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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 2 May 2013

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THURSDAY, 2 MAY 2013

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.


PRIVILEGE

Comments by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade


 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. It has come to my attention upon reading the transcript from yesterday's question time and comments that I have seen in the media that, in answer to a question—when I was asked after 403 days my first question by the Leader of the Opposition—I made some comments in terms of responding to that question. Madam Speaker, nothing in my response was meant to give the intention or intended to give a meaning that the Leader of the Opposition has taken from those comments. However, I do fully withdraw those comments.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Papua New Guinea, Trade Mission


 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.32 am): Today I wish to inform the House that I will be leading a trade mission to Papua New Guinea on 14 and 15 May 2013. Papua New Guinea is Queensland's closest neighbour. We share a longstanding cultural connection, and over the years this friendship has developed into a highly productive business relationship. This relationship was first formalised in 1992 with the signing of the Papua New Guinea and Queensland Memorandum of Understanding on Business Cooperation. We have reached many milestones and now, in its 21st year, I go to renew that agreement with an emphasis on agribusiness, resources, construction, infrastructure and education. My visit to PNG provides an opportunity to reinforce our position in supporting the development of the PNG economy through growing business ties. PNG and Queensland both have relatively new governments but both share a common desire and a strong commitment to developing our regions and industries and growing our economies. During my visit I will meet with key government and industry leaders, focusing on progressing trade, investment and business collaboration. I will be accompanied on this trade mission by a business delegation with strong interest and experience in working in Papua New Guinea. I hope that the visit will open a new and exciting year in our relationship. Once I return I look forward to reporting to the House on the outcomes from my mission.

Rise and Shine Queensland

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.33 am): As I informed the House during the last sitting week, the Queensland government is partnering with the Queensland Music Festival to deliver an exciting tour throughout the state to regions hit by devastating weather earlier this year. Rise and Shine Queensland is being programmed by the Queensland Music Festival, led by artistic director James Morrison, and will include a variety of up-and-coming and iconic Australian performers. I am delighted to announce the line-up for the first Rise and Shine Queensland concert in Rockhampton this Saturday, 4 May. Country singer Beccy Cole, rocker Ella Hooper and alternative country duo Texas Tea will take to the stage for an afternoon of great Aussie entertainment. The tour of these great artists will then move to the Queensland Heritage Park in Biloela for another fun-filled afternoon of entertainment this Sunday, 5 May. I encourage the Rockhampton and Biloela communities to come together at these events, enjoy a free afternoon of family activities, a barbecue and live music. The tour will then travel on weekends throughout May to Gympie, Bundaberg, Gayndah, Maryborough, Ipswich and Tamborine Mountain, and the tour will now go to Gatton after the event originally planned for Laidley was moved there. The Lockyer Valley council advises that

Gatton has a more suitable venue at the UQ campus. I encourage everyone across all regions where Rise and Shine Queensland is touring to take a break, reflect on the year and celebrate the resilience and spirit of their communities.

Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning


 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.34 am): The Commission of Audit report has set out a pathway back to fiscal responsibility for our great state after so many years of Labor's financial failures, and my Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning will play a key role in repairing the state's financial position. We are already delivering on some of the audit's recommendations. My department is already preparing a 10-year state infrastructure plan to identify and prioritise the state's economic infrastructure investment for the next decade. For too long the infrastructure needs across the entire state have been overlooked. This plan, in conjunction with the Premier's Queensland Plan, will redress the Brisbane-centric approach of previous administrations, underscoring that we govern for all Queenslanders.

The audit also recommended a rationalisation of the government's extensive land holdings. It recognised that measures are urgently needed to ensure the efficient management of the state's property portfolio—a portfolio that was poorly managed by the previous government. No greater example exists than that of the Traveston Dam land holdings—the Mary Valley debacle where the previous government bought hundreds of properties at inflated values and which are now costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in losses as property values have fallen. The government is determined to get the best value from all our land holdings across Queensland for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

We have established a new Government Land and Asset Management group within my department to deliver enhanced economic and social outcomes from government property. The group will provide a whole-of-government approach to land management and to the use of that land rather than the former disconnected approach, which not only created unnecessary debt but also failed to utilise the land portfolio to its full extent. The Government Land and Asset Management group, or GLAM as it has become known, will develop and implement a property and asset utilisation review to ensure real property based assets are identified, assessed and managed to their full potential for the benefit of the people of Queensland. This review will be consistent with the findings of the Costello Commission of Audit report and its recommendation to maximise the benefits of the government's portfolio.

Our government has not been idle in awaiting the Costello audit report. We have already begun the work to deliver on many of the recommendations which have now been formally accepted, and that work will now be accelerated. This work will be essential to get our great state back on track after so many years of Labor failures.

Commission of Audit

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.37 am): It gives me great pleasure to provide the House with a further overview of the findings of the independent Commission of Audit and the government's response which is a plan to provide better services for Queenslanders. Part of providing better services is to increase efficiencies so we can drive hard-earned taxpayers' dollars further to achieve those better outcomes. The commission has identified a serious decline in the standards of financial management and accountability in this state under the previous Labor government—no surprises there! This decline is most clearly exhibited in the substantial fiscal deficits delivered by Labor from 2006-07 onwards and projected to continue over the forward estimates period to 2015-16—virtually a decade of deficits under Labor. We can never forget that under Labor debt skyrocketed, reducing the capacity of the government today to provide services to Queenslanders. The Queensland Auditor-General noted in a recent report on the state's finances that—

... borrowings by the General Government Sector have grown by 338.5% between 2008 and 2012. The increase in borrowings over this time has increased risks to the long-term financial sustainability of the State.

We are absolutely committed to ensure that the rapid accumulation of debt never occurs again. The independent commission has made a number of wide-ranging and much needed recommendations to restore Queensland to the highest standards of financial management which were once the hallmark of Queensland.


The government has accepted in full, in part or in principle all of the commission's recommendations on financial management and planning. We will introduce a charter of budget accountability to set sound fiscal principles in legislation, specify minimum content requirements for improved financial reporting in the budget and related documents and impose a requirement for the publication of a pre-election budget update. The charter will include a requirement for the Treasurer to periodically prepare an intergenerational report to inform parliament and the public of the longer term demographic, social and fiscal challenges facing the state. Unless we identify the challenges ahead, how can we possibly plan for the future? The intergenerational report will look at the changing size and composition of Queensland's population. Future population trends will have significant implications for the state's health, education, housing and transport services and our infrastructure program. Our infrastructure spend will be subject to rigorous analysis in accordance with improved investment frameworks.

Under Labor, the Queensland Audit Office found that there was a lack of clarity over the roles and responsibilities of agencies involved at the business case/investment decision phase. The report also found that for some projects insufficient analysis of and comparison with delivery options was provided and that in some cases the delivery method appeared to have been decided prior to the business case being prepared. They knew what they were going to do and did not care whether it made sense or not.

One of the clearest examples of poor investment analysis that led to massive cost blow-outs was both the Queensland Children's Hospital and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The latest cost estimates are more than double the original published estimates, and when you are talking about hospitals that is billions of dollars. But for Labor, it just treated it like monopoly money. The Labor way is for someone else to pick up the tab and unfortunately the only people who do that are taxpayers.

Unlike Labor, the Newman government is committed to open and accountable government. The acceptance of the independent commission's recommendations on the financial management and planning systems further demonstrates this. We are also delivering today but planning for tomorrow, and the delivery of regular intergenerational reports will ensure that government services keep pace with the needs of Queenslanders. All of our actions every day are about ensuring that Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.

Road Safety


 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.41 am): Today, the Newman government will announce its support of Fatality Free Friday. Fatality Free Friday will be officially held on 31 May this year and encourages everyone to pledge to drive safely on this day. Last year more than 38,000 people made the pledge and Queensland recorded no fatalities on the official day. Today, out on Speaker's Green will be a life size blow-up Fatality Free Friday car. I encourage all members to join the police minister and me and to take some time to sign the car and pledge their support to safer driving.

Sadly, our road toll is at 99—15 more than last year—which is why this government is committed to shining a spotlight on road safety and reducing the number of fatalities on our roads. It is also worth noting that last year almost one in five fatalities occurred on a Friday in Queensland. From today, the car will be touring the state, appearing at TMR customer service centres from Toowoomba all the way up to Cairns and inland to Mount Isa. This tour will help to spread this year's theme 'Don't gamble with your life at level crossings', which supports our current level crossing safety campaigns. Running the gauntlet at these crossings is simply not worth the risk. So I urge drivers to obey the signs and signals to avoid tragedy. In 2012 there were 400 reported near misses at railway crossings across the Queensland Rail network, down from 472 the previous year. However, if you are stupid enough to take on a train at a level crossing then there is a very good chance that you will lose.

The Newman government has already shown its commitment to improving safety at level crossings. Work is underway to deliver our election promise to deliver flyovers at two of Queensland's most notorious level crossings: at Robinson Road, Geebung, and at Telegraph Road, Bracken Ridge. These projects, with a combined worth of about \$300 million, are being delivered in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council. We were also able to find the savings within the Department of Transport and Main Roads to provide double the funding for a trial of three level crossing technologies. Delivering these initiatives has only been possible because of the improvements that we have made to service delivery over the past 12 months.

The Commission of Audit has endorsed the work we have undertaken by reforming RoadTek to deliver better roads for better value. Under our plan, the cost of delivering transport infrastructure in Queensland will not continue to increase well above the national average, as it has for the past decade. RoadTek will remain in regional Queensland, but I accept the commissioner's comments that we need to ensure that RoadTek is not creating barriers to entry for private sector providers. But by delivering projects smarter and more efficiently than those opposite, we can deliver more.

Queensland Health

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.44 am): Unlike its predecessor, this government is committed to local decision making in healthcare delivery and to being open and transparent. On 1 July last year local boards were installed to replace the failed centralised bureaucracy of the former Labor government. This government believes that, when health services are tailor-made to local needs, Queenslanders benefit. This improved efficiency enables greater service delivery and higher performance. Boards are held accountable through a robust reporting framework. Already we have increased the number of Queensland hospitals reporting key performance statistics online from 33 to 57. No other state health system presents this high level of transparency.


Uniform public disclosure encourages community scrutiny and is fundamental if we are to realise the best outcomes possible from the considerable resources invested in health. From tomorrow, we step up to a new level. Hospital and health service performance indicators will be published in selected newspapers across Queensland on a quarterly basis. This ensures that community awareness of hospital performance in Queensland will be maximised. This data, linked to performance targets that are widely understood and open to community discussion, will enable Queenslanders to hold their HHSs to account for the results they achieve. The Labor days of hiding waiting lists are over. From tomorrow Queenslanders can open a newspaper and see how their local hospital is performing in pursuit of this goal.

Everyone knows that this government has faced massive challenges. Everyone knows that elective surgery outcomes have been compromised by the decision of the federal government to cut \$103 million from the hospital and health service budget and everyone knows that job losses as a direct result of having to fund Labor's failed payroll debacle could easily have comprised surgery performance. In its first year this government's priority has been to vastly improve emergency departments' performances and to ensure that the federal government's cuts, along with the costs of Labor's payroll debacle, did not worsen elective surgery waiting times or specialist outpatient clinics. Tomorrow, people can judge our progress.

In addition to surgery performance data, the published report cards will also contain data on this government's new Mums and Bubs policy—the in-home maternal and child health visits—along with data on hospital acquired infections and value for money. Even more detailed statistics will be available online for people who want to drill down for more information on individual hospitals.

Health performance should be judged on outcomes and outputs, not on simple input measures like staff and bed numbers. The LNP will be judged on how it delivers for patients; not on how it delivers for union bosses. We want a health system that delivers actual services, not one that just talks about what it might deliver. This is a great state with great opportunity and a transparent government. The reforms proposed in the Commission of Audit report will allow this government to continue to deliver better services for patients, quality jobs for health workers with greater choice between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and greater value for money for taxpayers.

Everyone's Environment Grants Program

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.47 am): Queensland is a great state with great opportunities, especially when it comes to caring for the environment. Over the past couple of days the Premier and the Treasurer have outlined the steps that the Newman government will be taking to get Queensland back on track. As the Deputy Premier just said, a significant part of this is growing the economy. To grow the economy, we must look after the environment. Our tourism and our agricultural industries are dependent on it.

The Commission of Audit report also highlighted the need for the government to work with the not-for-profit sector to ensure the maximum outcomes from taxpayers' dollars. One way that we are helping to protect our environment in partnership with the not-for-profit sector is through the Everyone's Environment grants. I am pleased to announce today that round 2 of the Everyone's

Environment grants program is now open. The Newman government is proud to be able to partner with grassroots level organisations who, like us, are determined to protect our environment for the future. In round 2, \$4 million will be up for grabs, with grants to be offered from \$2,000 to \$100,000. As an indication of just how important these grants are for community groups, my Department of Environment and Heritage Protection was inundated for round 1. Over 200 applications were received for a range of activities to help our local environment.

With \$3 million shared over 74 projects in round 1, round 2 is certain to encourage submissions from right across the state. We are urging community groups that support and are interested in protecting the natural environment to get on board. The Newman government is committed to helping these groups and volunteers who are sincere in restoring some of the state's damaged ecosystems. In round 2 there has been a subtle shift, with the guidelines now including a resilience theme to acknowledge the need to deal with the impact of extreme weather events on our environment. We do not want to just fix things to how they were; we want people to consider the impacts these events have and look at ways to build the resilience of our environment to ensure the conservation of the state's unique biodiversity. Just last week I visited the unique Wongaloo wetlands around 40 kilometres south of Townsville to see firsthand how round 1 of the Everyone's Environment grants is making a real difference. With the 74 projects from round 1 beginning to take effect, I encourage members in this House to take the time and make the effort to see how this initiative is working in their own backyards and to encourage their local constituents to get involved in applying for round 2.

In round 1 projects ranged in scope from \$4,000 to \$100,000, supporting a variety of activities including tree plantings for habitat rehabilitation and restoration, water quality monitoring, controlling pests and weeds, cleaning up community areas, local creeks and waterways, and reducing run-off to improve water quality. I look forward to seeing the exciting projects that may be funded this time around. The guidelines and information about how to apply are available on the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection website and applications close on 31 May 2013.

Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts



Hon. IB WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (9.51 am): I am pleased to inform the House of the results of the Commission of Audit and its impact on my portfolio of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. The Newman government is committed to getting the state back on track and giving taxpayers value for money while ensuring that we are as open and as accountable as possible. Unlike those opposite, this government is working hard to slash red tape and create greater transparency, identifying wasteful expenditure that could be directed towards front-line services.


Of the report's 155 recommendations there are 14 that have direct implications for the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. These are in the areas of information and communication technology, corporate services and grant administration. The commission's recommendations on ICT are completely in line with the international trend towards owning and maintaining fewer internal ICT assets and engaging more fully with external specialists. Around the world companies have decided they no longer need to own their own servers, manage their own desktop fleet or build their own specialised software in-house. Doing so diverts attention and resources away from their core business and the market for companies to undertake these functions is sufficiently developed that it no longer makes any sense to do these things yourself.

The Queensland government has recognised this trend and will move away from the delivery of commodity ICT, allowing departments to get on with the job of providing services. Our own internal ICT audit actually recommends just this approach as well. In the area of corporate services, some of which are provided by Queensland Shared Services on behalf of government, contestability is a key principle underpinning the commission's recommendation. Contestability should not be confused with outsourcing. Contestability seeks best value for money and as such it is not prescriptive about whether the service or the function is delivered by the private or the public sector. As the independent commission notes, contestability does not always mean that private providers will represent better value for money. In fact, a spur of competition provided by contestability can encourage greater innovation and efficiency from a public provider. If I worked for a public provider I would get great work satisfaction from knowing that people chose their service provider, not that they were forced to

take it. Of course, the solution could provide for a mix of public and private providers. We are already delivering major reforms in the way arts grants are delivered. These reforms are completely in line with the Commission of Audit's findings. The new arts investment framework will streamline process and make it easier for the arts community to access vital funding. In addition, it will also allow Queensland taxpayers to clearly see the value and outcomes of the government's investment in the state's artists and arts organisations.

As members can see, my department has a central role in the reform process and I will continue working hard to deliver positive change for Queensland. In the next few months I will be announcing the way in which the Newman government will be putting these reforms into practice in a measured and deliberate way. The Newman government is proud to have a positive plan to get the economy going. This is about supercharging our economy and ensuring growth. It is a plan for Queensland's future. It is about making Queensland the best state in Australia. We are delivering an efficient, effective and totally committed government for all Queenslanders. Unlike those opposite, we are not deceitful and tricky, working in the shadows and behind closed doors. This is about securing a bright future for our children and the generations to follow. We are working hard to make Queensland a great state with great opportunity.

Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs

 **Hon. GW ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier) (9.55 am): The Commission of Audit is an important document for the future of Queensland. It provides options for this government to negotiate a way out of the financial mess created by the previous Labor government. The commission's interim report last year identified renewal and reform of the Public Service as essential to give Queenslanders a more effective and efficient system of government. I am not surprised those opposite are reacting so vehemently to the final report because it spells out in black and white, line by line how they failed the people of Queensland. It exposes their guilt, it highlights their mismanagement and lays bare their financial incompetence. They broke the bond of trust between government and taxpayers by not using public funds wisely and refusing to take the necessary action to stop the state heading towards bankruptcy.

The Commission of Audit makes 19 recommendations directed specifically at the flexibility, accountability and opportunity needed to make Queensland's Public Service the best in Australia. Adoption of recommendations will streamline the process of enterprise bargaining by introducing standardised conditions across areas where staff are doing essentially the same work. The role of the Public Service Commission will be clarified and enhanced and agencies will be required to develop a five-year strategic workforce plan so that there is a clearer direction on how public services will be delivered across the state. The recommendations provide options to make our public services more responsive and to deliver front-line services in the most effective and efficient way possible.

I would like to draw to the attention of members recommendation 124 in the report. The goal of the public sector must be to achieve the highest standards of excellence and to ensure that Queensland is the best administered state in Australia. Even those perennial opposers opposite could not argue with that one. We agree wholeheartedly with it and we are working to reinvigorate our Public Service so that Queenslanders get the services they need when and where they need them. The Commission of Audit is a plan to reinvigorate the state's economy, making the most of our natural resources and the talents of our people while ensuring we protect essential services and those who need a helping hand. It is about being upfront and honest about our vision, not being deceitful and tricky, as has happened in the past. The report charts a course to secure a bright future for our kids and the generations who will follow. It is about making this a great state with great opportunity. The Commission of Audit is a plan for Queensland's future. It is about making this the best government in Australia—efficient, effective and totally committed to delivering for the people of our great state. The report's recommendations support this government's goal to reform and renew the Queensland public sector to make it the best Public Service in Australia. The Newman government is focused on providing the people of Queensland with the best possible Public Service, in stark contrast to the shocking disservice done to the public by the Bligh government.

COMMITTEES

Estimates Hearings

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (9.59 am), by leave: I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 177(4), the dates for each portfolio committee's estimates hearing, the date for the Committee of the Legislative Assembly's public meeting and the dates by which each committee is to report to the House as set out in the order circulated in my name be agreed to.

2013 ESTIMATES COMMITTEES—ORDER SETTING DATES FOR HEARING AND REPORTING

(1) The dates for each portfolio committee's hearing and report dates are as follows—

Portfolio Committee	Ministers	Date of hearing	Date of Report
Finance and Administration Committee	Premier	Tuesday 16 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Treasurer and Minister for Trade		
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee	Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning	Wednesday 17 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Energy and Water Supply		
	Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games		
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice	Thursday 18 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Police and Community Safety		
Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Friday 19 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection		
	Minister for Natural Resources and Mines		
Education and Innovation Committee	Minister for Education, Training and Employment	Tuesday 23 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts		
Health and Community Services Committee	Minister for Health	Wednesday 24 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services		
	Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing		
	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier		
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee	Minister for Transport and Main Roads	Thursday 25 July 2013	Friday 2 August 2013
	Minister for Housing and Public Works		
	Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience		

(2) The date for the Committee of the Legislative Assembly's public meeting and report date is as follows—

Portfolio Committee	Date of hearing	Date of Report
Committee of the Legislative Assembly	Tuesday 16 July 2013 (to be concluded by 10.00am)	2 August 2013

Motion agreed to.

TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE


Report

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—LNP) (9.59 am): I table report No. 23 of the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, *Subordinate legislation tabled on 12 February 2013 (SL234-250) (SL9-16)*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 23—Subordinate legislation tabled on 12 February 2013 (SL234-250) (SL9-16) [[2555](#)].

EDUCATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (9.59 am): I lay upon the table of the House the Education and Innovation Committee's report No. 14, *Subordinate legislation tabled between 13 February 2013 and 5 March 2013*. The Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013 amends the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Regulation to reflect the change in name of the national professional standards for teachers. Instead of referring to the standards by name, the amendment regulation refers to '... the standards approved by the Standing Council of Education Ministers'. This will mean that amendments to the Queensland College of Teachers Regulation are not required in the event the name of the standards changes in the future.


The committee did not identify any significant issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. However, the committee observed that the explanatory notes refer to the Ministerial Council of Education Ministers as the body required to approve national professional standards, whereas the amendment regulation requires the Standing Council of Australian Education Ministers to approve the standards.

Therefore, we seek clarification from the minister on whether the two references refer to the same council and recommend that the explanatory notes be clarified. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 14—Subordinate legislation tabled between 13 February 2013 and 5 March 2013 [[2556](#)].

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Public Sector Jobs

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.00 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's statements on 14 January 2013 about public sector job losses when he said, 'I am ruling out going over 14,000'. I ask: will the Premier guarantee no more public servants will lose their jobs as a result of the government's massive program of asset sales and privatisation?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the leader of the no position for her question, because it is good to at least be dealing with the issues of the day. I had a horrible feeling this morning—

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, I ask you to refer to the Leader of the Opposition by her correct title.

Mr NEWMAN: I stand corrected, Madam Speaker: the Leader of the Opposition's question. However, clearly they have no position. They have been here for a year and they are yet to announce one single policy. They have been here a year and they have barely engaged in a true debate on the issues of the day. They have been here a year and they have failed to tell us how they would deal with the mountain of debt that they built up. They have been here a year and they have failed to tell us how they would fund a national disability insurance scheme. They have been here a year and they have failed to tell us how they would actually provide better funding to our schools. I could go on and on and on.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: I am more than happy to answer their questions, but they are not very polite. They are quite rude. They always want to interject.

Opposition members: Oh!

Mr NEWMAN: Over here we are not the precious ones. We see a lot of glass jaws over there and we see it regularly. We know what they said about asset sales; we can look at what Curtis Pitt, the shadow Treasurer, said when he had his myth busters here—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order. The question was clearly about jobs and the Premier is refusing to answer the question.

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. The Premier has time on the clock to answer the question.

Mr NEWMAN: I am building my argument and the issue is that when Curtis Pitt talked about myth busters in relation to privatisation, he specifically canvassed the issue of job cuts. He said that it was not the case that privatisation led to job cuts. In fact, he was quite clear that privatisation led to expanded opportunities for employees. He quoted Qantas, for one. He said that the Qantas workforce had grown by 16 per cent. What else did he quote? He quoted Canadian National. Curtis Pitt's own material says it is a fact that privatisation does not always mean a reduction in worker numbers. I cannot say it better than that, but we are still waiting for their solutions to the problems that they created.

