Can you advise the committee of the expected megalitre transfer either to or from the Noosa Water Treatment Plant?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: To answer Mr Gibson's question, currently the NPI can supply up to 65 megalitres of water a day into the Brisbane supply system as part of the water grid. The long-term planning for the NPI is to operate at a maximum design capacity of 206 megalitres per day in the southerly direction. Those issues in terms of how it could be provided in both directions in part depend on decisions that will be made by the water grid manager, who actually determines those issues based upon need. If there is something further I can clarify for you, I can seek to do that.

Mr GIBSON: Minister, if you could give us some clarification. The 206 megalitres that you are referring to I am assuming is calculated on Traveston Crossing Dam being online. In answer to question on notice you indicated that it is a stand-alone project connecting the Noosa Water Treatment Plant to NPI stage 1. I accept that. I am just asking what the numbers are, megalitre wise, that you are looking at drawing either from the Noosa Water Treatment Plant or connecting to the Noosa Water Treatment Plant.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Unfortunately for Mr Gibson, I think he has missed his opportunity to ask that question because the Queensland Water Commission would determine those issues in terms of the specifications and the requirement of the operations of the pipeline. What the Northern Pipeline Interconnector is seeking to do, and will achieve, is to have a pipeline that provides for a connection to the Noosa Water Treatment Plant and see the capability of moving water in either direction. In terms of the quantum of that water, that is a matter which the Queensland Water Commission, which was available to the committee earlier today, would have been in a better position to answer.

Mr GIBSON: Minister, I accept that and thank you for that. In light of the fact that the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam is not approved—and I will follow up later to find out exactly what the figure is that is possible to either draw from or take to the Noosa Water Treatment Plant—we are looking at a cost of \$450 million for NPI stage 2. Would you concede that, without the Traveston Crossing Dam online, that is a very expensive connection just to a water treatment plant?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: To answer Mr Gibson's question, stages 1 and 2 of the Northern Pipeline Interconnector represent a significant element of the South-East Queensland water grid. They provide an ability to move water around the region. They provide an ability to move water to the northern end of the Sunshine Coast from the rest of the region. Indeed, they provide a significant opportunity to deliver water from the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam to the South-East Queensland water grid. I appreciate the point that Mr Gibson is making. None of us on the committee or no-one here before the hearing has any illusions about Mr Gibson's opinion of the Traveston Crossing Dam. There are no surprises there. I can reassure him that it is an important element of the South-East Queensland water grid—

Mr GIBSON: NPI stage 2 without the dam being approved.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: The dam is an important part of the South-East Queensland water grid—

Mr GIBSON: I understand that.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: And it will provide an important contribution towards obtaining water security for South-East Queensland's population for many years to come.

Mr GIBSON: Minister, I am going to ask it again, because you did not answer the question. I appreciate what you have just said: 'it is a very important part of the water grid.' I understand the government's position as well as the government understands mine. But if the dam is not approved, do you concede that the Northern Pipeline Interconnector stage 2, at \$450 million to connect the Northern Pipeline Interconnector stage 1 to the Noosa Water Treatment Plant, is a very expensive piece of infrastructure?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Gibson has identified that something that is worth \$450 million is expensive. That is no great surprise to anyone. It is an expensive piece of infrastructure but it is delivering an important element of the South-East Queensland water grid—

Mr GIBSON: To a water treatment plant.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: To the water grid, which is about providing flexibility and security in accordance with the requirements that were set out for the delivery of the infrastructure by the Queensland Water Commission. The Queensland Water Commission made the decisions that determine the nature of the infrastructure that my department is working with the alliance
Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg75-76

This questioning revealed the approach of the Bligh Government when it comes to major infrastructure projects. With no guarantee the Government will obtain approval for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam it is progressing with the NPI-2 despite its viability being directly linked to the dam.