Debt Reduction Target

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. On Tuesday night when asked about the government's new debt reduction target, the Treasurer said, 'We haven't done those numbers yet'. Yesterday, the Premier was apparently able to outline up to \$24 billion in debt reduction, little more than 15 hours later.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I ask: if the Treasurer has not done the numbers yet, will the Premier confirm that he is just making this up as he goes along?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the Premier, I have warned members before about interjecting during question time when the questioner is on their feet asking the question. I will be removing members from the chamber if they abuse that rule today. I warn members again in respect of interrupting the questioner. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: If I was an opposition member of parliament and I had heard someone say something in this House about me making something up, I would immediately have been on my feet calling for a withdrawal, saying I was personally offended and being precious. Week after week they show that they really cannot take too much. They are not very robust. However, I will overlook the slur, because, in fact, we have a 1,000 page report that demonstrates how we will get this state back on track and repair the economy and the finances of Queensland. Mr Costello's report has led to a comprehensive response from government. It is there. Unlike those opposite who would not tell the truth about asset sales to the people of Queensland, we have said in black and white what we propose to do in response to the 155 recommendations.

In relation to the issue of debt reduction, I will be very clear: the Treasurer has been asked to comment on various occasions and I have been asked to comment. Yesterday, I was asked about the potential for debt reduction. The potential for debt reduction is, as outlined in this plan, \$7 billion and maybe up to \$10 billion with the things that we are saying we are prepared to consider. Then there is \$14 billion worth of capital expenditure required in the energy GOCs and we would be inviting the private sector to work with us on innovative solutions to undertake the expansion of the poles, the wires and the transmission network. That is what I said yesterday.

Mr Pitt: Put things on layby.

Mr NEWMAN: Oh dear me! The shadow Treasurer of the party with no position whatsoever interjects. The reason that the Treasurer said what he said and the reason that I have said some of the other things that I have said is that it depends on whether the people of Queensland will give us a mandate to do what we have said we will do. It seems perfectly obvious to me that we are putting forward our proposals to Queenslanders. However, unlike the Australian Labor Party hypocrites opposite, we will not be railroading the people of Queensland. We are going to tell them about the ways in which we can undertake debt reduction through potential asset sales.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: We are unlike those interjecting, who have absolutely no credibility anymore because they just go and do what is best for them. Comrades always do that. They will not be upfront and they will not be honest. They will do the back-room deals, they will do whatever they darn well like and then mislead the people of this state about those things. We have to put forward a plan, get people to support it and then we will know what the ultimate position is.

Disability Services

Mr TROUT: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier please update the House on how the government's plan to assist Queenslanders living with a disability to access the best possible services is in line with the Commission of Audit Report and the government's response to it?

Mr NEWMAN: Again I say that this is what the debate should be about this week—the delivery of important front-line services to Queensland. The opposition again has no position when it comes to these things. In contrast, the government is committed to improving support for Queenslanders with a disability, their families and carers, particularly those who are currently missing out. We have already committed an additional \$868 million over five years from 2014-15 to support the implementation of the NDIS to help deliver this outcome. As I said in this House yesterday, I support a levy at the Commonwealth level to pay for these important services because I want to ensure we are providing better disability services and supporting more people.

Yesterday I highlighted that the government-run Accommodation Support and Respite Services cost over \$140 million per annum to deliver services to 1,091 clients. In contrast, NGOs provide these same services to 11,104 Queenslanders for \$480 million from the same government pool. So for just 3½ times the price, NGOs look after 10 times the number of people.

This differentiation in cost is not sustainable and is preventing us getting better services to more people. To address this issue, we have accepted recommendation 98 of the Commission of Audit report to transition all Accommodation Support and Respite Services to NGOs. This is an important efficiency reform that will help to better prepare Queensland for transition to an NDIS. It means the money Queensland gets will go further.

The Labor Party and unions claim that we want to sell off disability services. Those claims do not stack up given that more than 90 per cent of disability Accommodation Support and Respite Services are already delivered by NGOs. Given those opposite support the NDIS—well they say they do—and allowing Queenslanders with a disability greater choice and control over their specialist disability funding, they should support this reform as well.

A 2005 review of the former government's AS&RS program noted that—

While there is a community expectation that government will ensure provision of accommodation support to those in need, the direct service provision capacity will often be available in the non-government sector. If the government is to be the sole direct provider, special facilities will be required which is quite uneconomic.

Let me remind the House about the member of Mulgrave's Productive Commission submission which stated—

State and territories' role in the provision of disability services would be significantly reduced.

I challenge those opposite today to show courage and support our reforms to provide better services to Queenslanders with disabilities, their carers and families.

Sale of Public Assets

Mr MULHERIN: My question is directed to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's statement on Tuesday that the LNP would not sell Energex, Ergon and Powerlink in either this or the next term of government. Will the Premier confirm that his announcement yesterday will involve the sale to the private sector of \$14 billion in existing assets and future revenue streams?

Mr NEWMAN: I am delighted that the member for South-East Queensland would ask a question today on this important issue.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, I ask you to refer to the member by his correct title.

Mr NEWMAN: I stand corrected. Of course, I am referring to the member for Mackay who would prefer, as would the member for Bundamba, for these important planning deliberations for the 30-year plan to be held in South-East Queensland. I need to keep reminding the House of the Labor Party's position on the Mackay summit.

The difference between those opposite and ourselves is that we lay out our plans in black and white so people can consider them. It is here in black and white what the member is referring to. In relation to recommendation 8 the government says—

However, the Government will investigate alternative ways of funding the future expansion of infrastructure.

We have said that we will not be divesting the electricity distribution and transmission businesses. We will not be selling off Energex, Ergon or Powerlink, but we will be looking for ways to fund \$14.3 billion worth of capital expenditure that needs to be undertaken in the next few years. It is in the Commission of Audit report.

Why would those opposite be surprised? I know why they are surprised. They are not used to people putting in black and white a plan for consideration and for the community to comment on. They are interested in muck-raking, innuendo and nonsense, and when anybody dares criticise them they run off screaming and yelping about being given a hard time. They can dish it out but they cannot handle it themselves. They have no position.

Thirteen years ago a previous Labor leader had the guts to actually talk about partnerships with the private sector. I refer to an article in the *Courier-Mail* on 7 June 2000. Then Acting Premier Jim Elder was commenting on the potential for the sale and lease back of power assets. He said 'Yes, that was on.' He said this—

Mr Elder ruled out the South Australian model—

I will not go into that at this stage—

saying the government would only support joint ventures and partnerships that included lease backs under which the lion share of energy assets remained in public hands.

We could not agree more. When it comes to the distribution and transmission businesses, we could not agree more. Again, to get out of the huge financial mess that those opposite created—former members of cabinet who created a pile of debt—we need to find ways to get the private sector to fund the \$14.3 billion of expansion, distribution and transmission over the next few years. We will be looking at innovative ways of doing that with the private sector.

Queensland Economy

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr HART: Can the Deputy Premier advise how his department is working with Queensland businesses to attract new projects and help grow the Queensland economy?

Madam SPEAKER: Before I call the Deputy Premier, I warn the member for South Brisbane under standing order 253A for interjecting during the question being asked. I remind members to listen to questions in silence. I have already given a general warning. I call the Deputy Premier.

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Burleigh for the question. The reaction from the opposition indicates just how little they are interested in economic growth.

Economic growth is an issue that this parliament should have been considering all week because economic growth is an important part of our government's response to the Costello Commission of Audit. The Treasurer has outlined in some detail the response with regard to lowering the state's debt and increasing the productivity of the Public Service—all of those issues that are critically important.

But an equally important response to the difficulties that the state faces, as outlined by Mr Costello and his colleagues, is the absolute essential requirement to boost economic growth. Questions about economic growth and how our state is going to increase the rate of economic growth over the next decade to deal with Labor's debt are critically important.

There are two paragraphs in the report that I think have not received the attention they should have this week. I think that they deserve the consideration of not just every parliamentarian but all Queenslanders. The third paragraph states—

The Queensland Government's overarching economic strategy is unashamedly pro-growth. A strong and vibrant economy is essential to improving the well-being of Queenslanders. Without economic growth, the State will not have the income to meet the service delivery aspirations of its citizens.

It goes on to state—

To rebuild revenues, the Government has already changed the economic focus of Queensland by concentrating its efforts on "supercharging" the real strengths of our state ...

That is, the four pillars of the economy that we promised Queenslanders we would address. But the efforts that we have made in the last 12 months are just the beginning. They are just the beginning of a whole-of-government approach to drive economic growth in Queensland so that we can deal with Labor's legacy.

Every government agency will now need to focus on economic growth over the next decade. Economic growth over the next decade will be much harder to achieve than it was over the previous decade, when the government that went broke in the boom had the benefits of a booming world economy. That is no longer the case. The task that faces our government in driving economic growth will be much harder. It will be much more important that this government, and all its agencies, focus on achieving that economic growth so that we can deal with Labor's debt, so that we can deal with the problems that were left as the terrible legacy of so many years of Labor failures.

My department will lead that effort. My department of state development will lead that effort of driving the engine room of Queensland, building the business of Queensland for the benefit of all Queenslanders in a decade of economic growth.

(Time expired)

Blue Cards

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I understand operators of businesses at amusement parks in Queensland are exempt from the requirement to obtain a blue card. I ask: will the minister review the continuation of this exemption in the light of evidence that more and more parents are today leaving children and teenagers at amusement parks for extended periods of time because of the expectation that children will be safe?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. Members would be aware that the purpose of the blue card system is to provide a sense of security and safety around people working with children in activities where there might be issues or concern around their safety. With regard to the member for Nicklin's particular question, I understand that the initial rationale around having an exemption for amusement parks was that it was unlikely in these environments that children would not have adult supervision. I acknowledge his comments that there may be more and more parents leaving their children to participate in those activities. But, more than that, the children are unlikely to receive one-on-one services from people working in amusement parks where a relationship of trust is unlikely to develop.

But what I can tell the member is that, as part of our six-month action plan, the government is looking at streamlining the blue card process. It is very unwieldy at the moment and needs a review. As part of that process, the Assistant Minister for Child Safety, the member for Mount Ommaney, and I are looking at those issues that the member has identified. Because it is appropriate if we are doing a complete review of the streamlining of the blue card system to look at the whole system, that is what we are doing. Please be assured that that is being looked at. I understand that the assistant minister in the coming weeks is organising a meeting for some stakeholders to address that very issue that the member has raised today.

Commission of Audit

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House of some of the examples provided by the independent Commission of Audit about modern service delivery models and whether there are any alternative views?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her question. The member for Mudgeeraba comes from a health services background, a nursing background, and knows well the options that are available for the delivery of health services, having herself managed a significant health service provider.

Mr Stevens: And Telstra Business Woman of the Year.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes and, as the member for Mermaid Beach tells me, Telstra Business Woman of the Year. The independent Commission of Audit has identified that without reform the way the government goes about providing its services is in peril and the way we do it presently cannot continue. The cost of providing those services and the way that we have been providing those services is unsustainable, and the cost would become too great for the government to be able to meet

without rapidly raising taxes, fees and charges. We know that that was indeed the way it was done under the Labor Party. We understand also that there is a fundamental role for government in ensuring the delivery of services. This government remains committed to ensuring those services are delivered and delivered to the best possible standard at a price that Queenslanders can afford.

Modern processes such as contestability allow the government to benchmark their own internal services against external providers. They also provide us with the ability to leverage well-functioning, mature markets to deliver quality services. The government's sole objective in accepting the recommendations of the independent Commission of Audit around modern delivery methods is to provide more and better services for Queenslanders. As the Premier and as this government consistently state, we are all about ensuring that Queensland and the Queensland Public Service is the most efficient and best public service in Australia.

The member asked me if there were any alternative views in relation to service delivery models. The Labor opposition and their union allies, the union protection racket allies, have used this House and the media to peddle hysterical claims that contestability and outsourcing will lead to fewer services and higher costs. Madam Speaker, you can imagine my surprise when the independent commission highlighted a number of examples of the former Labor government using contestability and outsourcing. Members, you will be surprised. Members on this side who would have undertaken a thorough reading of the report—those on the other side wouldn't have—will have noticed the outsourcing previously undertaken by the Labor government.

Here are some examples where the Labor Party has already undertaken some services outside of the public sector. Nearly a quarter of social housing properties in Queensland are managed by the non-government sector, and the number went up from just under 10 per cent in 2007-08 to almost 25 per cent in 2011-12.

(Time expired)

Disability Services

Mr MINNIKIN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I refer the minister to the inaccurate claims made by the Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday that the government will sell off disability services and I ask: why are these claims inaccurate and is the minister aware of the opposition's record when it comes to actually selling off disability services?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for his question. As the Premier said this morning, our government has a commitment to improving the lives of Queenslanders with a disability and their families and their carers including those who are currently missing out. But our primary mechanism for achieving that will be through our support of the NDIS including our additional \$867 million over five years from 2014-15 to support that implementation.

As the Premier has previously outlined, the Commission of Audit makes some recommendations that will enable us to provide more and better services to people living with a disability. It will allow us to expand the current successful model which will see NGOs play an even greater role in the delivery of services, a model which the opposition when in government actually themselves acknowledged was the future.

Whilst we are committed to getting on with the job of trying to improve the lives of people with a disability here in Queensland, it is very disheartening for me to hear those opposite seeking to do nothing but create uncertainty and fear for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. On Tuesday, in reference to the Commission of Audit recommendations, the Leader of the Opposition had this to say—

The government wants to sell off to someone else the services provided to people who need the highest care in this state. They will not be looked after in the government's hands.

Those opposite know that 90 per cent of disability accommodation support and respite services are already delivered via NGOs—90 per cent. In fact, it was the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mulgrave who nearly doubled the budget available to NGOs to provide accommodation support and respite services.

I am asked though about the Labor Party's record when it comes to actually selling off disability services. Not surprisingly they do have a history. I thought I would do a little bit of research. Madam Speaker, during the course of my research, do you know what I came up with? Addresses and settlement amounts: 19 Laar Crescent, Boondall; Windmill and Hopkins streets, South Toowoomba; 101 Graham Street, Blackstone; 2A Robinson Road, Eastern Heights—all disability services properties sold for \$2 million. And who, lo and behold, were the ministers in charge at the time of those sell-offs? They would be the member for Mulgrave and the Leader of the Opposition. The hypocrisy of those opposite knows no bounds. We are committed to providing more services to more people with a disability, whilst those opposite in government were only interested in flogging off assets in a fire sale.

Public Service, Jobs

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I table an article that includes a statement from the Treasurer which says that the government workforce will reduce by one-third in the next five years due to natural attrition, retirement and 'other options being taken up'. I ask: will the Premier reveal if any or all of those 66,000 workers will be replaced or will their jobs disappear forever?

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 1 May 2013, titled 'A third of staff may go' [2557].

Mr NEWMAN: I am delighted to answer a question from the shadow Treasurer. In relation to this issue about outsourcing and privatisation, again I urge him to go back and read what he said about the wonderful benefits of asset sales and privatisation. He was a strong advocate and he continues to be a strong advocate. We know that because he had this material on the internet only a few weeks ago. We have here a strong supporter—our cheerleader. We did not have to look far for it. It was right there on the internet. We know how to spell hypocrisy. It is spelt A-L-P. As we just heard from my colleague the Minister for Communities, when the shadow Treasurer was the relevant minister he sold off assets. They are all over the shop. The trouble with those opposite is they have absolutely no position. They are a party of contrarians. They will say and do anything to get a cheap shot and a cheap headline. We can see that in the media today. Not only are they into cheap shots and saying exactly the opposite of what they said when in government even though they formally had those positions; the opposition has a very big glass jaw.

The Treasurer is making the point that over the next few years because of the age profile of the Public Service people will be retiring. The measure of success of a government is how well it provides services to its community. Perhaps I could ask one rhetorical question today. Perhaps the opposition will stand up in this place and tell us whether they have yet read the Commission of Audit report. Have they read the Commission of Audit report?

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Well, it is fascinating. It was good enough for them to come in here almost immediately after its release and ask, 'Have you read the Commission of Audit report, Premier?'

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Ms Trad: Who has the glass jaw now?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members!

Mr NEWMAN: I have hit a raw nerve over there clearly. I ask them: do the right thing by Queenslanders. Get a position. Find a position—any position but please get one.

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In the 30 seconds that the Premier has left, will he address the question which asked whether the jobs will be disappearing forever or whether the workers will be replaced?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Please take your seat. That is not a point of order. I warn members to be careful about taking a point of order when it is in fact out of order.

Mr NEWMAN: We know what Curtis Pitt said on his website. Here is the quote: 'It is a well-known fact that the private sector buy businesses to grow them, not shrink them.' That very strongly indicates to me a belief that privatisation leads to jobs growth, and I will accept that. Before I conclude, again, here is their plan to shrink the Queensland Public Service by 43,000 employees. There it is in black and white.

Mr Nicholls: The hit list.

Mr NEWMAN: That is their hit list. They stand condemned because they will not tell Queenslanders the truth. Not under any circumstances will they tell it like it is to Queenslanders.

Commission of Audit

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. I refer to the Costello report's recommendation to privatise mobile traffic camera services currently undertaken by police and ask: will the minister outline what impact this privatisation will have on the pay packets of police currently involved in traffic camera operations?

Mr DEMPSEY: It is great to be able to answer a question from the member for Rockhampton in relation to the Commission of Audit report and, in particular, speed cameras. In relation to the overall Commission of Audit report, when we talk about contestability, co-location and connectivity between the departments, we look at how we can get the best Public Service doing their core business and get the best value for all Queenslanders. That is what I am going to be doing in my portfolios of police and emergency services. What I will also be doing is taking on board the recommendations from the Keelty review, which will be handed down later this year, to look at how departments do not work in silos but work together so we can have the best Police Service and the best emergency services not just now but in 10 and 20 years time for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

To answer your question in relation to speed cameras, the issue of speed cameras was noted in the budget statements last year. There is no secrecy about that. It was in the budget papers that we would be looking at what we can do in relation to speed cameras. We are looking at all options that obviously maintain the integrity of speed camera operations but also get the best utilisation of police resources. But we will make sure we meet the high standards in relation to the operation of speed cameras. We are currently doing that.

After we have gone out and seen what the best options are, then we will work with all stakeholders. Like many other states and territories, what I want to do is make sure that the police are out on the streets of Queensland reinforcing the safety of our streets. Just this week to the end of April we conducted operation Q-Blitz. We issued 95,000 tickets to Queenslanders for committing offences across the whole of the state. There were nearly 2,000 drink drivers and 1,500 seatbelt offences. Here in the 21st century people are not getting that message. One of the benefits of that program is that it was police individually intercepting the offenders and having a personal conversation with them. When that offender, his family and other friends in that vehicle realise the effect it is having not just on them but also on other members of the community in putting the lives of others at risk, it sends a clear message.

(Time expired)

Queensland Plan

Mr COSTIGAN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. Could the minister please update the House on the progress of the Queensland Plan including the Mackay summit being held on 10 May?

Mr POWELL: I thank the honourable member for his question. I know he is gearing up for the upcoming home game in his home patch of Mackay on Friday next week. I know that he is looking forward to it.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr POWELL: Well, the member for Whitsunday is certainly supporting it in his area. I am pleased to report that 145 representatives from Queensland peak bodies gathered together on Tuesday to begin and join in the conversation on the Queensland Plan. These organisations have a wealth of knowledge and experience about what it means to live, to work and to do business in Queensland. Their input will help focus our conversations about the future and work out where we want to be as a state in 30 years time. There was a great mix of not-for-profits, peaks and industry associations on Tuesday. There were organisations as diverse as the Lions Club, the Multi-Faith Centre, the Salvation Army, the rabbit board, AgForce, the Regional Development Association of Australia and the Queensland Association of State School Principals.

I was inspired by the strong sense of community shared by all participants who highlighted the importance of working together to make Queensland a great state. There is a genuine willingness to collaborate in new and not-so-usual ways. For example, we had the suggestion that perhaps a mining company should partner with a charity to talk about what they want for the future. Those representatives also recognised the importance of ensuring our young people join in the conversation. We need to find as many opportunities as possible to ensure the next generation has a voice in the development of the Queensland Plan because they will be the leaders when the Queensland Plan's vision is realised.

I am pleased to advise the House that we have now locked in the arrangements for Mackay, with more than 400 Queenslanders coming together in a robust forum to shape our vision for the future. I thank all 89 members for their support in bringing together a great cross-section of Queenslanders in one room. From a bank manager in the Aspley electorate to a respite care worker from the Dalrymple electorate, a company director in Bundamba to a schoolteacher from the Gladstone region, the whole state will be represented. These delegates will work together to shape the process to develop the Queensland Plan, but then the work really begins. I remind members again that from May through to September we will be holding grassroots community engagement activities to answer the questions developed in Mackay.

I am excited to learn more about what Queenslanders aspire to in the future and I hope everyone will share their thoughts. It is clear that the people of Queensland are ready and willing to have their say. The Queensland Plan will be developed by Queenslanders for Queenslanders. I urge all honourable members to continue these conversations across our great state.

Cattle Industry

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. In Queensland average farm debt levels rose from \$700,000 two years ago to \$1.2 million in 2012 and now are at \$1.4 million and increasing. In the wake of this and other industry challenges including BJD, live export bans, dry seasonal conditions and the high Australian dollar and given that the federal government has just committed over \$400 million in assistance, what assistance will the Queensland government give to keep the western cattle grazing industry alive?

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lockyer, I warn you under standing order 253A. I call the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Mr McVEIGH: I thank the honourable member for his question. I am not sure whether the honourable member happened to be in the House late last night, but can I suggest that he would benefit from reading the transcript of the speech made by the member for Gregory in the adjournment debate in relation to the farm finance package from the federal government. The member for Gregory put it into context very nicely.

I can share with the House that over the last couple of years, certainly prior to our party coming into government, the state governments and the federal government in Australia have been dealing with a proposed drought reform package. For the interest of the House, tonight I will be joining my state colleagues and the federal minister in Sydney for meetings tomorrow of the Primary Industries Standing Committee to discuss that drought reform package. The package as published across the country in recent months with the support—

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order. Sorry, I missed that before. I just want to clarify was—

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr KATTER: I want a correction. I was in the House last night listening to the member for Gregory. I wish the minister to withdraw that statement.

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I did not hear the statement in reference to a member not being present. I will advise the member that it is not covered under the standing orders but it is a courtesy of the House that we do not refer to members not being present because they may have a very good reason and I ask the minister to respect that.

Mr McVEIGH: I certainly do respect that. I stand corrected if the member took that the wrong way. I was merely making the observation that the member for Gregory made an excellent presentation to the House last night and I simply was not sure whether the member for Mount Isa was here at that time. Given that he confirmed that he was, I am sure that he would agree with me that the member for Gregory put the situation into context.

The Primary Industries Standing Committee will be considering the drought reform package tomorrow in Sydney. That package, as promoted by the federal government over the last couple of years, is focused on the federal government removing itself from in-drought reform and providing social service through Centrelink to farm households with the state government left to look at direct drought assistance.

I note the comments of the federal Minister for Agriculture, Senator Ludwig, in the company of the federal Treasurer and Mr Bob Katter last weekend. With no reference whatsoever to state governments or state farm bodies, he has created great concern across the country, and I look forward to getting clarification on that tomorrow. State farm bodies and other state governments have said that that comment from the federal minister makes no sense, is in stark contrast to the drought reform package that has been developed and may well be, pending confirmation tomorrow, yet another attempt from the federal government at a cynical political exercise that does not really address the needs of Queenslanders or, indeed, Australians—in this case farmers who are under tremendous pressure. Why are they under this pressure, particularly in the north of our state? It is because of a live cattle export ban by Joe Ludwig himself. He is trying to fix his own mess.

(Time expired)

Health Services, Jobs

Mr SYMES: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I refer the minister to a meeting to be held next Tuesday at which the member for South Brisbane will accompany the federal Minister for Health, Tanya Plibersek, and I ask: can the minister advise what will be the single greatest issue the member for South Brisbane should raise with Tanya Plibersek if Labor is serious about standing up for health jobs and health services?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Lytton for his very strong and tenacious advocacy and practical and realistic advocacy on behalf of his constituents as the hospital board in his area struggles to deal with the legacy left by the previous government. I was most interested to learn recently that the honourable member for South Brisbane will be attending a meeting with Tanya Plibersek next Tuesday to talk about certain issues regarding primary care in Queensland. It is most interesting because I never hear Tanya Plibersek talk about anything to do with their responsibility. She is not up here at some GP superclinic which is lying as a smoking ruin. She is not up here looking at the issue of the failure to provide appropriate primary care in some of the areas around the state or the fact that we are losing GPs from the private sector in places like Mount Isa.

When the member for South Brisbane does attend this meeting with the minister next week, I think she should take along the Senate report into the brutal, retrospective punishment of the Queensland and state health systems around Australia by the removal—in our case particularly—of \$103 million in November last year. She should ask Tanya Plibersek to stand up and give that money back so that we can reinstate those services for the patients of Queensland. I bet she will not say any of that. I bet that she will go along and will not mention this. Don't mention the war! It is a little bit like *Fawlty Towers*: 'Don't mention the war. If you do it, do it once if you think you can get away with it.'

The other thing that I was interested to receive was a south-side summary, which looks like it is going to be an annual tome, from the member for South Brisbane who talks about all the wonderful things she is achieving on behalf of her constituents. When I opened it the other day I saw seven photos, but I could not find a photo of the honourable member with the Leader of the Opposition. There is no photo of the honourable member with the Leader of the Opposition. There is a picture of a bus, but no picture of the honourable member with the honourable Leader of the Opposition. Maybe it is on the inside, but I opened it up and I could not find it. Nowhere did I see in the honourable member's tome any representation of the fact that the honourable Leader of the Opposition privatised 9,000 workers in Queensland or offered 3,000 of them voluntary redundancies. But given her aspirations, maybe that will be in the next edition as she seeks to inch forward one seat further towards the front.

(Time expired)

Tourism Industry

Mrs SMITH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister please advise the House on any recent initiatives to promote the Queensland tourism industry to the international market?

Mrs STUCKEY: It is, indeed, a pleasure to receive this question from the honourable member for Mount Ommaney. What a strong representative she is for her constituency in that electorate. She also understands our government's focus on boosting the economy and how important tourism is to do just that, unlike those opposite who do not even like having tourism talked about in this House because they see it as frivolous and a waste of time.

Only last week I was fortunate enough to visit Sydney and attend an ATE, which is the Australian Tourism Exchange. This is one of the most significant trade travel events held on the tourism calendar in Australia. Guess who had the biggest contingent at this trade travel event? Queensland did. Queensland had the biggest delegation out of all the states. Why? Because those operators who attended that forum knew that they had a government that believed in tourism and had made it one of the four pillars of this great state.

We attended a welcoming function at the Sydney Pumphouse. It was pumping with 200 delegates all raring to go to promote Queensland. As I travelled around those booths at the massive Sydney Exhibition Centre at Darling Harbour, business was happening in every booth. This is the biggest opportunity for Queensland to attract an inbound market. Some 47 countries came to do business at this forum, and there were approximately 700 buyers in this large arena.

It is important to note that the ATE is held in a different location each year. On Tuesday we announced that the next ATE will be held in Cairns. For the first time, the ATE will be held in a regional centre. I know that it will bring sensational business to Cairns. The local industry has estimated that coup to be worth some \$10 million. Because we are focused on boosting our economy and growing this very important pillar, I know that Cairns will put on an ATE to be remembered. People will be able to experience our Queensland products firsthand, not just in Cairns but also right throughout Queensland. We have a suite of destinations that are the envy of Australia and will soon be known across the world as we are able to showcase them at ATE. Bring on the ATE next year. It is a significant win and another sign of the confidence the tourism industry has in the Newman government in Queensland.

Office of the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

Mrs SCOTT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister explain why, at a time when the creation of jobs in the tourism sector is vital to the Queensland economy, her office has become a revolving door for staff, with 13 people having left over the past year?

Mrs STUCKEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is an honour to finally be asked a question by the opposition. As I review the more than 300 questions asked over the past 45 question times I see that those opposite have not yet asked me anything about tourism, major events, small business or the Commonwealth Games. The member for Bundamba got a bit lukewarm. I think the honourable member asked me about sand erosion. Somehow that issue was linked into my portfolio!

I think it is important to note that, whilst we often talk up how well we are doing in tourism and with our tourism numbers, we make it look easy. Yet, because of the volume of red tape and the neglect of the Labor government over the past decade, there have been very difficult years for many operators. We are now seeing some of the first green shoots and positive signs that we have seen for a long time. I would like to place on record my thanks to the staff who have worked with me in the past 12 months to help us achieve these very significant outcomes. Those outcomes include not just a department dedicated to tourism but also a boost in tourism numbers. Those numbers certainly reflect the attitude that this government has.

Mrs Scott: Why have so many staff left?

Mrs STUCKEY: I will answer the honourable member's question. On the record I would like to thank those staff in my electorate office who have retired because they had reached retirement age. I want to acknowledge those who have gone overseas. I want to acknowledge those who have taken promotions. I want to acknowledge those who are working in other departments, which is a normal practice, in order to gain invaluable experience. This government has adopted a whole-of-government approach, and we want to know what is happening across the government, in other departments.

We are seeing the results of that, particularly through initiatives such as the tourism cabinet committee, which has five ministers on it. We are making major decisions that will affect national parks and make them more open to visitors. Those decisions, through the Deputy Premier, will affect access in terms of roads and infrastructure. Some wonderful achievements have been made in

conjunction with the Minister for Education in terms of increasing our skills and capacity so that we are better able to service our Chinese market. Overall, it is good news for my department. We are very pleased with the efforts we are making.

(Time expired)

Passenger Transport Services, Review

Mrs MENKENS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Could the minister please provide an update on the current review of long-distance passenger services and the government's response to the Commission of Audit in relation to long-distance rail services?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the honourable member for her question and for the great welcome to Ayr for the recent community cabinet. There were wonderful questions asked and great community involvement at that community cabinet meeting. I think all who attended welcomed the opportunity to go back to Ayr for the first time for many years for a community cabinet.

As the Commission of Audit indicated, the review has been going for some time already. We have been reviewing long-distance passenger services on air, rail and road—that is, coach. In order for those in the chamber to understand where we are at the moment I indicate that there are 16 long-distance subsidised coach routes across Queensland, five subsidised air routes, five regulated air routes and also the Traveltrains—the Sunlander, the Spirit of the Outback, the Inlander and the Westlander. As I have announced previously, we have been undertaking a review of those services.

We have written to communities and particularly to mayors to ask what they want in their areas, because the reality is that things do not always stay as they are. The travel needs and desires of communities do change over a period of time, and we want to ensure that what is happening in those areas is what communities want. A perfect example of that is the situation in Roma. Over the past six years we have seen a 500 per cent increase in the number of people travelling by air, so we are looking at that area as well. But we want to look across the state.

I thank all those who have responded to our review. Nearly 3,000 passengers have been surveyed or have provided submissions: 62 per cent regarding air services, 30 per cent regarding coach services and eight per cent regarding train services. There has been a great response and we are looking at that.

I particularly thank some of the mayors for their responses. This is the first review in six years. As I said, travel patterns do change. Also, obviously some issues have garnered headlines and have raised concerns in terms of the high level of subsidies for some forms of travel. For instance, on some of our Traveltrain services—say, the Westlander or the Inlander—we are seeing subsidies of \$2,000 per passenger per trip. So it is well worth undertaking this inquiry.

In terms of the Inlander particularly I thank Mayor Tony McGrady, who was at Parliament House yesterday. I caught up with him briefly. He suggested in his response that he wanted more investment in air services. Mayor Belinda Murphy from the McKinlay Shire Council said that the airline service was essential to her community but that she believed the era of traditional passenger rail travel had passed. I also thank Mayor John Wharton, from the Richmond shire, who agrees that the current subsidy is unsustainable. I thank all of those mayors for their input. We will continue working on that inquiry.

(Time expired)

Agriculture Industry

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister please advise the House how the findings of the Commission of Audit will help get Queensland and agriculture back on track?

Mr McVEIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question, because as Assistant Minister for Finance, Administration and Regulatory Reform she truly understands the significance of the Commission of Audit and as a regional member in this House she is proving to be a tremendous representative for her region. The Commission of Audit is a plan for Queensland's future, as the House now knows. It is about making Queensland the best state in Australia, ensuring our government is the most efficient and effective in Australia and totally delivering to the people of Queensland. It is a plan to reinvigorate our economy—making the most of our natural resources and

talents of our people whilst ensuring we protect essential services and those who need a helping hand. It is about being upfront and honest about our vision—not deceitful and tricky, as has happened in the past. It is about securing a bright future for our kids and the generations to follow. It is about making this a great state with great opportunity.

Whilst the state was left in a mess by those opposite, we are now focused on ensuring that regional and rural communities—that know and understand the value of living within your means, of not wasting precious resources and putting aside funds for tough times—get a fair go. For agriculture and its communities, sound management from the Newman government will ultimately mean more money for what they really need—hopefully more money for roads, more money for vital front-line services. Paying down debt and restoring our AAA credit rating will mean lower borrowing costs for our state, ultimately making more funds available for things that matter. That includes, of course, what means so much to regional communities and to the rest of Queensland—health, education and community services as well. Let us compare this with the shameful track record of the Beattie-Bligh years and the massive debts run up under then Treasurer Andrew Fraser. The LNP is determined to get our great state back on track, and agriculture—one of the four pillars of our economy—will be all the better for it.

Madam SPEAKER: The time for questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours


Madam SPEAKER: I wish to acknowledge the schools visiting today. They are Guardian Angels primary school from Wynnum in the electorate of Lytton, Yeronga State High School in the electorate of Yeerongpilly, Springfield Lakes State School in the electorate of Bundamba and Brisbane Independent School from Kenmore in the electorate of Moggill.

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND MISCONDUCT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 18 April (see p. 1149), on motion of Mrs Cunningham—

That the House takes note of report No. 90 of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee tabled on 5 April 2013.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (11.01 am): The report is both welcome and rather a disappointment. I say this because for the first time in a very long time there are three members, including the deputy chair, who have submitted a list of reservations about the report. Generally it is considered that there is a political flavour to all government and opposition reports. Inherently, they are unanimous in the PCMC. Sincere and detailed attempts are made to ensure this. As a former PCMC chair—in fact, the only opposition chair of it ever—it was possible to achieve. This is no reflection on the current chair of the committee. What concerns me is the final statement in the statement of reservations—

The release and destruction of the ... documents was a significant error that was compounded by poor judgement on a number of occasions. However, to claim that this instance is emblematic of the workings and functioning within the CMC is not a conclusion that can be drawn from evidence provided to this Inquiry and, in fact, would only support a political agenda to weaken the very important role of the CMC to keep Government open and accountable.


I have had more to do with these organisations than most here, and until relatively recently did so. My knowledge of the CMC fits the organisation that I know. The organisation is a lean, mean, crime-fighting machine. It needs to be so. The CMC did unfortunately release information that it should not have. This is not to say that the release of the information meant either never to be released or possibly released into the very distant future in the case of those documents released and the destruction of Fitzgerald inquiry evidence was not a dreadful failure of process. It was.

The PCMC has done an excellent job reviewing this material and reasons for what happened in this inquiry with the assistance of part-time parliamentary commissioner, Mr Paul Favell SC, assisted by Mr Peter Davis SC and the secretariat lead by Ms Amanda Honeyman. The critical recommendations would seem to relate to changes regarding the chairperson's role and its separation into a chair and senior advisor and a separate CEO so as to ensure the orderly management of the commission. Clearly, the legal team process needs some sharpening and a better overarching process. The report should deliver those changes. As for the issues that led to this

inquiry, I remain concerned that archiving may be a very difficult issue. It would seem it is entirely probable that this may be a wider problem for no other reason than time, the sheer volume of data, cost of storage and a measure of forgetfulness that can lead people not to be as careful with confidential information over time. This is a generalised problem in wider society. Idle gossip is the currency of politics, but I would suggest that a commitment to confidentiality of information—forever in many cases—is the currency of those who prosecute crime.

Ross Martin, the now retired chair, started in an environment of criticism from the incoming government in spite of a stellar legal career as a senior Crown Prosecutor with no political allegiances. He performed very well with a full complement of commissioners and part-time parliamentary commissioners all placed. The CMC had successful major critical misconduct and crime prosecutions in that time. The CMC incorrectly released Fitzgerald investigation documents. It was a serious error. The weighting of the failure is incorrectly prioritised as a critical failure of process within the CMC. It is being used as justification to implement significant changes in the CMC which will weaken its capacity to respond to the real challenges that we need the CMC to face. It is more than offset by its success in the last year, clearing the now Premier in three weeks of unsubstantiated but complex allegations.

I dispute the core statement contained within the Callinan review regarding the lack of necessity of integrity embedded within all our systems of government. All modern corporations and governments post GFC 2007 have honesty and integrity as their core mission statements. They are right, because dishonesty and a lack of integrity were the key ingredients of our near economic global collapse in 2007. History does repeat itself. It is internal threats that remain our biggest problem, as this is how major crime evolved. Similarly, the CMC has evolved. The last triennial review by the PCMC precipitated that. What the Callinan review is proposing is to seriously reduce and potentially penalise those who make mistakes. There is an assumption that a lot of what is wrong within the CMC is that its eye view is at the 'push end'. This is not uncommon thinking to legal people who have a very different view of what a complaint is, how it is assessed and even what it deserves. Others are angry with the CMC because at times it was politicised, it is excessively procedural, the investigations have a heavy personal toll and its process of acquittal is not always as it should be. Just because one person has a grievance or another found a small part of the organisation wanting does not mean we destroy the very instrument that we need to secure equity and integrity in the processes of governance in this state.


 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (11.06 am): I rise to participate in the debate about the contents of report No. 90 of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee and related matters. We all have a responsibility to best resource the Crime and Misconduct Commission to ensure it has the best opportunity to respond to complaints that Queenslanders make about corruption, about misconduct and about related matters set out in the Crime and Misconduct Act. As long as I remain a member of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, which has the oversight role of the Crime and Misconduct Commission's activities, I will continue to stand up and do what I think is right. I will continue to do what I think is right, and I frankly will not be a rubber stamp for whatever agenda the Attorney-General or the Premier have in relation to their grand plan for the CMC.

I note the acknowledgement of fault by CMC senior management in the report that we are referring to. They acknowledge that they were responsible for the unintended release of documents. I note the public apology to all Queenslanders and to this parliament. I note the commitments to do better, and quite frankly all organisations and all people can always improve on their performance. When I look at the contents of the Crime and Misconduct Act and its regulations, I wonder how many of the 89 members in this chamber have actually taken the opportunity to look at the wide-ranging powers and responsibilities that that act deals with, and they are significant. They are very significant. It amazed me that last night whilst we were in this very chamber debating another matter the Attorney-General went off on a tangent of more of the continued criticism of the CMC and ridicule of the CMC. It appeared to me very clearly that the Attorney-General does not understand the wide ramifications and responsibilities that this Queensland act of parliament places on the CMC. Clearly he does not understand how this Queensland act is so different to many of the interstate acts which deal with like-minded investigative agencies.

Quite frankly, if you are going to compare apples with apples, make sure you are dealing with apples and apples. If you are going to draw a comparison with interstate agencies, make sure they are both exactly the same, because on the information that I have they are very different. So to the

Attorney-General I say: take a cold shower, have a look at what you said in the chamber last night, have a reflection on the comments you have made both in this chamber and in public in the past. If this Attorney-General and this government are fair dinkum in trying to properly resource our peak crime-fighting organisation in Queensland so that it can continue to be a leader in Australia, if not in the world, we need to have a good working relationship between the government of the state and that crime and misconduct organisation. So we need all members to stop the political gamesmanship and get on with the job of trying to rebuild the bridge between the Queensland government and the CMC.

I note the sensitivity of the Attorney-General to criticism of the Callinan-Aroney report. Can I just say that I stand by my statement of reservation. All I am asking the Attorney-General—and if it is not him, some of his staff—is to take the time to look at not just the recommendations brought down by the Callinan and Aroney report but to take a step further and look at the assumptions that some of those recommendations are based on. It is all very well and good to go out there and say, 'How dare you criticise this retired High Court judge and carry on along those lines,' but all I am saying is that I do not agree that some of the assumptions that those eminent people have made that led to their recommendations that are being considered by this government are sound. That is what I am saying. In relation to some of those recommendations that the Attorney-General is so passionate to take on board, we need to take a step back and look at the assumptions that they made that led to the recommendations. If someone takes the time to look into some of those matters, I think they will come back and agree with the position that I have taken. I am not reflecting on all of the recommendations, but I say here and now that there are recommendations contained in that report that I believe need further investigation, because I am passionate, on the information that I am aware of, that those assumptions are incorrect.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (11.12 am): As a member of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, I would like to make a contribution to the Assembly's debate on report No. 90, namely, the inquiry into the Crime and Misconduct Commission's release and destruction of Fitzgerald inquiry documents. This inquiry was historic. It was the first time, at least in living memory, that a committee of the parliament conducted such an inquiry exercising the inherent powers of the Assembly to call witnesses to give evidence under oath with the power of summons to government departments and the CMC to produce documents and correspondence, together with the strong inquisitorial powers of the committee and the engagement of senior counsel as the acting Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner to conduct the inquiry together with the members of the committee. I understand that it was the first time that proceedings were conducted in the Legislative Council chamber concurrently with the Assembly since the abolition of the council—a shameful act of a Labor government of yesteryear in 1922.

As other members have noted, the inquiry was intense. For the best part of a month the PCMC directed itself to ascertaining how the CMC could release to the public Fitzgerald inquiry documents, including many thousands of which it is agreed by all parties should never have been released. The destruction of original Fitzgerald inquiry documents was also investigated. In this respect, the report tabled by the PCMC sets out in great detail the failure of the CMC. The report details evidence heard from many employees of the CMC, including senior officers of their information management and their legal services unit, which demonstrates that these sections of the CMC at the least simply did not have in place the governance structures, checks and balances and processes to do their job properly, to keep the Fitzgerald documents secure.

This is concerning. The CMC is charged with investigating misconduct, serious crime and numerous other allegations. Obviously, these investigations generate a significant amount of correspondence and files and these files need to be kept secure. The CMC investigations can make or break people's lives and livelihoods. Evidence heard by the PCMC in this inquiry clearly shows that, in this respect, the CMC has failed.

The PCMC recommended amendments to the structure of the CMC. Recommendation 19 refers specifically to the appointment of a CEO separate from the position of chair of the CMC. The government has made it quite clear that there will remain a strong, independent crime and misconduct body in Queensland, but this body needs to be fit for purpose and it needs to be fit to perform as the people of Queensland expect it to.

Other members have said that the mistakes of the CMC chronicled in this report should not be allowed to outweigh the good work of the CMC. I agree wholeheartedly. However, there is no way that the people of Queensland can have confidence in the CMC and see the benefit of the CMC's good work unless it is seen to be adequately performing its functions in all spheres of its responsibility. This requires a review of the CMC and an ability for its operations to be shown to the light of day on a regular basis. The public must be able to watch the watchdog.

I thank the committee staff, the Clerk of the Parliament, Hansard and other parliamentary staff for their assistance with the inquiry. Ten days of sittings were held and the report outlines 22 findings and 24 recommendations. It was a herculean effort and the whole PCMC is grateful for it.

The report outlines multiple failures of the CMC. It found a poor culture of governance within executive management. It found that there was an unhealthy silo culture in the CMC where different sections were not working seamlessly with others to achieve efficiently the CMC's objectives. Organisations like the CMC should have their structures, powers, responsibilities and performance reviewed regularly. They should be refreshed and renewed and, if necessary, taken apart, repaired and put back together every few years to ensure that the watchdog does not become entrenched in its ways, to ensure that there is no empire building within such bodies and to guarantee that such bodies do not simply become another cog in the system of government. Fresh eyes, open ears, clear minds and untainted and impartial officers are essential to maintain confidence in crime and misconduct watchdogs.

The only body that can conduct these types of inquiries is this parliament on behalf of the people of Queensland and this inquiry has certainly reviewed aspects of the CMC and shed light on its operations. Such review should occur regularly, in public and be comprehensive. They should be root-and-branch reviews that look at its structure, the functions performed by it, its governance procedures, its culture, efficiency and effectiveness. The CMC has failed as a custodian of the Fitzgerald documents. The report laid down in the House clearly outlines these failures and charts a way to the future.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE


Report, Motion to Take Note

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 71, the notice of motion has lapsed.

SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN BILL

Resumed from 13 February (see p. 147).

Second Reading

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.17 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. As the Queen of Queensland dispute of the mid-1970s shows, the Queensland government takes very seriously both the state of Queensland's and the executive government of Queensland's ability to maintain its direct connection with the sovereign. As section 7 of the Australia Act 1986 makes clear, the exercise of the powers and functions of Her Majesty in respect of a state shall be performed on advice tendered by the Premier. The relationship between Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her dominions is a direct and enduring one. We would expect nothing less for a self-governing peoples.

It is against this backdrop that the Newman government has rejected the Commonwealth's desire to subordinate the state's direct and enduring relationship with Her Majesty and her successors. Just as the Queensland government and others opposed the Whitlam government's attempts to have all communication to the sovereign go through the Governor-General—the so called

Yarralumla postbox—we also oppose the idea of referring a basal element of our state's constitutional structure to the Commonwealth parliament. To do so would run counter to anything that was achieved by the long and difficult negotiations for the enactment of the Australia Act in 1986.

It is because of the Australia Acts that Queensland has a direct constitutional relationship with the sovereign. We did not go through the process of establishing that direct relationship only to replace the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs with the Commonwealth Attorney-General. We did not replace the foreign office in Whitehall with the Attorney-General's department in Canberra. Nor do we wish to refer powers to Canberra just for the sake of it. As a general principle, the Newman government believes that there must be an overriding and clear case why the state should refer its constitutional powers to the Commonwealth parliament before a reference is made. Where there is a case for consistent legislative purposes amongst the states, if those purposes can be effected by Queensland legislation that remains entirely within the province of the Queensland legislature to amend or repeal, then that is the preferred approach. This bill marks a further step in redefining the relationship between the federal and state governments.

I now turn to the nature of the bill before the Legislative Assembly. The bill implements in Queensland important reforms to the rules relating to the succession to the Crown, namely to allow for succession regardless of gender, to remove the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic and to limit the requirement for the sovereign's consent to marriage. Turning to the committee's report on the bill, I acknowledge at the outset that the committee did have concerns about the urgency for the bill's introduction. The central policy objectives relating to these reforms have been agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments. The Queensland government was of the view that it is important to provide certainty as to Queensland's position on the reforms and for the Commonwealth and remaining states to be aware of the process Queensland intended to follow so they can determine their own respective courses of action. The introduction of the bill allowed this to happen. I note that the committee tabled its report on the bill on 27 February 2013. The committee made five recommendations in its report. I now table a copy of the government's response to the report.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, Report No. 22—Succession to the Crown Bill 2013, government response [\[2558\]](#).