The Bligh Government has a record of making big promises on the Water Grid infrastructure, but being unable to deliver projects on budget. It is not even able to give a clear cost benefit analysis for progressing NPI-2 ahead of any approval for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

Given the recorded failure of this Government to deliver on properly planned infrastructure projects, there is no reason to progress with NPI-2 ahead of any approval for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

Traveston Crossing Dam

Possibly one of the most significant examples of poor planning on infrastructure expenditure during the estimates committee process was the line of questioning asked with regards to the funding of rehabilitation works for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

The Bligh Government has allocated \$75 million in its budget for environmental measures and community projects, such as the establishment of a Freshwater Species Conservation Centre, habitat and vegetation rehabilitation and relevant catchment management initiatives.

The Minister was asked Questions on Notice by both government and non government to provide examples of the type of mitigation measures that would be funded by this allocation. In neither answer was any examples given.

In response to further questioning it became clear that those responsible for the provision of the habitat and vegetation rehabilitation and relevant catchment

management initiatives had not conducted any planning as not one example could be provided by the Minister.

Mr GIBSON: *I note the answers to questions on notice both asked by me and the member for Chatsworth where we sought examples of the type of mitigation measures that are expected to be funded from that \$75 million detailed on page 90 of Budget Paper No. 3. I note that in both of those answers to those questions on notice you failed to provide one example. Can you give us just one example of the planned habitat and vegetation restoration that would be funded from that \$75 million, or one example of a relevant catchment management activity that will be funded from that \$75 million?*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *I want to thank Mr Gibson for his question and draw to his attention that there are a range of proactive strategies for rehabilitation activities that will enhance the catchment's existing degraded riparian and aquatic areas.*

Mr GIBSON: *You obviously do not like cattle. I read about your—*

CHAIR: *Member for Gympie, I will explain how this works. You ask the questions; the minister answers them.*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *Those mitigation matters are measures that are being considered by QWI and will be submitted to the Coordinator-General for consideration, but if you want to have some examples I can draw your attention to examples, which include the establishment of the Freshwater Species Conservation Centre—*

Mr GIBSON: *I am aware of that.*

Mr HINCHLIFFE:—*which I am sure you are aware of, a range of habitat and vegetation registration projects that can be delivered and a range of relevant catchment management initiatives.*

Mr GIBSON: *I will ask again: one example, Minister. Surely in coming to a figure of \$75 million there would have been some discussion about, 'Let's do this. That will cost us a couple of million. We'll throw that into the pile. Let's draw on this idea. Perhaps that will cost us \$10 million. Put that in the pile.' I am just seeking one, Minister, just one example.*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *To answer Mr Gibson's question, these are matters that are subject to consideration by QWI and will be submitted to the Coordinator-General for his consideration.*

Mr GIBSON: *You have no idea, do you? You have not got a clue.*

CHAIR: *Member for Gympie!*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: *I am happy to flag that these are matters that QWI are considering, and I am happy to confirm any specific examples that might illustrate the broader examples that I have already outlined. But if you are looking for something more specific than examples such as the Freshwater Species Conservation Centre—I think we know what we are talking about there—I am happy to get that information from QWI and provide it.*

Mr GIBSON: *That was the intention of the questions on notice by me and the member for Chatsworth, but I am happy to have it on notice again, and if we can get one example I would be really chuffed.*

Hansard, 16 Jul 2009, pg81

The Minister for Infrastructure was unable to provide one example either to the questions on notice or during the estimates process. The subsequent answer provided to the committee by the Minister makes reference to “weed clearing, revegetation and instream rehabilitation” as examples of habitat and vegetation restoration and no examples of relevant catchment management initiatives were provided.

It is incredulous that no details could be provided by this Government for an expenditure allocation of \$75 million.

Recommendation: That the Minister should table the plan for expenditure of \$75 million allocated for the provision of habitat and vegetation rehabilitation and relevant catchment management initiatives.

Conclusion

Each of the three major areas of concern dealt with in this report reveals the extent to which under the Bligh Government there is an apparent absence of concern about the spending of public funds and complete lack of process in implementing decisions.

The areas of concerns are:

- Deficiencies in the Estimates Committee process
- Relevance of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning
- Poor Infrastructure Planning and

This dissenting report calls on the recommendations made to be implemented as a matter of priority.



David Gibson
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Planning
Member for Gympie

29 July 2009