The committee's first recommendation, that the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013 be passed, is welcomed. Recommendation 2 is that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice explain to the House the justification for including section 13 in the bill and how the Union with Ireland Act 1800 of Great Britain and the Act of Union (Ireland) 1800 of Ireland apply as part of the laws of Queensland. As noted in the government response, while the Union with Ireland Acts were not expressly preserved by the Imperial Acts Application Act 1984, section 5 and schedule 1, it is possible that they were saved by section 6 from the general termination of the application of imperial laws under section 7. Section 6 preserves any imperial act which independently of the provisions of the Imperial Act 9 George IV Chapter 83 (The Australian Courts Act 1828) is made applicable to Queensland by express words or necessary intendment. The Union with Ireland Acts contain no express words of extension to New South Wales, which then included what later became Queensland. But interpreted in light of the understanding of the nature of the Crown in 1800, the Union with Ireland Acts may, by necessary intendment, have been applicable to the colonies independently of the Australian Courts Act, section 24. In that case they may be part of Queensland law. Even if they are no longer part of Queensland law, however, they would have been prior to the commencement of the Imperial Acts Application Act 1984 on 12 October 1984. In that case the possibility that the operation of the Union with Ireland Acts before that date may have a bearing on the future succession to the Crown cannot be excluded. Accordingly, the provisions have been included out of an abundance of caution. At worst, if the Union with Ireland Acts are not part of the law of the state, the provisions will simply have no effect.

Recommendation 3 is to the effect that I explain to the House the justification for including sections 21 to 24 in the bill and how the Union with England Act 1707 of Scotland and the Union with Scotland Act 1706 of England apply as part of the laws of Queensland. Similar considerations apply to the Union with Scotland Acts as I have outlined apply to the Union with Ireland Acts—that is, while the Union with Scotland Acts were not expressly preserved by the Imperial Acts Application Act 1984, they may, by necessary intendment, have been applicable to the colonies independently of the Australian Courts Act, section 24. Again, in that case they may be part of Queensland law.

Even if they are no longer part of Queensland law, they would have been prior to the commencement of the Imperial Acts Application Act 1984 on 12 October 1984. In that case the possibility that the operation of the Union with Scotland Acts before that date may have a bearing on the future succession to the Crown cannot be excluded. Accordingly, the provisions have been included out of an abundance of caution. Again, at worst, if the Union with Scotland Acts are not part of the law of the state the provisions will simply have no effect.

At this juncture I would like to indicate that I intend to move an amendment to clause 13 of the bill to include the Union with England Act 1707 of Scotland and the Union with Scotland Act 1706 of England. I will elaborate on this amendment later in this speech. Recommendation 4 asks me to confirm to the House that the approach taken by Queensland will not impact on the ability for all the Commonwealth realms to maintain the same monarch at all times and that it is consistent with the agreement reached at the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Queensland has participated in the COAG process to work towards a position where all realms maintain the same monarch at all times. My understanding is that the reforms in the bill are consistent with those agreed to by all the realms.


The committee's final recommendation asks me to provide further detail to the House on the steps taken by the government to develop the bill and advise the House whether I am confident that the bill is constitutionally valid. In order to progress the royal succession reforms the Council of Australian Governments established a COAG working group on royal succession. The COAG working group developed a working draft model state complementary bill as an option to progress royal succession reforms. The Queensland bill is based on the working draft model state complementary bill. This government is confident the Queensland bill as introduced and when enacted would be a valid act to give formal recognition within Queensland to the proposed changes to the succession to the Crown. Notwithstanding this, and in a spirit of compromise, following further discussions with the Commonwealth and the states at the recent April 2013 COAG meeting, the government has agreed to amend the bill before the parliament to also include a request under section 51(xxxviii) of the Commonwealth Constitution for the Commonwealth parliament to enact a law to change the rules of royal succession. The specific changes dealt with by the request are, as provided for in the existing provisions of the bill, to allow for succession regardless of gender, to remove the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic and to limit the requirement for the sovereign's consent to marriage. I will be moving amendments to give effect to this during this House's consideration in detail of the bill. However, I make the point that nothing in this amendment is to be taken to limit Queensland's direct relationship with the monarch. I will also be moving other amendments to the bill during the consideration in detail of the bill.

As adverted to earlier, I will be making an amendment to clause 13 of the bill to include a reference to Article II of the Union with Scotland Act 1706 of England and Article II of the Union with England Act 1707 of Scotland. This will ensure the bill's treatment of these acts is consistent with the way the Succession to the Crown Act 2013 recently enacted by the United Kingdom parliament treats these acts. Other amendments that I will be proposing resolve an ambiguity in clause 10(1)(d) of the bill and align the retrospectivity in the succession to the Crown not dependent on gender amendments provided for in clause 6 of the bill to United Kingdom time. This bill implements important reforms to the succession to the Crown while also ensuring Queensland's longstanding ties and direct relationship with the Crown are preserved.

It is most appropriate that this bill is being introduced 60 years after the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Again I extend the congratulations of this parliament to Her Majesty. The bill does not interfere with the constitutional principle that the sovereign is to be a descendant of Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover. The people of Queensland—indeed, the people of all of Her Majesty's dominions—eagerly await the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's first child, a child who will eventually take its place in the history of the English-speaking peoples.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Some members were not listening so I will repeat myself: the people of Queensland—indeed, the people of all of Her Majesty's dominions—eagerly await the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's first child, a child who will eventually take its place in the history of the English-speaking peoples. We are delighted that, no matter whether this child is a boy or girl, the child will be our future sovereign. The days of male primogeniture are over. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.29 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. From the outset, I state that the opposition will be supporting this bill, although we do have some concerns about the process that was initially adopted by the Queensland government in order to give effect to the proposed changes. This bill was introduced by the Attorney-General on 13 February and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which reported on 27 February 2013. Unfortunately, because of the short time frame given to the committee to scrutinise this bill, a number of questions remain unanswered and the bill would have benefitted from at least a call for written submissions or a public hearing.

The bill purports to be the Queensland government's attempt to implement legislation to give effect to changes announced by the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, which changed the rules relating to royal succession. It is important how those laws are effected because Queensland is not acting in isolation. There is the Commonwealth—seven states and territories and 16 realms, together with the United Kingdom—that must act in concert to ensure that the same person is recognised as the sovereign of each of those independent but aligned jurisdictions. It was at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, held in Perth in October 2011, that the prime ministers of the Commonwealth realm nations agreed to the proposal by David Cameron that the rules for the royal succession be reformed. To give full effect to the changes, it would be necessary for the reforms to be approved by the parliaments of all 16 realms. New Zealand chaired the working group to look at ways of implementing the change.

At the Council of Australian Governments meeting held in Canberra on 7 December 2012, the Prime Minister, the premiers and chief ministers of the states and territories agreed to the proposed changes to the rules relating to the succession to the British Crown. However, there was not anonymous agreement as to how those changes should be effected, with Queensland the only jurisdiction that did not agree on the proposed approach at that time. As the Premier said at the press conference after the COAG meeting, 'Queensland has a view that others don't agree with.' He went on to say—

Well our view is that we will pass legislation in accordance with our position as a separate sovereign state. We're a federation of states, we're going to do it the right way, the proper way and that's our view.

I ask the Premier exactly from where he received the advice that Queensland going it alone was the right and proper thing to do. Perhaps in his speech in reply, the Attorney-General might explain whether he was the person who, in fact, provided that advice to the Premier. I know that the Attorney-General has at his disposal one of the greatest legal minds in the country and, certainly, one of the most imminent constitutional lawyers, the Solicitor-General. I note that even the explanatory notes to the bill state—

The policy objectives could also be achieved by an approach under section 51(xxxviii) of the Australian Constitution, involving State legislation requesting the changes to be made by a Commonwealth law.

Under this option, each state would pass legislation that requests the enactment by the parliament of the Commonwealth of an act to give effect to the required changes to the royal succession rules. The proposed Commonwealth act would be attached to each state's request legislation. The Commonwealth would then enact the legislation in the terms attached to each state's request legislation.

Because there are so many different jurisdictions involved in the changes to be made and because of the importance of those changes being uniform to the greatest extent possible, this seems a flawed approach. By Queensland taking this unilateral action, not only are we putting at risk our own legislation and the question of who will be the valid heir in accordance with our legislation; we could also be preventing all other states and territories, along with the Commonwealth, from adopting their own uniform legislation. Queensland has placed itself in a position where it is seen to have been totally out of step with the other Australian jurisdictions for no apparent reason. If at COAG the Premier had been able to enunciate a legitimate reason for not taking the responsible mature approach, he should have raised those issues there for examination. In fact, the Communique from the COAG meeting stated—

COAG asked officials to continue to work towards cooperative implementation.

I ask the Attorney-General to explain why he did not do this in the first place.

Obviously, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee had the same concerns that I have raised. I commend the chair and the members of that committee for the intellectual rigour that they brought to the report. The member for Ipswich is not listening. That is, indeed, how a committee of this parliament should operate. I am commending the member for Ipswich for the report. He is

nodding, which I take to be nodding in agreement. To paraphrase the words of Sir Humphrey Appleby, I say to the chair of the committee, courageous decision, member for Ipswich, courageous! The questions raised by the committee are all very valid and perhaps could have been answered following a more considered scrutiny of the bill. Once again, part of the problem was that the issue was being rushed when a more cautious approach could have been taken by the government, and then perhaps we would not be in the situation where today we have placed before us a substantially different bill. I commend the Attorney-General for seeing the light.


Mr Bleijie: That is because the House of Lords amended it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. He did see the light and now he has amended his bill to make it consistent with everyone else. He has agreed to insert in the preamble—

It is expedient to request the Parliament of the Commonwealth to enact under section 51(xxxviii) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth an Act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, set out in schedule 1.

The Attorney-General has covered all of the recommendations that were outlined by the committee chair. I believe that the Attorney-General has addressed those issues.

In conclusion, of course the opposition will support the bill. We think it is the right thing to do. I am glad that the Attorney-General has seen the light and has worked cooperatively and in a spirit of federalism with the other states and the Commonwealth to make sure that Queensland is in line, that we are not going it alone and doing something substantially different that could find us at odds with others and could jeopardise the succession laws. All members of the House would share their wishes for the very best for the forthcoming birth of the heir to the throne. Whether that child is male or female, gender will not play a role in the succession. This is the right thing to do. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.36 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate and to support the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. Members should not be under any illusions about my enthusiasm to participate fully in this debate. However, and rather ironically, as an executive councillor presently I am required to attend a meeting of the Executive Council with Her Excellency the Governor. Therefore, I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my contribution in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state that its objective is to change the law in the State of Queensland as it relates to the effect of gender and marriage on the royal succession.

These changes are consistent with the proposed changes to the law in other Australian jurisdictions and in the United Kingdom, so that the same person will be Sovereign of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth of Australia and the Australian States.

At a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October 2011, the leaders of the 16 Realms of which Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, is Sovereign, agreed to reforms to the rules of royal succession.

The Governments of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Australian States have agreed to support the following three reforms to the rules on royal succession, proposed by the Government of the United Kingdom:

To allow for succession regardless of gender;

To remove the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the Sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic; and

To limit the requirement for the Sovereign's consent to the marriage of a descendant of King George II to the first six persons in line to the throne.

The Newman Government fully supports these three changes to the rules of royal succession. Obviously, this Bill seeks to give effect to the proposed changes to the rules of royal succession in the State of Queensland.

The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state that the objectives of this bill could also be achieved by an approach under section 51 of the Australian Constitution, involving a request to change state legislation via a Commonwealth law.

Under this option each State Parliament would pass legislation requesting the enactment by the Commonwealth Parliament of an Act to give effect to the required changes to the royal succession rules.

The proposed Commonwealth Act would be attached to each State's legislation requesting the change. The Commonwealth would then enact the legislation in the terms attached to each State's request legislation.

There is an assertion in the explanatory notes that the referral option to the Commonwealth under Section 51 of the Australian Constitution is the most constitutionally sound approach to giving effect to these changes.

The Newman Government has determined to give effect to the proposed changes to the rules of royal succession in the State of Queensland by enacting separate but substantially uniform legislation through the Queensland Parliament and through that legislation making a request to the Commonwealth to pass complementary legislation under Section 51 of the Australian Constitution.

I strongly support this decision by the Newman Government to assert its sovereignty as a State on the basis of Queensland's longstanding and direct relationship with the Crown.

The Australia Acts 1986 came into force in March of that year. The passage of these Acts meant Australia became fully independent of the United Kingdom, terminating residual constitutional links between the two countries.

While practically Australia had had full power to exercise its independence from at least 1931, with the passage of the Statute of Westminster, a constitutional anomaly existed in that while the Commonwealth of Australia was independent and regarded internationally as a sovereign nation, the Australian States remained dependencies of the British Crown.

For example, the States remained subject to the Colonial Laws Validity Act 1865. Furthermore, it was the Sovereign of the United Kingdom, rather than the Sovereign of the Commonwealth of Australia, that gave assent to certain bills before they could become law, could disallow a State law within two years of its enactment and appointed State Governors.

Officially, when fulfilling the constitutional powers and functions with respect to the Australian States, the Sovereign of the United Kingdom acted on the advice of British Ministers, rather than Australian Ministers. The Australia Acts 1986 terminated the status of the Australian States as dependencies of the British Crown.

The Australia Acts tell us clearly that the advice to the Sovereign in relation to the exercise of powers and functions in respect of a State shall be tendered by the Premier of that State. This suggests the continuation of a relationship between each State and the Crown, separate and distinct from the relationship between the Commonwealth and the Crown.

The States and the Commonwealth, in drafting the Australia Acts 1986, avoided the issue of the succession to the Crown as the intent of the legislation was only to remove the role of the British Government and Parliament in Australian affairs, not the involvement of the Sovereign. In fact, the Commonwealth Parliament has no express head of power to legislate with respect to succession to the throne.

Indeed, the Australia Acts 1986 conferred on the various State Parliaments in Australia all legislative powers that the Parliament of the United Kingdom may have exercised before the passage of the Australia Acts for the peace, order and good government of that State. This certainly included laws concerning the identification of the State's Sovereign.

Problems become apparent at this point. First, are the powers and functions granted to the Sovereign under State Constitutions conferred upon the Queen of Australia, or does the Queen act in a separate capacity in each State, remembering that following the passage of the Australia Acts, the States are no longer dependencies of the British Crown?

Secondly, the Australia Acts state that the Sovereign must act on the advice of a State Premier in respect of matters concerning that State, suggesting a separate Crown in each State. However, if the Sovereign is indeed the Queen of Australia, States have no capacity to independently amend the laws of succession to that office.

Some argue that the Commonwealth may assume a right to legislate for the succession to the throne under section 51 of the Australian Constitution, the external affairs power, but that argument is hardly persuasive in view of the provisions of the Australia Acts that make it clear the Sovereign is the Australian Sovereign and not the British Sovereign.

These constitutional quandaries have been addressed through the concept of the divisibility of the Crown, namely, that while the Sovereign is a single person, they may act in different capacities in different jurisdictions, exercising the relevant powers associated with that particular office.

The divisibility of the Crown is clearly evident in that period between 1930, after the passage of the Statute of Westminster and 1986, with the passage of the Australia Acts, during which the Commonwealth was clearly independent and associated with an Australian Crown, while the States remained subject to the Crown of the United Kingdom.

The Australia Acts, in providing that the Sovereign acts on the advice of the State Premier when fulfilling the functions or exercising powers in relation to a State, therefore resulted in one of the following scenarios:


Separate crowns were established in relation to each of the Australian States, or

The Australian Crown took on a federal function or character, where the Sovereign acts on the advice of Ministers from individual jurisdictions within the federation in relation to matters concerning that jurisdiction.

In any event, I believe it is clear that Queensland has a demonstrable and enduring relationship with the Crown and is a sovereign State within the Commonwealth of Australia that has the perfect legal right to pass this legislation and for it to have legal effect.

The Commonwealth has no constitutional power to pass legislation pertaining to the rules of the royal succession in the absence of a request from the States, even under the often abused and liberally interpreted external affairs power, being Section 51 of the Constitution, as the Sovereign is an Australian sovereign, not a foreign entity.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on bringing the bill to the House and the Premier for standing up for Queensland's legitimate, sovereign and constitutional interests at the Council of Australian Governments Meeting. It should give Queenslanders comfort to know it finally has a State Government that is committed to doing so and will not be the irrelevant, compliant, lap dog of the Federal Government.


 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (11.37 am): For several reasons it is an honour for me to speak on this bill today. One reason is that this goes to show the robustness of the LNP Newman government as our committee made recommendations that the Attorney-General has taken on board and answered directly in this parliament. However, this debate has wider implications and the Attorney-General has mentioned some of them. I am surprised that we did not receive the support of the opposition, because one fundamental issue here is the sovereignty of the state of Queensland. The reality is that Queensland was born in 1859; the Commonwealth was created in 1901. The reality is that the states were here first and that sovereign right ought to be acknowledged. This bill indicates that to us. Through the press I have followed the debate involving both Attorney-General Dreyfus and the Prime Minister. Frankly, I found it confusing as to why there had to be some sort of ceding of the power to the Commonwealth. In fact, there should have been an acknowledgement by the Commonwealth that the states have the sovereign right. It has been around for a considerable period and the laws have not been changed.

Mr Bleijie: Gillard doesn't believe in the states.

Mr BERRY: I do reiterate that it should have been the opposition's role to support the state because effectively that is what we are here to do. This parliament is here to support the sovereign right that this state represents. Any primary school or high school student knows who was created first. Of course Queensland was here before the Commonwealth. For that not to be acknowledged and not to be supported by the opposition concerns me a little.

I note the member for Bundamba is in the chamber. She has acknowledged that sovereign right by reason of the fact that she has bestowed upon me a lordship, which I duly acknowledge. I have a confession to make here. I am saddened that I have to make this confession: my mother tells me that I am from Irish peasant stock, so I really cannot concede that I am a lord and that the baroness has bestowed that on me. That is what happens in the rumble of parliament. I had a look at the top 100 in terms of succession to the Crown. If a few papists get back in I might move up the line but, unfortunately, that is not the case. I live for another day.

I thank the Attorney-General for being forthcoming and frank in terms of responding to our recommendations. It was an urgent bill and it was considered appropriately. I thank the Attorney-General and my committee members. It is a robust parliament in which we reside. It is heartening to know that the process is working. May I say to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, may God save the Queen.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (11.41 am): As a Catholic woman and proud constitutionalist it gives me great pleasure to rise today in support of this Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. I will keep my comments incredibly brief. As a constitutionalist I believe it is incredibly important that Queensland enact its own legislation.

I had a debate with the member for Nicklin as the committee was considering this bill. As I pointed out to him, if we have a look at the Constitution of Queensland and the Constitution of Australia, we see that Queensland is indeed its own sovereign state and the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency, is not the representative of the Governor-General in Queensland; she is the representative of the Queen in Queensland.

I said that I was proud to stand up here as a Catholic woman. I note that I could now potentially become a member of the royal family in England. Unfortunately, I think I have missed my opportunity with the Duke of Cambridge, but my understanding is that Prince Harry is still single so I may still have an opportunity to become a member of the royal family. It is fantastic what we are doing. As a constitutionalist, I am so very pleased that we have taken this next step. I think the Attorney-General has done a fantastic job of outlining exactly why, as a sovereign state, we in Queensland need to do this.

I note that the opposition have some concerns and that the federal government have some concerns. As a believer in competitive federalism I wholeheartedly reject the notion that we should do anything in our power to pass things on to the federal government. I am a strong believer in strong states and I am a strong believer in states' rights. One of the things that I am particularly disheartened by is states in the past that have been very quick to refer powers to the Commonwealth.

One of the things that our forefathers were particularly keen to see was indeed strong states. That is why competitive federalism is so important in this country. That is why we see debates about health funding from the Commonwealth government. That is why we see debates about education

funding from the Commonwealth government. We all appreciate that state governments are the best governments to regulate these areas. Of course, there is no Commonwealth control as per section 51 of the Constitution.

As a constitutionalist I think it is incredibly important that we take these steps. When I swore my oath as a member of this parliament I swore an allegiance to the Queen of Australia. I did so as a proud member of the Queensland parliament. I am incredibly proud that Queen Elizabeth is the Queen of Queensland. I am incredibly proud that Prince Charles will be the next king of Queensland and that Prince William, his successor, will be the king of Queensland after him. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's child, be it male or female, will be a sovereign of this great state.

We can be incredibly proud of the fact that we are indeed a sovereign state. We are an independent state and can be proud of our heritage. We were of course named after Queen Victoria. Given our heritage and given who we are named after, I think it is incredibly important that we make these strides, as a sovereign state, to follow through, of our own accord, on the reforms that were agreed to at CHOGM.

I am heartened to see that Commonwealth realms around the world are taking similar steps. I hope that other states around Australia follow our lead and appreciate that it is important that we, as individual sovereign states and territories of this great country and of this great Commonwealth, enact our own legislation to ensure this succession.

There was some discussion during debate in the media that perhaps if Queensland were to go it alone we might see a circumstance where Queensland would have a queen and the rest of Australia would have a king. I think that is absolutely ridiculous.

Mr Hathaway interjected.

Miss BARTON: I will take the interjection from the member for Townsville. It is indeed a laughable situation. We know that no-one would ever let that happen. One of the key elements of this reform is that every single Commonwealth realm has agreed wholeheartedly to support these reforms. We have seen that our good friends to the east—New Zealand—have already enacted some of these reforms. They led the working group on this. We have seen the House of Commons and the House of Lords in the United Kingdom pass these reforms.

With the indulgence of the House, I would like to acknowledge that recently the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge celebrated their second wedding anniversary. I think it only appropriate that we in this House congratulate them on having celebrated their second anniversary. I look forward to the birth of their first child in July. In addition to being a constitutionalist, I am a royalist. I do think that the royal family is rather lovely and I have particular affection for the Queen.

Mr Hart: Are you knitting some booties?

Miss BARTON: I will take the interjection from the member for Burleigh. I am not knitting booties. Unfortunately I do not have the ability that the first lady of Queensland, Mrs Newman, has to knit, or the talent of the Prime Minister to knit. Perhaps the Prime Minister, who I note is a fond knitter, might decide to knit some booties for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's child. I think that would be an entirely appropriate gift on behalf of the people of Queensland.

It gives me great pleasure to commend this bill to the House. It gives me great pleasure to know that I might one day join the line of succession if I marry the good Prince Harry, although, I must admit, my chances are pretty slim. I also say with great pleasure God bless Queensland—

An opposition member: You're too picky.

Miss BARTON: I think that I am probably a bit too good for Prince Harry.

Mr Gibson: Insulting. The British tabloids will be stalking you.

Miss BARTON: Member for Gympie, I do not think the British tabloids will be stalking me. I do not think that I am too picky. I do say God bless Queensland, God bless Australia and God save the Queen.



Mr CHOAT (Ipswich West—LNP) (11.48 am): I rise also to speak to the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. It gives me much pleasure as both a proud and strong supporter of our British monarchy and, of course, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia and, importantly, Queen of Queensland.

Late last year the Australian Monarchist League presented me with the most wonderful portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. That now takes pride of place on my front counter in my electorate office in Ipswich West. I have been extremely pleased with the affection that people have shown to

Her Majesty in expressing how great it is to see that tradition of having a portrait of Her Majesty or the monarch in an electorate office. After all, this is Her Majesty's 54th Parliament. That has been very good. So what a wonderful opportunity we have here. We stand here, as I said, in Her Majesty's 54th Parliament and we are passing a bill that has such relevance in ensuring our monarchy is reflective of the wider modern community it represents so well. I believe that we are seeing a resilience in support for our great monarchy. People have been very thrilled about not only the marriage of the Duke and Duchess but also the impending birth of their first child.

Mr Hart: Knit them some booties.


Mr CHOAT: No, I am sorry, member for Burleigh. I will not be knitting booties. That it is really not my thing. I do have some spares left over from our last child, so if they have a little girl I might be able to hand some over.

Quite seriously, the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013 will change the law as it relates to the effect of gender and marriage on royal succession to ensure it is consistent with changes being made to equivalent law in the United Kingdom and indeed other jurisdictions in Australia so that the same person is the sovereign of Australia and of the United Kingdom.

It is right that all Australian state and territory governments have agreed to support the reforms on the rules on royal succession proposed by Her Majesty's government in the United Kingdom. The reform allows for succession regardless of gender, removes the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic—and I do note the member for Broadwater's enthusiasm for courting a member of the royal family—and of course limits the requirement for the sovereign's consent to the marriage of a descendant of King George II to the first six persons in line to the throne.

As I mentioned before, I believe these changes will go a long way to reflect the will of the wider community. I must say as a Catholic myself—and, just like the member for Broadwater, a very, very good Catholic—it is great news indeed, because the Catholic and Anglican faiths are so tied together in history, and I think this is a great opportunity for them to come together a little bit more.

It is only fitting that this great state of Queensland, named in honour of perhaps one of the greatest British monarchs of all time Her Majesty Queen Victoria, will be the first jurisdiction to pass its succession legislation. I will say, as members have previously, God save the Queen and may her splendid reign continue well into the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (11.51 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, the opposition will not be opposing the bill, but during my speech I will be talking about the issues which cause me great concern.

You may not be aware of this very important fact, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I have a close association with the royal family in Bundamba. In fact, many of the members of this House may have had the privilege of visiting the Royal Mail Hotel in Goodna. The Royal Mail Hotel has been an integral part of our community for over 150 years. It was one of the stopping points for Cobb and Co coaches between Ipswich and Brisbane, and legend has it that it was a place where many political differences were sorted out. And today's patrons of the Royal Mail will keep up that tradition of political discourse.

When I want to know what is happening in our community or what the locals think about any pressing issue at all, the Royal Mail is one of the first places that I go. So the other day when I was visiting the Royal Mail Hotel I was not at all surprised when Bazza—and note that I am going to have to change some of these names to protect the innocent—sidled up to me and said, 'Jo-Ann, what's happening with the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013?' He said, 'You know, matey, that Attorney-General bloke, he introduced this on the 13th of February and the committee had to report by the 27th of February. He saw the urgency in the legislation. But here we are, matey, more than two months down the track, and nothing! Can't this LNP government do anything? Don't they have any respect?'

And, once Bazza brought the topic up, the others said, 'Oh, dearie me,' and the questions kept rolling on and on. Dogger told me he was very concerned about the baby that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are expecting. He said to me, 'Kate is approaching her eighth month of pregnancy, and the question of royal succession still hasn't been finalised by the Queensland government!' Now I know how the boys feel. I feel their pain and their anguish. It is a real matter of concern to the fine people of the Bundamba electorate.

Now, Johnno raised a legitimate concern. He told me that he read in *Hello!* magazine—he said he read *Hello!* magazine at the barbers while he was getting his head shaved; that is very important—that while Kate was on a visit to Grimsby in March, a member of the crowd claimed that as the mum-to-be accepted a teddy bear from a well-wisher she said, ‘Thank you, I’ll take that for my d ...’ and as a result, Ladbrokes took a flurry of bets on the name ‘Alexandra’ and, as a result the odds dropped from 10 to one to two to one overnight. The boys down at the Royal Mail Hotel can always be trusted to keep a close eye on what is happening at Ladbrokes. Why? Because they like a bet. So, as Johnno pointed out, if the baby is a girl they want to be reassured that the laws will be in place before the baby is born, because that is their No. 1 concern at the Royal Mail Hotel in Goodna.

Now you can just imagine my personal relief to read that the bill had passed the committee stages in the House of Lords in the UK. It was an interesting debate by all accounts and Bazza, who seems to be the legislation expert down at the Royal Mail and in Goodna generally, explained to me about the amendment that was proposed by Lord Northbrook. You see, maybe—just maybe—the Attorney-General will be better across the details than I am. So I encourage him to correct me if I get anything wrong because I am just relying on Bazza’s interpretation and, although a good one, we must recognise he is a bush lawyer.

But Bazza tells me that, if his Royal Highness and the Duchess of Cambridge have a daughter, she may, thanks to the bill, be able to become Queen. However, she cannot, God forbid, as of right become Duchess of Cornwall or Countess of Merioneth. Oh dear! You could have knocked me down with a feather when Bazza told me that. Of course, that was the first I had heard of this problem and I was so shocked! Apparently Lord Lloyd of Berwick supported Lord Northbrook’s amendment, drawing on the personal experience ‘of what the Duchy of Cornwall is and how it works’ that he gained during his time as Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales. He concluded—

It seems to me that to enable the heir to the throne to become Duke of Cornwall if female is the logical extension of the provisions of this bill.

Lord Wallace of Tankerness weighed into the debate, arguing that the rules surrounding the inheritance of the duchy are an historical anomaly. He said—

With the Duchy of Cornwall we therefore have an unusual and interesting piece of English history that does not conform to the standard rules of descent for hereditary titles.

However, it is exactly that: a piece of English history and not an issue that is of direct relevance to the succession to the Crown—as the noble Baroness, Lady Hayter, indicated—nor to the other realms of the Commonwealth.

He continued—

... it is not the government’s intention to deal in this legislation with UK-specific matters.

So I said to Bazza, Andrew and the singer in residence Cath Butler that I would ask the Attorney-General whether he is aware of what is proposed about the anomaly surrounding the Duchy of Cornwall and what the UK parliament intends to do about it. I said to Bazza, ‘You know, mate, that’s a bit complicated for me, but if anyone knows the Attorney-General will know because he knows a thing or two about Queens.’

They are an esoteric mob, the boys at the Royal Mail. You would think the most pressing thing on their minds might be job cuts, privatisation, loss of services, cuts to health services and public housing. They talk about these things all the time when I speak to them. Believe me, they are matters that they raise every day of the week, and they tell me to make sure that Campbell Newman knows what they are thinking, preferably in between drinking his Pimm’s and eating his cucumber sandwiches. Yet, in amongst those matters that affect their daily lives, they still have the curiosity to wonder about the succession to the Crown. And, you know, I am so proud of each and every one of them.

They question why the LNP government would want to go it alone. They worry day and night at the Royal Mail about whether that will jeopardise the efficacy of the laws both in Australia and internationally. I guess the people of Bundamba and, more broadly, the people of the Ipswich region—and I note that in the gallery today we have students from Springfield Lakes State School—have a fine example to look to. We are lucky enough to have Lord Lamington in our midst—well, obviously not the real Lord Lamington but one who is affectionately known by that name. But the person does not eat the lamington. He has no manners at all. Because he failed his certificate in compositing, he deliberately bobby pins a lamington to his head.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will refer to members by their proper titles.

Mrs MILLER: I was not referring to a member. As chair of the committee that has responsibility for scrutiny—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will refer to other members by their proper title.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As chair of the committee that has responsibility for scrutiny of this bill, I know that the member for Ipswich will try to do the right thing. That is why I am pleased he has included recommendations 4 and 5 in relation to this bill. On behalf of Andrew and his patrons at the Royal Mail Hotel, I would like the Attorney-General and the minister to confirm to the House that the approach taken by Queensland will not impact the ability for all the Commonwealth realms to maintain the same monarch at all times—

(Time expired)

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (12.03 pm): Today I rise to contribute to the debate in support of the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013 as a member of the 54th Parliament. One of the most important responsibilities that is entrusted to us is to pass on to the next generation our sacred customs and traditions—that and a sustainable economy. Australia is defined by many customs and traditions. Steeped in those traditions is our nation's strong connection with our monarchy. For over 60 years, Australians have been blessed with an infallible sovereign. Her Majesty the Queen has served not only her loyal subjects of the Commonwealth with distinction, compassion and humility but also people of the entire world. I could not in good faith speak to this bill as a member of Her Majesty's Queensland government without acknowledging Ma'am. For the record, that is Ma'am as in 'jam' not Ma'am as in 'farm'.

Much has changed in the world since 1952 when a young Princess Elizabeth ascended to the throne—the Cold War, the rise and fall of nations, the incredible evolutions in technology and so on and so forth. What has remained the same is the position that our monarch is held dear in the hearts and minds of Queenslanders. As society changes, what was once practical in years gone by is not so practical today. We as a state and as a people continue to change with the fast pace of the world around us. We must at times amend to a degree those sacred traditions, and this bill does that.


In its current form the Royal Marriage Act, which was passed some eight years before Captain Cook landed on the shores of our great southern land in 1780, holds a provision that prohibited the succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic from ascending to the throne. At the time, this caveat was relevant. With the sovereign serving as head of the Church of England, this was seen as a practical and sound piece of legislation that preserved England, and indeed the United Kingdom, as an independent sovereign state. However, much has changed since 1772 and now what was then considered an issue is one for the pages of history.

This bill will enable Queensland to repeal the Royal Marriages Act 1772 of Great Britain which limits the requirement for the sovereign's consent to the marriage of a descendant of King George II to the first six persons in line to the throne and repealing the act so far as it is part of the law of the state. This bill also brings gender equality to the succession protocol. Through fate and not by the flexibility of the law, our Commonwealth's two most loved and gracious monarchs who presided over significant periods in human history have been females. Her Majesty Queen Victoria on 20 June 1837 succeeded her uncle King George IV at the age of 18, after her father's three elder brothers had all died leaving no legitimate, surviving children. Queen Victoria went on to reign for 63 years and seven months. Only one monarch has come close to such a milestone and that is our sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Her Majesty the Queen, as we are all aware, was thrust into the order of succession when her uncle King Edward VIII abdicated and was succeeded by her father King George VI in December 1936. Over sixty years since Her Majesty began a life of service and devotion to her people across the globe, we see a young and modernised royal family that will lead the Commonwealth well into the 21st century. Her Majesty's grandchild and second in line to the throne, His Royal Highness Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, and his wife, Her Royal Highness Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, are expecting their first child in the middle of this year. This bill will mean they will go on to serve the Commonwealth and its 16 Commonwealth realms as our future sovereign regardless of gender. Yes, customs and traditions are important. However, so is our ability to join both traditions and the evolution of society and the role we all play.

As a retired military man, I not only understand the reverence in which we hold customs and tradition but I embrace it. As an Australian, preserving and passing our traditions onto the next generation is a must. This bill helps to ensure that our nation's sovereign and their rightful successor to the Crown will always be preserved in the laws of our land.

Just briefly, I would like to thank the Australian Monarchist League for donating to my electoral office a portrait of Her Majesty. With pride I display this portrait not only as a tribute to Her Majesty and the oath that we have taken to serve as members of parliament but also the special place in Australian culture that the sovereign and the royal family hold. I would also like to wish the Australian Monarchist League well in their petition to have the warrior prince, His Royal Highness Captain Henry 'Harry' Wales, serve alongside Australian Defence Force personnel. I am sure this will be a tremendous outcome for not only Australia and our Defence Force but also for the strong bonds we share with the United Kingdom as a leading nation within the Commonwealth.

I commend our honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Justice for his efforts on this bill. As a staunch monarchist and a loyal subject of the Crown, I am sure that his efforts in preserving our nation's traditions and heritage will not go unnoticed by St James' Palace. As my honourable colleague the member for Beaudesert, Mr Jon Krause, mentioned in the chamber yesterday, will we see a Sir Jarrod Bleijie one day? God save the Queen. Long may she reign. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.07 pm): I am thankful for the opportunity to add a brief contribution to the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. Some comments made here today by certain members I think belittle our institutions. The rule of law and the institutions that exist that make Queensland great have been inherited from Great Britain and the United Kingdom. They are things that have kept us safe and kept people well. They have ensured that good government has been able to be executed across Queensland and Australia. To belittle those institutions I think is beneath this parliament. I found it somewhat frustrating to listen to those comments.


This bill is about allowing succession regardless of gender. For those who may not be aware, throughout history Britain has faced several occasions where Queens have come to power and they have all served long reigns and served very well. Queensland, as people would know, was named after one of those Queens. My predecessor and first member for Toowoomba and Drayton, John Watts, came into this place to form Queensland over 150 years ago at the request of Queen Victoria because he felt and the people who formed Queensland at that time felt that Queensland would be better served by having people who live, work and have families in this great state run this great state.

That brings me to something that I hear time and time again. There has been some criticism that Queensland is supposedly going it alone with this piece of legislation. I remind people that Federation did not give the federal government control over Queensland. The powers given to the federal parliament in section 51 were quite limiting. The Queensland Legislative Assembly has been given control for many aspects of Queenslanders' lives. It is disappointing when a federal government wants to interfere with the rights of this House. Nowhere in the Constitution does it give them the right to tell us how to run our education department or to withhold taxes that they have taken from Queenslanders on the insistence that we shall follow their ordained description of how education shall be run. That is an affront to our Constitution. Simply, they should transfer any funds to the people of Queensland that they took from them so that the people of this House can administer education appropriately. It is not just happening in that area; the same thing has been tried in health and other areas. It is interesting because one of the powers they do have is to borrow money on the public credit of the Commonwealth. They seem to have been using that power an extraordinary number of times recently as they have brought the federal government to \$300 billion worth of debt. Another area that the federal parliament has control over is postal, telegraphic, telephonic and other like services. This has meant they have rolled out the NBN and they have done that very poorly in many areas and at great expense.

Returning to the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013, the federal government seems to want to interfere, when it suits them, with the rights of this House in telling us how we should look after Queenslanders when the right to do that was given to this House by Queen Victoria. I believe that Queen Victoria and her successors should certainly be in charge of Queensland from a succession point of view. I agree with the Australian Monarchist League. I think it has been a good form of government. It has certainly delivered for the people of Australia and for Queensland. I would encourage the federal government to stop interfering in areas that belong to this House, such as education and health, and concentrate on areas that they should look after such as border control. I think the people of Queensland would be much better served with a local government, as my predecessor for Drayton and Toowoomba, John Watts, who stood in this place many years ago now, knew. He knew that Queensland would be best served by people who know Queensland. Knowing Toowoomba and my part of Queensland as I do, I will be a strong advocate for a range crossing. It would be nice if the federal government exercised their rights and ensured they funded that


appropriately. There are many other projects for which they have taxed Queenslanders and then gone and spent the money in other states. I believe that we should ensure that the rights of Queensland are protected. We should ensure that the people of Australia know that we are our own house of parliament and we will have our own relationship with the monarchy and we will respect that relationship in the same way that the other realms have. However, we will not deliver that control to the federal government.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on bringing this forward and standing up for Queensland. During a game of State of Origin you do not hear many people calling out, 'Long live the republic!' When there is a game on at Lang Park Queenslanders shout out, 'Queenslander!', because that is what we are: Queenslanders. We are Queenslanders because Queen Victoria gave us the right to self-rule. The state was named after her. We should certainly recognise her and her succession line. I commend the bill to the House and I thank the Attorney-General for it.


 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (12.14 pm): Today with pride, as a fellow monarchist, as so many in the House are, and as a parliamentarian, I rise to support the Attorney-General's Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. Australia has held ties with the so-called motherland in the United Kingdom from the landing of the first fleet in 1788 to the inception of the Ashes cricket tours. Australia and the UK have a decorated relationship, both past and present, but one of our most common associations with the motherland is that of having the same royal family. The role of Her Majesty is present throughout all walks of life, from our currency to the naming of our great state, which has great opportunities.

The objective of the bill, as the Attorney-General has outlined, is to change the law around gender and marriage relating to royal succession consistent with legislative changes in other state jurisdictions and in the United Kingdom so that the same person is the sovereign of Australia and of the United Kingdom. In October 2011 the federal, state and territory governments collectively agreed to support three main reforms to the rules surrounding royal succession including: allowing succession regardless of their gender, removing the bar on succession for an heir and successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic and limiting the requirement for the sovereign's consent to the marriage of a descendant of King George II to the first six persons in line to the throne. The bill also repeals the Royal Marriages Act 1772 of Great Britain insofar as it is part of state law. Clause 7 removes the age-old view that succession passes first to an individual's sons in order of birth and subsequently to daughters, again, in order of birth. Succession is also governed by the Acts of Union 1800, which restates the provisions of the Act of Settlement 1701 and the Bill of Rights 1689. These laws restrict the succession to legitimate descendants of Sophia, Electress of Hanover and bar those who are Roman Catholics or who have married Roman Catholics. This bill will reverse the injustice that restricted Roman Catholics who married into the royal family from enjoying the same opportunities as those from the Church of England.

In conclusion, the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013 assists in providing a universal position in conjunction with all state, territory and national jurisdictions as well as the United Kingdom's House of Lords to balance the age-old arguments of gender equality and discrimination around excluding Roman Catholics from being in the sovereign. Lastly, I commend the bill to the House. God save the Queen.

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (12.17 pm): I rise to make a very brief contribution in support of the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. I simply want to acknowledge the immense amount of work that Her Majesty and Prince Phillip do. I want to acknowledge the work they have done in modernising the institution of the Crown. I appreciate the leadership of that institution and I appreciate the amount of effort that goes into ensuring that leadership is well received by her dominions. I note the continuation of that theme in this bill which allows succession regardless of gender and removes the bar of succession for an heir or a successor of the sovereign who marries a Roman Catholic—and I do not think the member for Broadwater is out of the picture. I think she is a Queen in our place here. I note also the limiting of the requirements for the sovereign's consent of royal marriage to the first six individuals in the line of succession.

I acknowledge the common-sense factors in this bill. I might say that I am married to a queen; she is the queen of my house. Last Monday we celebrated 24 years of marriage. Since we are talking about royalty, I felt it was important to mention that. The outcome of that union—my two boys, Isaac and Joel—has been fantastic. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (12.20 pm): I rise today to make a brief contribution to the Succession to the Crown Bill. My decision to speak on this bill is a very personal one, and it goes to the very heart of my own relationship with our current sovereign which commenced 36 or 37 years ago as a young boy with an oath of allegiance as a Sea Scout. Similarly, this bill is about relationships, in this case between the state of Queensland and our monarch.


I remind the honourable members of this House that, as a state, Queensland has had a close and longer relationship with our monarch than indeed our Federation. This reason alone should be enough to clearly explain why we, as a sovereign state, wish to maintain that closeness with our constitutional monarch. Simply put, why else would we be called Queensland? It is important that we, as a sovereign state in our own right within this Commonwealth of ours, are able to continue to exercise that relationship. This is not about political point-scoring but rather about recognising the history of our state of Queensland. It is about making a statement on our relationship with our monarch and marking this milestone appropriately for the record.

While this is not about political point-scoring, I do note that our predecessors, the sage authors who framed the Constitution for our country, envisaged a cooperative Commonwealth, but they also anticipated that this may have been achieved with a degree of competitive federalism. The competitive part of me does take a degree of satisfaction from the fact that we will be the first jurisdiction outside of the United Kingdom to mirror their legislation and act on the agreement made at CHOGM in October 2011. This bill achieves the intent of that agreement. That is the cooperative side of our federation and Commonwealth, but who amongst us can honestly say that they do not crack an inner smile at the idea of being in advance of the Kiwis and, more importantly, New South Wales and Victoria?

I must also indicate that, whilst, to ensure the brevity of this debate, my colleague from Thuringowa is not speaking today, I know that this bill has his strong support. As a devout Anglican with a contemporary view, he recognises the benefit of changes to the Royal Marriages Act which will permit marriage by heirs and successors to Roman Catholics. Equally, I know that this bill has strong support from the member for Gympie who, like me, retains proudly his Queen's Commission on the wall of his electorate office and therefore shares similar views on the personal nature of his relationship with our constitutional monarch.

I note as a Roman Catholic, much like the member for Broadwater, the changes with regard to intermarriage with Roman Catholics not impacting on succession. Whilst my age, amongst other things, may preclude my chances of marriage to an heir to the throne, at least the chances of the member for Broadwater have not similarly been discounted!

In closing, while my latter discussion was intentionally light-hearted, the nature of this debate is not. The very principle of this bill is to enable Queensland to exercise its sovereignty. As all members should know, by international convention, the failure of a sovereign state to exercise its sovereign claim can call into question the actual claim of that state and open it to contestability from outside sources. My purpose in speaking today is to remind honourable members that we have a duty to maintain the long-established and sovereign right of Queensland to maintain its relationship to the Crown without ceding that responsibility to the Commonwealth. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (12.23 pm): It is an honour to be able to speak to this bill, which amends the Crown succession laws to ensure they are in line with the laws in force in other realms of the Commonwealth. Most prominently, the bill sees to it that the Crown shall pass to the firstborn child of the monarch, whether male or female. This is a step which many other monarchies around the world have already taken.

I note that my electorate of Beaudesert has a proud historical connection to the British monarchy. In 1927 the Duke and Duchess of York, as they then were, visited Beaudesert and many of its surrounds. They even attended the Beaudesert races, of which some of you may have heard me speak before. The Duke and Duchess of York went on to become King George VI and Queen Mary.

Queen Elizabeth II is the Queen of Queensland, the Queen of Australia and the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Queensland was, as other members have mentioned, named after Queen Victoria, the present monarch's great-grandmother. Our connection in this parliament building has been in existence from the start of our great state's history as the colony of Queensland in 1859. Queen Victoria signed the letters patent to establish Queensland; hence, we gained her name and her history.

Some speakers have spoken about this bill in the context of relations between the federal government—the Commonwealth—and the states of the Commonwealth. That is a very important argument to have. By passing this bill in its present form we are asserting our right as a sovereign state with a separate connection to the Crown. But this is just one very small issue in which this place needs to assert its right as a separate state, as a separate parliament with strong powers which should not be beholden to a Commonwealth parliament in Canberra. That is not the way our founding fathers—although I hate that term I have just used it—envisaged Australia working.

We were to have cooperative federalism, whereby states did some things and the Commonwealth did other things. But over the past 100 years, more and more power has accreted to the Commonwealth. I do not think that is a good thing at all. The Commonwealth took income-taxing powers from the states in World War II and we never got them back. Ever since then there has been a move of power away from the states by virtue of the fact that the Commonwealth can try to dictate what states do by withholding money from them. It is not right. It is not the way it should have worked.


I am encouraged by some comments by the Premier in recent times where he has made it clear that this state will not sign up to Commonwealth-State agreements which are not in the best interests of Queensland. In fact, I would urge him to start a discussion about the reformation of Commonwealth-State relations in Australia. Queensland should lead the way on this and get the other state governments on board. There are four good conservative state governments in Australia at the moment. Let us start a discussion about reforming our federation—reforming the powers which are exercised by the Commonwealth—and let us clearly delineate the powers which are to be exercised by the Commonwealth and those which are to be exercised by the states. Of course, part of that discussion has to be about who raises taxes. Queensland has a very limited tax base and a lot of service delivery obligations, so we need to look at that as well if we are to have a proper, functioning federation.

The royal family has a special place in the hearts of many Queenslanders, who hold Queen Elizabeth II in high esteem for her long years of service to the Commonwealth and her absolutely unwavering dedication to duty. These days, such examples of service and dedication over such a long period are rare. Unlike the recently abdicated Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, it is said that our Queen would never countenance abdication because she gave her pledge—both before her coronation in 1953 and in her coronation oath—to serve her realm for all the days of her life.

Many of us would have visited the United Kingdom. One of the first stops for many tourists is Buckingham Palace in London. The monarchy—the royal family—acts as a symbol of the Commonwealth and is the unifying aspect of the Commonwealth of Nations, a family of nations which has delivered so much to the world: representative democracy, the English language, the common law, the Magna Carta, the bill of rights, the concept of habeas corpus and the protection of the rule of law. The people of Queensland are inheritors of this legacy of the Commonwealth, bequeathed to us by the United Kingdom. So when we stand in this place and reflect on the monarchy, we are acknowledging the historical traditions and roots of Queensland's own democracy and system of government.

This is not just about the royal family; it is very much about our history, our tradition and our political, legal and cultural heritage—our system of constitutional government. A constitutional monarchy offers unparalleled stability in comparison to other systems around the world. When opponents of this system advocate its abolition in favour of untested, untried parliamentary elected heads of state they are ignoring centuries of heritage—in fact, disowning and betraying the heritage of our own state of Queensland.


Stable government, a civil society and respect for the rule of law are features of our state which can never be overvalued. Many millions—perhaps even billions—of other people in the world would give anything to have the political and legal culture we have here in Australia. Let us treasure our heritage, protect our freedom and remember always the fundamental underpinnings of that society. Opponents of a constitutional monarchy may have some good arguments, but they cannot at this point overcome the overwhelming weight of this stability and civility given to us by our monarch and her forebears. So at this juncture may I say, for I do not know when I will again have the opportunity to discuss this matter in this House, God save the Queen.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (12.30 pm): This is not an issue that a state government, Legislative Assembly and community representatives should be wanting to be drawn into, but they have been called on to do so. Australia is a constitutional monarchy. It is a federation of states.

Queensland is part of the federation. The Queen is our constitutional monarch. The system is working. Australians seem to like it. Republicans have not given up, and nor should they, but we are a stable democracy in a world free of dictatorships and too much intolerance. The government of the UK has made a decision to take gender out of the succession issue, as well as religion. This is a reasonable step in a more enlightened world where women are not just considered equal but are treated as equals by men and women alike. This makes us a stronger society. The United Kingdom, the former colonial master, is a constitutional monarchy as well. It has just gone through a significant change of its structure to include changes to the House of Lords and the roles of hereditary peers, with major restrictions on their voting capacity and the formation of the Scottish parliament with partial regional autonomy. The traditional problem of a tiered society with a class system was eliminated in the former colonies of Australia and Canada and to some extent the USA. That did not allow for those to become former penal colonies entrenched by their own mutual histories. That class system is hierarchical and gender based. Titles are passed from one to the other on the basis of gender and order of birth.

The United Kingdom has a great example of the role and skills of strong women—Victoria, Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II. These occurred because men did not either survive or did not come along. It really has come the time when we accept the need to choose the best person, and as families are now smaller, royalty included, why not just take the first person, if all other things are equal, and keep the second born, if they are lucky enough to have a second child, as an emergency? Not all people want to do this. Edward found that he could not do it before the Second World War and abdicated in favour of his brother, and his brother did a magnificent job. Merely being a male does not impart a special talent to the monarch. There appears to be a measure of both ignorance and stubbornness here. The alternative legislation as proposed elsewhere looks terribly like a media stunt when really there are far greater issues that need to be addressed. It looks very comparable to Labor's decision to have a Queensland Constitution with a very lopsided preamble. It did more to separate us as a people than bind us together. If that was the result, irrespective of the intent, then little has been achieved. In fact, maybe more harm has come from it. The alternative royal succession bills elsewhere just may achieve the same thing—that is, separate us rather than bind us together as a nation.

I am an Australian first and a Queenslander second. Laws that weaken that statement have no place either in my world and, respectfully, they should have no place in yours. We do not have to dissent on things that have no practical effect on our lives. Interestingly, it is in times of adversity that we all retreat back to the values that draw from our own collective histories. We have such a mixed history, but it is our model that seems to be the most empowering for modern times.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.33 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. The objective of these reforms has been agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments—COAG—as I said earlier. They are being implemented in the United Kingdom through the recently passed Succession to the Crown Act 2013. The bill reflects the government decision to give effect to the measures in the United Kingdom legislation by an approach that involves substantially uniform and coordinated state legislation and complementary Commonwealth legislation.

I echo the commentary by members on this side of the House in terms of the enduring relationship that Queensland has had and will continue to have in the future with the monarch, particularly Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We have strengthened this relationship in the last 12 months in this state. We have gone through a process whereby we have re-established the title of Queen's Counsel in this state. We have gone back to processes of naming buildings after Her Majesty—namely, the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law, a majestic \$570 million building named after Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. What we have seen in this process is that there is certainly at the federal level an attempt to bypass Fernberg Road and the Queen's representative in this state, the Governor, through the Governor-General's office in Canberra.

We believe fundamentally in the right of Queensland as a sovereign state to liaise directly with Her Majesty, her heirs and successors through the Queen's representative in this state—the Governor. So we do have concerns. The federal approach to these things is that the federal government through the Governor-General's office should have more of a say about what happens between the Queensland government and Her Majesty. We do not agree. That is why we went about directly communicating with the Palace through the Queen's representative, the Governor, in order to have approval from Her Majesty to name the new building the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law.

Similarly, I was pleased to write to Her Majesty with respect to the reintroduction of Queen's Counsel in this great state. Her Majesty replied through her Chief Secretary, noting that Her Majesty was pleased to receive the news that Queensland was reintroducing the title of Queen's Counsel and in fact wanted to be kept updated and abreast of the issue. I am happy to advise that in the next couple of weeks that process will be instigated and senior counsels will then have the option to transfer to the title of Queen's Counsel.

I turn now to address issues raised by the opposition leader particularly, and I thank the opposition leader for her contribution. It is not often in a sitting week of parliament that I get support on one piece of legislation, let alone two. I cannot recall if I scored the three this week with regard to my bills, but I think we got two out of three, which ain't bad. But I do want to say to the opposition leader that in the spirit of cooperation in these debates where the opposition supports us she should temper the member for Bundamba in her contributions, because I note that during the member for Bundamba's contribution the opposition leader was so disgusted that she could not even look up when the member for Bundamba was making that dreadful contribution today. The member for Bundamba was casting aspersions on all sorts of people—not only the royal family and her local constituents but also me personally in terms of some of her comments, which I will deal with later.

In terms of the opposition leader's question with respect to the process and why we are doing it, we believe in the fundamental principle of Queensland as a sovereign state. We believe fundamentally in that principle. That is why Queensland's position originally was to absolutely go it alone. Lawyers and so forth can talk about this until the cows come home, but at the end of the day someone has to act and someone has to take the first step. Queensland was particularly pleased that we took the first step of any of the jurisdictions in Australia. We took the first step to acknowledge the fact that a firstborn child, if it is a little girl, can become the reigning monarch of the Commonwealth. We took that first step and I am proud that this government took that step. What we have then seen is a debate from other states. We were anticipating that other states might then pass their own legislation—that is, copy the model law as we did and introduce their own legislation. They failed to act in that regard—failed to act as Queensland did—so what the Premier took to COAG was the form of a hybrid model which essentially said that Queensland will still have its own legislation. He said that we will pass our own legislation in relation to succession, as we are debating today, but we will add a chapter in the spirit of cooperation but without disregarding our legislation—our bill—before the parliament. He said that we would add a chapter that essentially says under section 51(xxxviii) that we will also request the Commonwealth to do the same. We therefore believe we have got all the states and territories on board with the hybrid model.

It may be the case, though, that the other states and territories simply pass a bill through their parliaments to request the Commonwealth to do it. I would discourage them from doing that. I would encourage the states and territories to do what Queensland has done and have their own legislation stamping in black and white the relationship that exists between the states and territories and the sovereign. We will wait and see, but I am pleased that we have waited until the House of Lords considered this matter, which it did a couple of weeks ago. There was a debate in the House of Lords and now we have the opportunity.

Colleagues, we are the first state and jurisdiction in Australia to pass legislation if it is passed this afternoon. We will be the first to take this important step to make sure that little girls can become successors to the Crown if they had a brother who was born after them. Despite gender, little girls will be able to become the monarch.

So I say to the Leader of the Opposition that, yes, there were positions that had been formulated, but it was essentially going to COAG. We wanted a position going from COAG so that the Premier could stand with the leaders of the other states and territories knowing that we had a solid position on the matter. The solid position is this: we will have our own legislation. We will also do the request and we will wait and see what the other states and territories do. I encourage the other Attorneys-General and first ministers to ensure that they have their own legislation.

Essentially, this is the model bill that was agreed at COAG. There were two processes. The request could have been made and the states would pass a request bill under the Constitution. We have a hybrid model in place now where we are doing our own but we also do the request so that the Commonwealth can go and do what it needs to do. No doubt, the Commonwealth's legislation will reflect the Queensland legislation that we anticipate will be passed shortly.

I thank honourable members for their contributions. I thank my honourable colleague to my right, the member for Hinchinbrook, the honourable Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. As he indicated in his brief contribution—but he tabled the remainder of his speech—Her Majesty's personal representative in Queensland was only down the corridor and being advised by Her Majesty's Queensland ministers. I think it is great that we were having a debate at the same time that Her Majesty's personal representative in this state was being advised by Her Majesty's Queensland ministers on important matters of state. So I thank the honourable minister for completing that duty. It is good to see him back in the chamber for the final elements of this debate.

Earlier this year I was particularly pleased to travel to Longreach and Winton, in the electorate of the honourable member for Gregory, to visit and meet with Prince Charles, the future King, and the Duchess of Cornwall. I enjoyed the community barbecue, which was held in Longreach style. I thank the member for Gregory for his hospitality both in Winton and Longreach. I think the Prince and the Duchess of Cornwall were most pleased to be there, despite the hot weather. We know that the royal family have a strong connection to Queensland. I am advised that the royal family love to come to Queensland whenever they have the opportunity. We have seen Prince William travel to the electorate of the honourable member for Hinchinbrook after Cyclone Yasi. The royal family has a special place in the hearts of Queenslanders. Whenever the royal family visits it certainly lifts the spirits of our communities. That is also a great role that our Governor plays. I pay particular tribute to our Governor. In midst of the floods after Australia Day, the Governor travelled throughout the state to talk to affected communities. It really lifts the spirit of these communities to have Her Majesty's representative go out to see them. So I pay tribute to Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland.

I also want to say that Her Majesty, in the Diamond Jubilee year of her coronation, has been an exemplary leader in her 60 years on the throne. She shows the qualities that one should aspire to in terms of leadership. So I thank the members on this side of the House who paid particular tribute to our reigning monarch. I thank the member for Broadwater whose goal in life is to marry Prince Harry.

Miss Barton interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: We will wait to see what happens there. I also congratulate the member for giving us the incredibly proud history of Queen Victoria and the naming of this great state.

Colleagues, I am not even going to give the time to respond to the woeful contribution of the member for Bundamba. She does not deserve it. It was an attack on not only everyone in the royal family but also everyone in this chamber. There were elements of homophobia in there as well, which I will deal with at a later stage. I am not going to give the time of day to respond to the contribution of the member for Bundamba. I think she is an embarrassment to the opposition and to this parliament.

I thank the member for Logan for his contribution. It is great to see that he is a proud Queensland and a proud monarchist. He also paid tribute to the Australian Monarchist League, which I do today as well, being an honorary life member of the Australian Monarchist League. My honourable ministerial colleague is a member of the Australians for Constitutional Monarchy. They are great organisations. I acknowledge other members who are also proud members of those associations.

I thank the members for Kallangur and Toowoomba North for their contributions. I never thought we would hear cricket mentioned in a debate about royal succession, but the member for Lytton did that. He did well and I thank him for his contribution.

In conclusion, in my second reading speech I referred to the fact that, in the spirit of compromise, following further discussions with the Commonwealth and the states at the COAG meeting, the government agreed to amend its bill to include a request. That was in a spirit of cooperation and hoping that the other states move on with this important issue. As I said, I will be moving amendments to give effect to that in consideration in detail and also a few other amendments. I thank all honourable members for this debate. I think it has been a worthy debate. I am very proud that Queensland will be the first state to move to make sure that little girls can become monarchs. They deserve to be just as much as their little brothers.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! There is a preamble and 24 clauses. The consideration of the preamble is postponed until after the clauses have been considered.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.46 pm): I move the following amendments—

2 Clause 4 (Object of this Act)

Page 5, line 15, 'being'—

omit.

3 Clause 4 (Object of this Act)

Page 5, lines 17 and 18—

omit, insert—

the Sovereign of Australia is the same person as the Sovereign of the United Kingdom.

Amendment No. 2 deletes the word 'being' in clause 4 of the bill because it is unnecessary, given Queensland's understanding that the amendments in the various Australian jurisdictions and the United Kingdom are proposed to commence at the same time.

Amendment No. 3 makes a further amendment to the wording in clause 4 regarding the sovereign so that it is consistent with the equivalent clause in the schedule being inserted by amendment No. 10.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.47 pm): I move the following amendment—

4 Clause 5 (Relationship with Sovereign not affected)

Page 5, lines 20 to 22—

omit, insert—

It is not the intention of this Act to affect the relationship between the Sovereign and the State as existing immediately before its enactment or that that relationship be in any way affected by the enactment by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of the Act requested by section 13A.

Amendment No. 4 amends clause 5 of the bill consequential to a new section 13A being inserted by amendment No. 9 and is consistent with the equivalent provision of the model state request bill developed for the COAG working group on royal succession.

May I now take the opportunity to table the explanatory notes to all of my amendments.

Tabled paper: Succession to the Crown Bill 2013, explanatory notes to Hon. Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [\[2559\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.48 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 Clause 6 (Succession to the Crown not to depend on gender)

Page 6, line 5, after '2011'—

insert—

(by United Kingdom time)

Amendment No. 5 amends clause 6 of the bill to provide that the date 28 October 2011 referred to in the clause is determined by United Kingdom time. This is consistent with the equivalent clause in the schedule being inserted by amendment No. 10.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.48 pm): I move the following amendment—

6 Clause 8 (Disqualification arising from marriage)

Page 6, lines 21 to 23—

omit, insert—

person is disqualified by section 3(3) of the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013* of the United Kingdom, as in force at the commencement of this section, from succeeding to the Crown in right of the United Kingdom.

Amendment No. 6 amends clause 8 of the bill so that it is consistent with the equivalent clause in the schedule being inserted by amendment No. 10.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clause 10—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.50 pm): I move the following amendment—

7 Clause 10 (Validation of some marriages voided by the Royal Marriages Act 1772)

Page 7, lines 16 and 17—

omit, insert—

(d) no person acted, before the commencement of this subsection, on the basis that the marriage was void.

Amendment No. 7 amends clause 10 of the bill by omitting existing clause 10(1)(d), which is ambiguous, and inserting a new clause 10(1)(d). The amendment is consistent with the equivalent section in the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013* recently passed by the United Kingdom parliament and the equivalent clause in the schedule being inserted by amendment 10.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.50 pm): I move the following amendment—

8 Clause 12 (References to Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement)

Page 8, line 7, 'Act.'—

omit, insert—

Act and of the Act of the Parliament of the Commonwealth requested by section 13A.

Amendment No. 8 amends clause 12 of the bill to also refer to the act of the Commonwealth parliament being requested under new section 13A as inserted by amendment 9. This is consistent with the model state request bill developed for the COAG working group on royal succession and new section 13A being inserted by amendment 9.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 12, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 13—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.51 pm): I seek leave to move amendment No. 9.

Leave granted.

I move the following amendment—

9 Clause 13 (Union with Ireland Act 1800 of Great Britain and Act of Union (Ireland) 1800 of Ireland affected by this Act)

Page 8, lines 8 to 13—

omit, insert—

13 Union legislation affected by this Act

So far as they are part of the law of the State, the following are subject to this Act—

(a) Article II of the *Union with Scotland Act 1706* of England;

- (b) Article II of the *Union with England Act 1707* of Scotland;
- (c) Article Second of the *Union with Ireland Act 1800* of Great Britain;
- (d) Article Second of the *Act of Union (Ireland) 1800* of Ireland.

Part 4A Request for Commonwealth legislation

13A Request for Commonwealth legislation

- (1) The Parliament requests the enactment by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of an Act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, set out in schedule 1.
- (2) Subsection (1) is not affected or limited in any way by any other provision of this Act.

Amendment No. 9 firstly omits clause 13 of the bill—*Union with Ireland Act 1800* of Great Britain and *Act of Union (Ireland) 1800* of Ireland affected by this Act—to insert a new clause 13: Union legislation affected by this act. The new clause provides that so far as they are part of the law of the state, the union legislation referred to in the amendment relating to both Scotland and Ireland are subject to the act. This change has the effect of treating Article II of the *Union with Scotland Act 1706* of England and Article II of the *Union with England Act 1707* of Scotland in a way that is consistent with the bill's current treatment of the *Union with Ireland Act 1800* of Great Britain and the *Act of Union (Ireland) 1800* of Ireland. Part of amendment 10 is consequential to this amendment. The amendment makes the approach to the union legislation relating to both Scotland and Ireland consistent with the approach in the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013* recently passed by the United Kingdom parliament and the equivalent clause in the schedule being inserted by amendment 10.

Amendment No. 9 secondly inserts new section 13A, which provides that the Queensland parliament requests the enactment by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of an act in the terms, or substantially the terms, set out in schedule 1. This reflects the government's decision, in a spirit of compromise following further discussions with the Commonwealth and the states at the recent April 2013 COAG meeting, to agree to amend the bill before the parliament to also include a request under section 51(xxxviii) of the Commonwealth Constitution for the Commonwealth parliament to enact a law to change the rules of royal succession. New schedule 1 is being inserted by amendment 10. The request is made pursuant to section 51(xxxviii) of the Commonwealth Constitution.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 21 to 24—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.54 pm): I seek leave to move amendment No. 10.

Leave granted.

Mr BLEIJIE: I move the following amendment—

10 Clauses 21 to 24

Page 10, lines 4 to 21, and page 11, lines 1 and 2—

omit, insert—

Schedule 1

section 13A

An Act to change the law relating to royal succession and royal marriages, and for related purposes

Preamble

On 28 October 2011, representatives of nations of which Her Majesty is the Sovereign agreed that the rules on succession to, and possession of, the Crown should be changed so as to make succession not depend on gender and to end the disqualification arising from marrying a Roman Catholic.

The United Kingdom has further proposed to disqualify certain persons from succeeding to the Crown as a result of marriage, to repeal the *Royal Marriages Act 1772* and to validate certain marriages made void by that Act.

For the purposes of paragraph 51(xxxviii) of the Constitution the Parliaments of all the States have requested the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia to enact an Act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, of this Act.

The Parliament of Australia therefore enacts:

Part 1—Preliminary**1 Short title**

This Act may be cited as the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013*.

2 Commencement

- (1) Each provision of this Act specified in column 1 of the table commences, or is taken to have commenced, in accordance with column 2 of the table. Any other statement in column 2 has effect according to its terms.

Commencement information		
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Provision(s)	Commencement	Date/Details
1. Sections 1 and 2 and anything in this Act not elsewhere covered by this table	The day this Act receives the Royal Assent.	
2. Sections 3, 4 and 5	The day this Act receives the Royal Assent.	
3. Parts 2, 3 and 4	A time and day, or times and days, to be fixed by Proclamation.	
4. Part 5	The day this Act receives the Royal Assent.	
5. Schedule 1	A time and day, or times and days, to be fixed by Proclamation.	

Note: This table relates only to the provisions of this Act as originally enacted. It will not be amended to deal with any later amendments of this Act.

- (2) Any information in column 3 of the table is not part of this Act. Information may be inserted in this column, or information in it may be edited, in any published version of this Act.

3 Object of this Act

The main object of this Act is to change the law relating to the effect of gender and marriage on royal succession, consistently with changes made to that law in the United Kingdom, so that the Sovereign of Australia is the same person as the Sovereign of the United Kingdom.

4 Relationship with Sovereign not affected

This Act is not intended to affect the relationship between the Sovereign and the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories as existing immediately before its enactment.

5 Definition of Crown

In this Act:

Crown means the Crown in all of its capacities.

Part 2—Succession to the Crown not to depend on gender**6 Succession to the Crown not to depend on gender**

In determining the succession to the Crown, the gender of a person born after 28 October 2011 (by United Kingdom time) does not give that person, or that person's descendants, precedence over any other person (whenever born).

Part 3—Marriage and succession to the Crown**7 Removal of disqualification arising from marriage to a Roman Catholic**

- (1) A person is not disqualified from succeeding to the Crown or from possessing it as a result of marrying a person of the Roman Catholic faith.
- (2) Subsection (1) applies in relation to marriages occurring before the commencement of this section if the person concerned is alive at that commencement (as well as in relation to marriages occurring after that commencement).

8 Disqualification arising from marriage

A person is disqualified from succeeding to the Crown if the person is disqualified by subsection 3(3) of the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013* of the United Kingdom, as in force at the commencement of this section, from succeeding to the Crown in right of the United Kingdom.

9 Amendments and repeal relating to marriage and succession to the Crown

Each Act of England or Great Britain that is specified in Schedule 1, so far as that Act is part of the law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory, is amended or repealed as set out in the applicable items in Schedule 1, and any other item in Schedule 1 has effect according to its terms.

Part 4—Other modifications of parts of the law of the Commonwealth, States and Territories**10 References to Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement**

References, however expressed, in any law that forms part of the law of the Commonwealth or a Territory, to the provisions of the Bill of Rights or the Act of Settlement relating to succession to, or possession of, the Crown are to be read as including references to the provisions of this Act.

11 Union legislation affected by this Act

So far as they are part of the law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory, the following are subject to this Act:

- (a) Article II of the *Union with Scotland Act 1706* of England;
- (b) Article II of the *Union with England Act 1707* of Scotland;
- (c) Article Second of the *Union with Ireland Act 1800* of Great Britain;
- (d) Article Second of the *Act of Union (Ireland) 1800* of Ireland.

Part 5—Repeal or amendment of this Act**12 Repeal or amendment of this Act**

This Act may be expressly or impliedly repealed or amended only by an Act passed at the request or with the concurrence of the Parliaments of all the States.

Schedule 1—Further provisions relating to marriage and succession to the Crown**Part 1—Amendments relating to marriage to a Roman Catholic*****Act of Settlement*****1 Preamble**

Omit “or marry a papist”.

2 Preamble

Omit “or marrying”.

3 Section 2

Omit “or shall marry a papist”.

Bill of Rights**4 Section 1**

Omit “or by any King or Queene marrying a papist”.

5 Section 1

Omit “or shall marry a papist”.

6 Section 1

Omit “or marrying”.

7 Application of amendments

The amendments made by this Part apply in relation to marriages occurring before the commencement of this Part if the person concerned is alive at that commencement (as well as in relation to marriages occurring after that commencement).

Part 2—Repeal of the Royal Marriages Act 1772**8 The whole of the Act**

Repeal the Act.

9 Validation of some marriages voided by the *Royal Marriages Act 1772*

- (1) A marriage that was void under the *Royal Marriages Act 1772* of Great Britain, so far as that Act was part of the law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory, is to be treated as never having been void if:
 - (a) neither party to the marriage was one of the 6 persons next in the line of succession to the Crown at the time of the marriage; and
 - (b) no consent was sought under section 1 of that Act, or notice given under section 2 of that Act, in respect of the marriage; and
 - (c) in all the circumstances it was reasonable for the person concerned not to have been aware at the time of the marriage that the Act applied to it; and
 - (d) no person acted, before the commencement of this item, on the basis that the marriage was void.
- (2) Subitem (1) applies for all purposes except those relating to succession to the Crown.

Amendment 10 firstly omits Part 6 Division 3—Amendment of Union with England Act 1707—and Part 6 Division 4—Amendment of Union with Scotland Act 1706—consequential to the insertion of new clause 13 by amendment 9. The amendment inserts schedule 1 consequential to the insertion of new section 13A by amendment 9. The schedule outlines the terms of the legislation that the Queensland parliament is requesting the Commonwealth parliament to enact. The provisions in the schedule are similar to the existing provisions of the bill and are based on proposed Commonwealth legislation.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 21 to 24, as amended, agreed to.

Preamble—



Mr BLEIJIE (12.54 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Preamble

Page 4, after line 17—

insert—

- 3A It is expedient to request the Parliament of the Commonwealth to enact under section 51(xxxviii) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth an Act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, set out in schedule 1.

Amendment No. 1 amends the preamble to the bill to refer to the expediency of requesting the Parliament of the Commonwealth to enact under section 51(xxxviii) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth an act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, set out in schedule 1 as inserted by amendment 10. As I have noted previously, in a spirit of compromise following further discussions with the Commonwealth and the states at the recent April 2013 COAG meeting, the government has agreed to amend the bill before the parliament to also include a request under section 51(xxxviii) of the Commonwealth Constitution for the Commonwealth parliament to enact a law to change the rules of royal succession.

Amendment agreed to.

Preamble, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.56 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.56 pm): I move the following amendment—

11 Long title

Long title, from 'State'—

omit, insert—

- State, to request the Parliament of the Commonwealth to enact under section 51(xxxviii) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth an Act in the terms, or substantially in the terms, set out in schedule 1, and to make consequential amendments to other legislation

Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LAND, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 5 March (see p. 309).

Second Reading



Hon. AP CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (12.57 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee for its consideration of the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. I note that the committee tabled its report on 23 April 2013. The committee's report recommends that the bill be passed. I table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee. Report No. 20—Land Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, government response [\[2560\]](#).

I would like to address the recommendations and clarify some points which have been raised in the report. In relation to the amendments pertaining to levees, the committee recommends that the Department of Natural Resources and Mines continue to monitor pre-existing levees which will not be affected by the provisions of the bill to ensure those levees do not endanger landholders and infrastructure. The amendments in this bill are only the first phase of establishing a regulatory framework for levees. The second phase will involve the development of a code against which to assess levees and necessary regulations under the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009.

The Queensland government will, as part of the implementation of that regulatory framework, establish a monitoring system for the approval of new levee construction or modification of existing levees. That monitoring system will also include the ability for the Commonwealth government to identify any existing levees that may currently, or as a consequence of their failure, pose a threat to population or potentially have a significant economic impact.


In relation to the amendments pertaining to riverine protection permits, the committee also recommended that the Queensland government continue to monitor sediment levels, water quality and other environmental impacts on downstream ecosystems. The monitoring of Queensland waterways is a collaborative effort undertaken by government agencies, industry bodies, regional natural resource management groups, landholders, communities and research organisations. I would like to reassure members that the Queensland government has in place appropriate targeted monitoring in high-risk catchments, particularly those adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef. In addition, the Queensland government has recently enhanced monitoring in the Fitzroy Basin through the enhanced Fitzroy Management Program.

Debate, on motion of Mr Cripps, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

RESTORING FAIRNESS FOR GOVERNMENT WORKERS BILL

Introduction

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013 [\[2561\]](#).

Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2562\]](#).

The Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill seeks to repair one of the most fundamental breaches of trust perpetrated by the Liberal National Party on government workers in Queensland. On 4 April 2011, soon after becoming leader of the LNP, Campbell Newman declared, 'The Public Service has nothing to fear from me.' However, within six months of winning the election, the Newman LNP government betrayed many government workers by wielding its massive majority and removing a range of employment conditions that helped ensure an impartial Public Service. Those provisions included protections against contracting out, employment security provisions, organisational change provisions and termination, change and redundancy provisions. The Newman government also watered down the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

We now know why the Newman government made those changes. It was to make it easier to sack 14,000 government workers, including front-line staff such as nurses, doctors and teachers, and to slash services. Today, the Newman government did not rule out cutting even more jobs in next month's budget. Last year in this chamber we witnessed the extraordinary situation when, without warning, the Attorney-General introduced a raft of late changes. At the time, the opposition described the move as disgraceful and the passage of time has not at all altered our view.

Those changes were made by the Newman government without consultation or prior notice and were in direct contravention of guarantees made by Campbell Newman prior to the 2012 state election. In the interests of hardworking government staff in this state, the opposition has introduced the Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill. This bill seeks to restore the industrial conditions that were negotiated between the state government and public sector employees and their unions before the cold-hearted and callous actions of the Newman government. The bill seeks to restore agreed industrial conditions in enterprise bargaining agreements. There is no fairness in a legislative framework that allows for agreed industrial conditions to be overridden at the stroke of a pen. The bill also makes changes to restore independence to the Industrial Relations Commission.

The Labor opposition's bill will restore the conditions for government workers that were stripped away. Those conditions acknowledge the professionalism of government workers and ensure that the Public Service has the freedom to provide the government with frank and fearless advice. Despite his half-baked attempts to crush unions, the labour movement is alive and well and, right across Queensland, we will march together this Sunday, the real Labour Day, to show the Premier exactly what workers think of his government. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.34 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

MILK PRICING (FAIR MILK MARK) BILL

Introduction

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.34 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the setting of a fair price to be paid for the production of milk and to establish a fair milk mark to assist consumers to purchase milk for which a fair price has been paid to dairy farmers. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013 [\[2563\]](#).

Tabled paper: Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2564\]](#).

It is with great honour that I present the Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013 to the House. The dairy industry is one of Queensland's leading rural industries. It employs about 4,500 people, with 2,700 people on farm, and contributes \$1 billion ex factory to the state economy. For 2012-13, the gross value of milk production is forecast at \$230 million, with an expected decline in production of six to eight per cent. In 2000, there were 1,545 dairy farms in Queensland. In 2010, there were 610. That number has dropped below 540 and likely will be below 500 by the end of 2013. Reports indicate that up to 50 farmers have left the industry since the supermarket duopoly began a price war over store-label fresh milk, with more farmers forecast to leave the industry due to nonviable returns.

This is merely the continuation of a steady trend of decline since the deregulation of the Australian dairy industry in 2001. Deregulation has resulted in great personal cost and increased debt burden. With continued downward pressure on farm-gate prices, production declines have continued with no statutory intervention to restore the competitive imbalance.

Considering the Queensland dairy industry is reliant on a domestic fresh milk market, the need for legislative reform and statutory controls is greater than in southern states with a large export industry. There is growing consumer awareness that the market power of the retail duopoly is a real threat to Queensland's milk supply chain and to the production of fresh milk in Queensland.

The Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013 introduces a non-compulsory marketing mechanism to: address the competitive imbalance created by deregulation and unethical marketing practices of the supermarket duopoly; give consumers the opportunity to express their support of our domestic dairy industry; outline a program of ministerial consultation with other state jurisdictions to introduce similar legislative instruments to ensure the Queensland dairy industry is not disadvantaged by increased transborder trade; and legislate an ethical market for fresh milk in the Queensland dairy supply chain.

The bill will introduce a fair milk mark for all milk that is sold in Queensland where the farmer is paid at least 8c per litre above the cost of production. I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Prior approval has been granted by Madam Speaker.

Leave granted.

The bill will introduce a penalty system for any milk that is sold in Queensland bearing a Fair Milk Mark for which the farmer has been paid less than 8c per litre over the cost of production.

Without the re-regulation of the Queensland dairy industry and the introduction of a mandatory minimum arbitrated farm-gate price for milk, there is no other way to achieve the policy objectives.

This bill is simple: it creates a Fair Milk Mark placed on a milk container that identifies where the farmer is paid at least 8c per litre above the cost of production.

When a consumer goes to purchase a bottle of milk, the Fair Milk Mark on that bottle clearly identifies that our dairy farmer has been paid a fair milk price.

While arbitration is proven to be the most effective way to negotiate the farm-gate price, deregulation has placed a noose around the negotiation table.

The Fair Milk Mark will help restore the viability of this valuable industry, rebuild confidence and keep our farmers doing what they know best, and that is to provide fresh milk for Queenslanders.

First Reading

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.37 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mount Petrie Bowmen

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.37 pm): I rise to bring to the attention of the House the wonderful work of one of Chatsworth's sporting clubs, the Mount Petrie Bowmen. The club started from humble beginnings when, in 1964, four members came together to shoot at straw targets on a former small bore rifle range. In the early 1980s, the club embraced beginner archery courses, which caused membership to grow and enabled the club to undertake extensive capital works, building a competition-level range.

In the decades since, the club has gone from strength to strength. Their facilities are now regarded as some of the best in the world, attracting the British and Italian Olympic archery teams in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympics, in addition to being used by the Australian Institute of Sport. Access to those world-class facilities, along with the support and guidance of quality coaches, has given members the resources to compete at the highest level.

I would like to draw to the attention of the House the outstanding achievements of the junior members of the Mount Petrie Bowmen. At the 2012 National Youth Archery Championships, the team won gold in all five disciplines and a number of the team members broke national records. In 2013, the club is aiming higher again as it hosts the National Youth Archery Championships in Chatsworth. Four of the team members will be shooting for selection to the Australian national youth team to compete at the world championships in China. I wish them all the very best for a successful competition.

However, while the club's record at competitions is most impressive, the Mount Petrie Bowmen remain committed to catering to all ages and abilities. The club's come-and-try and beginner courses continue to grow in popularity and offer members of our community the opportunity to try their hand at a new sport. The club is also working to once again upgrade its facilities, this time to improve access for individuals with a disability so they too can become involved in the exciting sport of archery. Recently, it was my honour and privilege to be asked to serve as patron of this wonderful club. I look forward to offering my support to the club in the coming years and being a part of their continued growth and development. Indeed when I visited the archery range a matter of weeks ago they made me feel extremely welcome and I was able to have a shot or two myself. It proved to me how difficult this sport is and the amount of discipline one requires to undertake this exacting sport.

Over many years since those first archers took aim, the Mount Petrie Bowmen have grown to become one of Australia's most successful archery clubs. I am very proud to commend the work of the club's coaches, archers and numerous volunteers who make this wonderful club continue to prosper. I commend them to the House.

Ulysses Club, 30th Annual General Meeting




Mrs MADDERN (Maryborough—LNP) (2.40 pm): For almost an hour they rolled past—small motorbikes, large motorbikes, old motorbikes, new motorbikes, some with sidecars, some with three wheels; over 2,000 of them. Some of the riders and passengers had green feather boas, there were Muppet helmet covers, streamers and balloons, helmet cameras, fairy wings and, from the community of Wollondilly, a group of 'Where's Wally' characters with their red-and-white striped shirts and beanies. It was the parade for the 30th AGM of the Ulysses Club on their way to their official civic welcome ceremony in Queens Park, Maryborough.

From 15 to 21 April Maryborough hosted some 3,300 Ulysses visitors at the Maryborough showgrounds—the same showgrounds which had hosted the 11,500 scouts for the 2013 jamboree. Riders and their passengers came from all over Australia and, in some instances, from overseas to share a week of friendship and fun, an annual general meeting, committee meetings, church service and weddings, demonstration rides, self-guided rides, escorted rides and adventure rides, entertainment in the Piazza and the closing ceremony. This event only happened because of the large number of local and outside volunteers who gave up significant amounts of time, particularly in the last couple weeks before the event. Sponsorship and donations also provided the necessary support for the event.

On Saturday night Lloyd and I were privileged to attend a black-and-white themed dinner for 2,200 people with live entertainment afterwards. This event was held under a huge marquee which had been erected before the event. But as is usual with this type of event nothing goes smoothly and a huge downpour of rain meant that 600 cubic metres of hardwood sawdust needed to be laid in the marquee to make it a suitable surface to walk on. The catering for this event was carried out with military precision. Bars manned by local Rotary clubs were busy and a good time was had by all. I was privileged to meet with the mayor of Alice Springs, the host city for the next AGM.

It is estimated that the event generated some \$10 million for the Maryborough economy. The biggest thrill for me was seeing the signs held up by riders saying 'Thank you Maryborough'. I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the Ulysses visitors. We loved having you and please come again bringing your friends and families. Thank you also to local club members and volunteers who made this even so successful.

Tzu Chi Association

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (2.42 pm): Last month I had the great pleasure of joining the Tzu Chi Association on their flood recovery mercy mission to Bundaberg. Over 40 of us drove up in a bus very early one Sunday morning and returned at midnight after spending the day distributing packages to nearly 500 flood ravaged families. The packages included, amongst other items, a first-aid kit, a \$500 cash card and a blanket.


I might add, as a matter of great curiosity, that these blankets started their lives as plastic bottles. Members might ask what a blanket made out of recycled plastic bottles feels like. Surprisingly, they are as soft as a baby blanket. It is amazing technology from Taiwan. I must add, the Tzu Chi are probably the most environmentally friendly organisation I have ever heard of.

Anyway, back to Bundy. We were greeted on our arrival by the member for Bundaberg, Minister Jack Dempsey, Mayor Mal Foreman, Councillor Barnes, Bundaberg school principal Doug Ambrose and his teachers and myriad newspapers and local TV stations. Minister Jack Dempsey told me that the residents of Bundaberg told him that they were so moved that people as far away as Brisbane cared enough about them and made them feel like they were not so alone. He said their visit gave them hope and faith in mankind.

These good and generous people are part of the Taiwanese Buddhist community and proud Australians. They receive no funding other than donations. While their office is in a neighbouring electorate, I am privileged that many of the kind-hearted volunteers do live in the Stretton electorate. I was impressed how well organised they were. Watching them handle the logistics of distributing packages to over 400 people was amazing.

The Tzu Chi have not finished helping the residents of Bundaberg. They have formed bonds with those most in need and continue to help them to this day, as they do others in South-East Queensland. They ask for nothing in return. I would like to formally thank the Tzu Chi on behalf of all Queenslanders. God bless you.

Currumbin Electorate

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.45 pm): Honourable members, it is all happening in Currumbin. Our famous Currumbin beach was recently judged Queensland's cleanest beach by Keep Australia Beautiful. Can I just say, in Currumbin we have long been aware just how spectacular our beaches are so it is fitting this beach has now been recognised through this state-wide award.

Despite tumultuous weather events earlier this year, Currumbin was spared any serious coastal erosion and is looking as beautiful as ever. Out of a total of eight categories in the clean beach awards, Currumbin was top, or equal top, in six of them, which is a real credit to residents and community groups who use and care for our beaches.

Currumbin Vikings Surf Life Saving and Friends of Currumbin, together with members of our close-knit community, are to be commended for the diligence and pride they display in keeping our foreshores in perfect condition. I invite you all to come and visit Queensland's cleanest beach, Currumbin—enjoy our sandy beaches, sheltered creek mouth and friendly relaxed atmosphere.


North Kirra's foreshore was recently transformed into a mini city to host the annual Surf Life Saving Championships 'Aussie' titles. First held in 1915 in Bondi the 'Aussies' have grown into one of the nation's premier sporting events, boasting all forms of surf competition. Queensland is world-renowned for glittering beaches, home to over 59 surf-lifesaving clubs—eight of them falling within the Currumbin electorate.

More than 6,000 athletes from across the nation competed in this event, producing quality contests and friendly rivalry. I was lucky enough to watch champion Ky Hurst take out his ninth win in the open surf race—no mean feat considering the strong competition. The economic impact for the community was huge—surrounding suburbs abuzz, no-vacancy signs everywhere, restaurants overflowing and a generally great atmosphere. What better place for our heroes of the surf to test their ability against top-class competitors than our majestic North Kirra beach. Thankfully this year's event was free of tragedy and I commend surf-lifesaving officials for continuing to make the safety of competitors their No. 1 priority.

All honourable members would attest that Anzac Day services are humbling and solemn events. In Currumbin they are embraced passionately by locals. The dawn service at Elephant Rock, hosted by the Currumbin RSL and the inimitable president Ron Workman, was again a deeply moving occasion captured on television and beamed around the nation.

Around 10,000 gathered at the service as the honour roll was reverently read out, with the highest number of veterans lost this past year. Currumbin Viking's boat crews scattered the ashes of 14 veterans at sea and the bugler played the *Last Post*. It is heart-warming to see so many residents, young and old, involved in these services honouring the spirit of the Anzacs and ensuring their memory lives on in the hearts of future generations. Lest we forget.

Cairns, Homelessness

 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (2.48 pm): I rise today to update the House on work being done to address homelessness in Cairns and to thank the many non-government and government agencies working to address this longstanding and incredibly complex issue. I have visited the shanty camps on the banks of creeks in Cairns and I have spoken to those people who live in them. The conditions these people live in are more reminiscent of a Third World country than an international tourism jewel like Cairns.


Regrettably, this issue has built up over many, many years. Having worked intensely on this issue over recent months, it is clear to me that previous governments and local members put this issue in the too-hard basket. I pledge to my community today that I will not go down that same weak-willed, head-in-the-sand path.

A key issue facing our city is the urban drift of Cape York residents to Cairns because of alcohol management plans and the complete and utter failure to build rehabilitation services and centres in those remote communities where AMPs were put in place. We must act decisively and we must not cease in our attempts to tackle this longstanding problem. Some estimates suggest that between \$15 million and \$20 million of public money is spent on this issue in Cairns and Far North Queensland every single year. Yet nothing is changing and anecdotally the situation is getting worse. Clearly, we need to do things differently.

We know that there are 80 to 90 hardcore rough sleepers in our city, with dozens of others drawn in and out of that cycle on an itinerant basis. One of the initiatives I have been working on with a range of stakeholders is the need for transitional accommodation for rough sleepers. Many of these rough sleepers are simply not ready or capable of being placed in suburban homes. We are in fact setting them up to fail by continuing on a simplistic 'street to home' policy path. Working with local stakeholders, I have been investigating which types of accommodation models are needed in Cairns. I am researching facilities such as the Topsy Harry Centre in Mount Isa to see how elements of those accommodation facilities may work for the unique situation in Cairns.

For their work in attempting to tackle this immense challenge, I want to thank agencies and organisations such as Anglicare, Three Sistas, Ozcare, the traditional owners, Alluna Land Trust, Apunipima, Wuchopperen, Queensland police and the departments of communities, housing and others. I also thank the Minister for Housing, the Minister for Police and the Minister for Communities for their work and concern about this issue in Cairns. While there is a mountain of work to be done on this issue, I am confident that, with revitalised service delivery, new approaches from our government and greater collaboration across the government and non-government sector, we can turn this terrible ship of homelessness in Cairns around once and for all.

Cleveland Electorate, Law and Order

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.51 pm): Law and order, justice, policing and community safety are important subjects to the people of Cleveland. The LNP government believes that the community can and should have a key and growing role in many aspects of law and order. I want to outline two ways that the Cleveland community can and is getting involved in law and order.

The first way is through becoming a JP. Justices of the peace play an invaluable role in our justice system. I commend the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Jarrod Bleijie, for the amendments to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act that will allow JPs to play a

greater role in Queensland's justice system, following the changes passed by the Newman government this week. The changes allow certain minor matters to be heard by JPs. I agree with the Attorney-General when he said—

These respected citizens volunteer their time and devote their energy to serving justice in Queensland and this initiative rewards those JPs who want to contribute further.


A 6 month pilot program will soon utilise their skills to come up with common sense solutions to minor civil disputes.

While I am speaking of the role of JPs, I want to today congratulate Mr Roy Bushell, born on 25 July 1919, of Heritage Village, Freeth Street, Ormiston, for performing 60 years of service as a justice of the peace for the people of Queensland. I met with Roy recently to congratulate him and to present him with a certificate for 60 years of service as a JP. Mr Bushell informed me that he was sworn in as a JP in 1952 while he was living in Indooroopilly, member for Indooroopilly. While I have presented numerous JP certificates, this was the first time in my four years that I have presented one for such a lengthy period of service. People like Roy do our community proud and make a critical contribution to our justice system.

The second way in which the Cleveland community is getting more involved in law and order that I want to mention is via law and order forums. I previously held one in November 2010. I am glad to announce that on 15 May at 10 am the Attorney-General will visit Cleveland to hold the Redlands law and order forum. He will speak on the topic of 'The fight against crime: strengthening Queensland's justice system'. Following the AG's address, there will be a Q&A panel to answer questions from the public. The panel will be emceed and mediated by 4BC radio personality Gary Hardgrave. The panel includes the Attorney-General, anti-youth violence advocate Paul Stanley from the Matthew Stanley Foundation, QPS Wynnum District Superintendent Jim Keogh and state MPs.

I welcome the public to attend this significant law and order event which will be held at The Gallery, the former Redlands Cultural Centre, Middle Street, Cleveland. Participants should RSVP my office by 8 May. They can also send a question in advance to the Cleveland office. The LNP government is again delivering on law and order for the people of Cleveland and the broader Redlands.

Commission of Audit

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.54 pm): This week we have seen a politically motivated response to the Premier's politically motivated Commission of Audit—a massive privatisation program before the next election, more direct attacks on the job security of government workers and the largest outsourcing of both social and economic infrastructure and services in this state's history. It is a horror show of economic mismanagement and deception that should strike fear into the hearts of workers and families across the state. It includes outsourcing passenger rail, selling off a raft of energy assets, outsourcing of things like mental health, aged care and pathology services, while at the same time opening the door to another round of mass job losses. It is more of the same from this Premier—slashing Queensland services, sacking Queensland workers and selling off Queensland assets.

But someone who will not suffer is Peter Costello, who was paid \$3,300 a day to deceive Queenslanders and effectively outsource the entire government to the private sector. It was a plan backed to the hilt by the Treasurer, who even said that, unless he privatises the entire electricity network, he would have to increase taxes and charges. We know how that turned out. The Premier and the backbench thought so highly of the Treasurer's economic plan that they rolled him in cabinet, they rolled him in caucus and then they leaked it to the media just to make him look even more inept. So instead of a debt reduction plan, he turned to the spin doctors who told him to trot out a plan to 'supercharge the economy'. I think most Queenslanders would just accept a 'mini-charged' economy at the moment or at least anything that has more life than the flatlining economy we have seen under the LNP.


The facts are that, under this Treasurer's watch, unemployment in Queensland has increased from 5.5 per cent to 5.9 per cent today. And when economic growth was running at four per cent at the end of Labor's last term, the Treasurer said the state was an 'economic basket case'. Deloitte Access Economics now forecasts growth to nearly halve to 2.3 per cent this financial year. The Treasurer now hypocritically describes this as 'solid'.

The fact is that the LNP has taken a sledgehammer to economic growth, and their latest plan only threatens to make it worse. And the Treasurer, as usual, trots out convenient growth figures, citing slower years like 2009-10 and 2010-11 under the former government, even though

unemployment was lower than it is now. Never mind the global financial crisis and the natural disasters that have hurt our state's economy. This Treasurer does not like letting facts get in the way of his spin. This has definitely been a week to forget for this Treasurer, but it is certainly one that Queensland workers and families will not forget.

It has also been a week to forget for the Premier, who did a massive backflip yesterday, announcing plans to access \$14 billion in private funding for Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. It is privatisation by stealth that will cost Queenslanders more over the long run. Under at least one of the options outlined in the Costello report, this is akin to telling private companies that they can lay-by electricity assets and then pay off in instalments. What the Premier will not tell you is this: when the private sector borrows the funds, they will pay a higher interest rate on those borrowings. That means the only way they can make a profit is to slash jobs or massively increase power prices—something Queenslanders can get used to under this Premier.

Flying Foxes

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (2.57 pm): I want to talk about the decision of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection to put the health and wellbeing of communities ahead of flying fox colonies. A few weeks ago I had a meeting with a group of residents in one of the towns in my electorate, Boonah, who are affected by a flying fox colony which has moved into their neighbourhood only in the last three or four years. It is not an area which has previously had flying foxes living there. It is vegetation which was planted only 20 or 25 years ago but which in the past few years has seen a rather large colony of flying foxes move in—estimates of up to 30,000 flying foxes living in some cases less than 100 metres from residents' homes.

Obviously, the residents in that area of Mount Carmel in Boonah were quite worried about the impact these flying foxes were having on their health. When we talk about health, we need to be sure to talk not only about the tangible health risks of having bats living close to people but also about the health risks in relation to psychological health and the odour issues which can arise from having flying foxes living so close. So it is fantastic that local councils will now be empowered to effectively manage flying fox roosts proactively.


By actually removing the need for councils to apply for a damage mitigation permit, we are going to cut out a whole layer of bureaucracy and red tape in the management of flying foxes. The Scenic Rim Regional Council in this case has been very proactive since that community meeting and has engaged consultants to develop a plan which was to be used to apply for a damage mitigation permit. Gladly I can say that will not be necessary now because that council will have the power to deal with this within an agreed code which will be developed by the department in consultation with councils.

These measures empower councils to act quickly and decisively so that, if they see a roost forming, they will be able to take action to move those flying foxes on before a roost is established. This will benefit residents in that where that problem arises councils can take action without the need for a permit to be obtained from the department here in Brisbane. We are cutting the bureaucracy. I am glad to say that following that meeting I have spoken to the department, and one of the results of my consultation with the department is this announcement made yesterday. So it really is rather a good outcome.

I want to touch on one other point. Councils have said this will result in increasing costs for them, but councils have always been providing dispersal methods in any case. This continues the status quo.

(Time expired)

Cattle Industry


 **Mr YOUNG** (Keppel—LNP) (3.01 pm): I rise to speak about the plight of the Queensland cattle industry, which is facing a very uncertain winter season ahead. The Queensland cattle industry has been hit by the perfect storm of events which is seeing cattle prices in free fall. This has not been seen since the beef price crash of the 1970s. One-third of Queensland is now in drought, with 13 shires being impacted and, sadly, more shires likely to join those already drought declared. A failed wet season in both Cape York and Western Queensland has meant that large numbers of cattle are moving south and east towards meat processors and saleyards. Meat processors and feedlots are seeing record throughput and saleyard numbers are the same.

The snap suspension of Australian live cattle exports to Indonesia by the federal government shows the inept and lack of consequential thinking by Senator Joe Ludwig and the Australian Labor Party both at the federal and the former state level. The live cattle export industry has resumed but at only 50 per cent, and this has thrown the northern Australia cattle export business into chaos, forcing the remaining northern herd with no option but to travel south to southern markets, again placing pressure on southern cattle numbers. There is some short-term benefit, with Indonesia to boost the import quota from Australia by about 50,000 head to meet the increased beef demand for the Ramadan religious festival.

The cattle-wasting disease Bovine Johne's Disease became the next aspect to plague the cattle industry. The honourable Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry after lengthy consultation and being guided by peak industry groups made the decision to go down the path of eradication, which necessitated quarantining properties. I wish to place on the record my thanks to the minister and his Biosecurity Queensland staff for their valued efforts to eradicate this disease. Queensland and Australia enjoy a clean and green image with our export trade, and we hope to keep it that way.

The high Australian dollar versus the American dollar and low processing costs in North America are impacting on the Australian boxed meat export market. Whilst we have failed wet seasons in the north and west, the flooding rains of ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald wreaked havoc across eastern Queensland washing away infrastructure, topsoils and fencing—such is the contrast and challenges of primary production in Queensland. I can only look forward with optimism for the industry and await a changed federal government in September to invigorate the live cattle export trade.

Oxley State School


 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (3.04 pm): I heard the member for Mulgrave speak earlier. I do not know what parallel universe he is living in, because the Newman government is delivering for Queensland and the electorate of Mount Ommaney. Today I rise to speak about the wonderful suburb of Oxley in my electorate of Mount Ommaney and, in particular, Oxley State School. Oxley State School is over 125 years old. In fact, some World War I soldiers were students at Oxley State School. At the Anzac Day ceremony last week, those past students were individually honoured.

Oxley State School is located on the very busy Oxley Road. The safety of school students has been of great concern to parents and the principal for some time now. Concerned parents Kylie and Shelby Robinson came to see me to raise concerns they have had for the past six years about the safety of their children around the school and crossing that road. They wondered whether I would support them in looking at solutions such as flashing school lights. We decided we would consult with the Oxley community and the school community about the installation of flashing school lights on Oxley Road outside the school. In March I sponsored a petition started by Mrs Robinson calling for flashing school lights. The school got behind it. The community got behind it. The petition only ran for two weeks and we got in excess of 500 signatures. It was a great effort and it shows how the community of Oxley gets together to support the priorities of this school and this area.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mrs SMITH: Absolutely. I am really proud to advise the House today that because of the efforts of the community, the petition and our lobbying the Hon. Scott Emerson MP has advised that flashing school lights will be installed at Oxley State School. That is a fantastic outcome. They are very grateful that you have taken their concerns so seriously, Minister Emerson. We in the LNP look after our community. We look after the delivery of services. We look after the safety of our students. We are addressing all the areas that the previous government neglected.

Road Infrastructure

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (3.07 pm): We have heard a lot this week about the need to turn around what has been a generation of wasted opportunities and wasted money. There are myriad reasons we have to do that, but one of the most important is the need to build better infrastructure. That can only happen if you have the finances to do that. When I look around my part of the world in the electorate of Mundingburra, I see a part of the state that for too long has given more than it has got in return. There is no doubt that there is a need for more infrastructure, but we have made a start. We have started to take some steps forward.


In the area of roads—an area which I am most passionate about and one of the reasons I came into this place—we have made some steps forward. I want to touch on some of the things we have achieved and where I think we need to go in the future. Already work has begun on the intersection of Woolcock and Mather streets. That is about a \$10 million job. I see the transport minister nodding. Like the previous member, I intend to say very kind things about the transport minister. That is a key project. There is also work going on at the intersection of Nathan Street, Dalrymple Road and Duckworth Street. Both of those are happening at present.

Very shortly, work will begin on Blakey's Crossing. Blakey's Crossing is a local government road, but it would be hypocritical of me to have come into this place and to have said that that was not an important piece of infrastructure for the state to fund. Why? Because it is a key arterial link that links people into not only our industrial area but also the northern beaches into our city, and it was a job that needed to be done. For too long it was part of political games. The minister's predecessor held the council to ransom on it for too long. I am so proud that this year that \$24 million project will be funded entirely by the state government, and I thank the minister for that.

Following work on that vital piece of infrastructure, work on the Dalrymple Road-Banfield Drive intersection will begin. Again, it is another key piece of infrastructure. I want to make this point to members today: my city may not yet have 200,000 people but you cannot say that it does not have issues with managing traffic. You cannot say that because a city does not have a capital status or because it does not have millions of people that it does not have issues. We have reached that point. It is absolutely essential that we deliver this infrastructure because it has been spoken about a lot over the years but it has never been done.

The next project on my list in the years to come is the intersection between Mervyn Crossman Drive, Annandale along Stuart Drive and the duplication of that bridge. That is a key road for people who work in the part of the city I represent around Lavarack Barracks. It is a key piece of infrastructure for people who get choked in traffic as they take their kids to William Ross High and Southern Cross School. It needs to be done, and I am proud that the first steps are occurring under the Newman government.

Rural Fire Service, Review

 **Ms MILLARD** (Sandgate—LNP) (3.09 pm): I rise to talk about the Rural Fire Service review that was undertaken in the last several months, also called the 'Malone review'. I thank the assistant minister Ted Malone, the member for Mirani, for undertaking this review very seriously and very extensively. I would also like to thank Minister Dempsey and the Premier for coming good on a promise to undertake the review.


Firstly, I would like to give a special thanks to Mr Malone because he actually chose me to be the female member of the team. As he said, I had all the attributes to be the female member of the team. As we know, he was referring to my 20 years experience in the manufacturing sector. I would like to clear that up in case anyone was concerned with any of those comments. So I say thank you to Mr Malone for allowing me to be part of that team.

The other members of the team that I would also like to thank for their dedication and guidance are Mike Garrahy, the President of RFBAQ; Andrew Houley from Reef Catchments who also has a forestry background; Bryan Cifuentes from rural operations in the Cairns district; Neil Gallant, the assistant commissioner of rural operations; and Troy Davies from the Department of Community Safety. I would also like to pay tribute to the 34,000 rural fire volunteers who go about their work. Even though not all are active, there are plenty who are. We certainly appreciate what they do and that is partly why the review was undertaken.

We travelled the state from Cairns down to the coast and from Barcaldine through to Rockhampton and everywhere in between. We were talking to people and we were listening to what they had to say. We were reading submissions of which there were over 200. We did that over a series of many months. I suppose with my background being in manufacturing, it was of particular interest to me. For many years I have seen the rural fire trucks being manufactured and becoming more complicated. It was great to get feedback on where we could take note.

In short, there were 91 recommendations to try to provide practical solutions, reduce red tape and allow volunteers to move on in a positive manner and do what they do best, which is assisting to look after this great state of ours. I thank Mr Malone once again. I would like to thank all the volunteers who do fantastic work around this great state.

Anning, Mr N


 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (3.12 pm): I rise to talk of Mr Neville Anning, who passed away on Monday at the age of 96. Nev was born on 19 November 1916 and died on 29 April 2013. He is survived by his wife, Cynthia, and his children, Susan, Kay, Janis, Ronald and Helen together with 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. From an early age Nev immersed himself in the Beerwah and Peachester communities, yet when World War II broke out Nev and two friends from Peachester volunteered for the Army.

On 30 July 1941 Nev was shipped to Singapore as part of the 2/26th Queensland Battalion. Sadly, Nev became a prisoner of war in Singapore and was there for 3½ years. It was during his time at Changi that he worked on the construction of the aerodrome and also in the nail factory. Members of this House would know by reputation that the word 'Changi' implies the most horrendous and horrific conditions. To pass the time away and help keep himself sane, Nev engraved dixies and water bottles. He said that kept him away from the constant chatter about steaks and the food they could not wait to eat once they got home.

Nev was a true survivor. He beat cholera, malaria, tropical ulcers, malnutrition and the effects of bloodworms that he contracted during his time in the jungle. There is one thing he never lost during the horrendous time in Changi and that was his sense of humour. He joked in his memoir *A Mug From the Bush* that the Japanese were confused by the soldiers and their ability to still laugh in the face of such terrible circumstances, referring to his time as a POW as a 'guest of Nippon'.

Nev returned to Australia in September 1945 following his hellish ordeal. Nev and his brother Eric, who joined up alongside him, arrived back home in Brisbane on 28 September 1945. From then Nev went on to donate his time to the RSL. He was one of the foundation members of the Beerwah-Peachester RSL sub-branch with the first meeting being held in August 1946 at Beerwah Hall. Nev was well known not just in the hinterland area, but right across the Sunshine Coast. Nev will be missed as a man who honoured his country and his community and who raised a wonderful family with his loving wife. Nev Anning was a true legend. A man who fought for our country and who survived the most heinous of conditions, Nev will always be remembered.

Commission of Audit

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (3.14 pm): On Tuesday the Costello report was finally tabled in the parliament outlining an agenda for big business, an agenda for large companies and LNP donors to bid for a third of government business in a privatisation frenzy, including clinical services in hospitals, public transport and community services to Queenslanders—Queensland's most disadvantaged—to name but a few. Buried down in the government's response was recommendation No. 61, which was accepted by the LNP, to rationalise and consolidate industry development and assistance programs. These programs are listed at pages 332 and 333 in volume 2 of Costello's political tome, including small business programs. This follows cuts in the last LNP's budget of \$2.6 million to small business training programs. It is clear that fostering entrepreneurs and small business is simply not part of the agenda of this government, which is only focused on companies with large pockets, particularly the donors who attend the LNP's exclusive QForum policy development functions.

Despite all of the rhetoric from LNP members about getting this state back on track, Queensland's economic growth is forecast by Deloitte Access Economics to have nearly halved from four per cent last financial year. State final demand, a key measure of the economy, also contracted over the second half of last year after recording growth of 7.9 per cent over the year to March 2012 under the previous Labor government. There are 28,000 fewer full-time jobs in Queensland and fewer overall jobs according to the ABS. This is having an impact on small business owners. Put simply, with less job security and fewer employed people, there are fewer customers.

Figures from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission show that insolvency appointments increased by 76 over the first three-quarters of the LNP government, to a total of 2,517 compared with the corresponding period under the previous Labor government. The quarterly figures for companies entering external administration are also tracking higher, with an increase of 30 under the LNP compared with the previous government.

On whatever measure you look at—economic growth, employment or insolvency—conditions are worsening for small business and entrepreneurs under this government. Why? Because this government is only interested in looking after the big end of town, because this government is only

interested in lining the pockets of the people who can line their pockets. It is only interested in making sure that big business, which can pay the big dollars to do business with the LNP, is looked after in this state.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mudgeeraba, Roads



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.17 pm): Reedy Creek residents are increasingly—

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that the Attorney-General is pointing to me saying Eddie Obeid gave me money. That is untrue and offensive, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Attorney-General, the member has found your comments offensive. Would you like to withdraw them, please?

Mr BLEIJIE: Withdraw.

Ms BATES: I will start again. Reedy Creek residents are increasingly frustrated by traffic congestion. Reedy Creek is an area that has experienced growth in recent years and the road network has not kept up. In particular, the roundabout at Old Coach Road is a source of great frustration. Firstly, all traffic that enters—

Ms Trad interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: That was offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms TRAD: Withdraw.

Ms BATES: Firstly, all the traffic that exits the M1 at exit 85 passes through this roundabout. Significant numbers of vehicles enter the roundabout from Kingsmore Boulevard in the west, which leads to the primary entry point to the significant Observatory estate. Traffic from the south at Reedy Creek enters the roundabout as it forms part of the only route for motorists travelling from this area heading northbound to enter the M1. Additionally, all traffic heading southbound on Old Coach Road passes through this roundabout. Its four exits direct an extraordinary 6,408 vehicles between 7 am and 8.30 am every day. It is a known bottleneck. The congestion issues are compounded by the fact that the approach to the roundabout is dual lane until approximately 200 metres from the roundabout, where it becomes one lane. This is leading to road rage, as people are rat-running on the inside lane and jumping the queue.


Whilst only the M1 ramp and the roundabout are under state government control, we need to actively engage council on this issue. I have liaised with Councillor Daphne McDonald in this regard. I have had a number of suggestions made to me as to how we can solve this problem. As I have regularly been caught at this roundabout myself, I have also had plenty of time to consider the options from behind the steering wheel.

The roundabout could be divided to enable dedicated left- and right-turning lanes from the Observatory. Of the 4,000 cars coming off the Observatory, half wish to travel south. These vehicles are currently required to traverse five sets of lights and cross the motorway to do so. Opening up the right-hand turning lane would allow traffic to go southbound down Old Coach Road to the Tallebudgera Connection Road. This would alleviate concerns until Old Coach Road is opened up at exit 87 at Bermuda Street. Putting temporary traffic lights on the south side of Old Coach Road would also allow the Observatory traffic more time to get through the roundabout.

For many years temporary lights were used to great effect on exit 82 at Robina Parkway to improve traffic flow and give motorists a fair go during school pick-up times. Councillor Daphne McDonald and I have discussed other possible solutions. Council has also acquired land which will allow Bridgeman Drive to be opened up to Observatory Drive. This will encourage parents who are trying to deliver their children to my three Christian schools to utilise this route instead of utilising the roundabout at Old Coach Road. The council is also negotiating to connect Old Coach Road to exit 87 at Bermuda Street. To achieve this end, a contribution from the Newman government is going to be required. I urge the minister to open up to these approaches. I table a map of the area for the benefit of all members.

Tabled paper: Map showing council controlled and state controlled areas [[2565](#)].

Pine Rivers Electorate, Anzac Day

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (3.21 pm): Last week I attended a number of Anzac Day services across the Pine Rivers electorate. There were a phenomenal number of people attending the local services on Anzac Day. The Bray Park-Strathpine RSL commented that people were turning up as early as 4 am to get the best spots for the 5.30 dawn service. It was one of their largest crowds ever.


I then had the privilege, along with the members from Murrumba and Kallangur, of taking my place with the official party and observing the spectacular sight of the traditional Anzac Day march along Anzac Avenue through Kallangur. I first attended this parade as a spectator back in approximately 2004. It has been amazing to see the growth in both the number of participants and the number of spectators at this march over the past decade. Every school in the Pine Rivers electorate was well represented by students, teachers and parents marching in the parade. The only exception was Dayboro State School, which, I am told, was well represented in the Dayboro Anzac Day parade. It was also good to see other community groups marching such as the local Scouts and Guides, SES workers, rural fireies and the Pine Rivers Salvos. For me it brought back memories of marching with the Salvation Army brass band in my teenage years in various Anzac marches throughout Brisbane.

The applause and appreciation expressed for students and community groups by the gathered crowd was well and truly surpassed by the almost deafening cheers and appreciation shown as veterans and our armed forces representatives marched past. It was heartening to see the high level of respect which our armed forces personnel were shown and the high regard in which they are held by our community. The service that followed the parade also had record crowds, with an estimated 5,000 people attending the Pine Rivers RSL service.

I was reflecting with one of our local Moreton Bay councillors about the growing crowd numbers. We were both of the opinion that one of the reasons for the growing interest in Anzac Day services and parades is the exceptional Anzac services which are being held by our schools each year. This year I had the opportunity to attend Anzac services at Bray Park High, Pine Rivers High, Strathpine West State School and Genesis Christian College. Each of those services was highly professional, well led by the student leaders and full of emotion. I would like to give special mention to the Strathpine West State School choir, which sang beautiful renditions of several Anzac themed songs as part of their school service.

We have a new generation of children who are being personally touched by war and conflict. A number of them have had mothers, fathers, older siblings or family friends serving—or who have served—our country in recent years in various deployments across the globe. Whilst in years past there may have been concerns that the Anzac legend could eventually die out, it is clear to me that there is no such danger. This year's Anzac Day in Pine Rivers was comprehensive proof that the Anzac spirit is alive and well.

Youth Crime

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (3.24 pm): I rise to speak about an issue of great concern for me and my community. I will read some correspondence, warts and all. This correspondence came to me from a teacher at one of my schools. It states—

Enough is enough!!!! How long does the illegal vandalism and down right bullying have to continue before someone steps up and does something about it? As a parent and staff member at—

a local school—

I am sick and tired of being told that 'nothing can be done' about the consistent breaking in, vandalism and destruction of government property—property that MY tax dollars go to pay for. Since when do the police NOT lay charges when youths are caught in the act of breaking in to a government property? Since when does a Principal of a school get away with telling the entire community that these youths are 'too young to be charged' ... Since when does our local member condone such disgusting, destructive and community soul destroying behaviour by turning a blind eye to what is going on, DESPITE common knowledge of the youths involved, having them CAUGHT in the act, photographs of them being taken in the act, and having them brag about their escapades to anyone that will listen because they know they are untouchable just as they were when they attended—

this school—

because no one in authority has the—

intestinal fortitude—

to step up and do something about it. Shame on you and all of those who have the power to lay charges and deal with this situation and putting our children and community in the position of a third world country.

I will also read correspondence from the P&C chair. It states—

As you will probably be aware, our school was broken into once again just now. 20 youths that required 4 police cars and police chopper. Our tuckshop was hit last week.

Living close by as residents we can hear it going on over there night after night. Parents are getting frustrated, the kids are heart broken ...

So I ask you, what more can be done; to deter, to make these "youths" criminally responsible for their actions.

I raise this issue because it is of grave concern to the community. It is of grave concern to the parents, the students and clearly the teachers and the staff at this school. I say this because I want my community to know that this is something this government takes very seriously. In fact, our Attorney-General and Minister for Police have introduced into this House more bills in this area than any other. Our Attorney-General is taking this matter seriously. We are reviewing the legislation in this space. Police are being resourced by the Minister for Police.

As I said, this sort of activity should not and will not continue in the community while ever this government has anything to say about it. I, for one, agree with the residents: I am fed up to my neck of this sort of behaviour going on and on in the community. I know that a number of my colleagues feel the same way about it.

Whitsunday Electorate, Boating



Mr COSTIGAN (Whitsunday—LNP) (3.27 pm): I rise to speak about the chronic need for more boat ramps, better boat ramps and better facilities overall for our boaties in the Mackay-Whitsunday region. It is no secret that the good people of paradise, as I call it, love getting out on the water, so much so that I understand we now have up to 20,000 registered boats of all shapes and sizes in our region comprising the three local government areas of Mackay, Whitsunday and Isaac. Many of these boats are in the form of the humble tinnie—owned by cane farmers anywhere from Koolachu to Koumala. Many others are owned by the cashed-up coalminer, who also works hard but obviously with some very good financial rewards; hence, their capacity to purchase some very substantial vessels.

It is not just our farmers and miners hitting the water; it is also people in small business, young professionals, tradies and southern investors—all of them and more getting out on the water and enjoying our creeks, rivers, estuaries, bays, the Great Barrier Reef and, of course, those 74 islands between Mackay and Bowen known throughout the world as the Whitsundays.

Sadly, though, our boating infrastructure is not up to scratch and hardly the equal of other places up and down the coast. Put simply, it is the legacy of 20 years of Labor government and poor representation. With all of these islands, the reef and everything else sitting there you cannot have people coming from all over the place, wanting to spend money in places like Airlie Beach, being unable to get out on the water due to poor and limited facilities—not enough boat ramps, ramps exposed to bad weather and so on.


I thank the Minister for Transport for the sympathetic ear he gave to a deputation that came to Proserpine for community cabinet last year and for turning the tap on.

A government member interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: I take the interjection from the assistant minister for transport, who was there with bells on for that community cabinet. I thank the minister for turning the tap on. It is a start, but more needs to be done. I also want to acknowledge the efforts of people like Greg France and John Atkinson in our community who, like me, want to see a better deal for our boaties and specifically a better facility adjacent to the VMR at Cannonvale. Recently I had the good fortune of being escorted to the far north of my electorate to a couple of secret locations, so to speak—at least as far as the local boaties were concerned. People like John Gillies, Russell Steel, Ron Ogilvie and Darcy Jones are good, decent blokes—country blokes. They love getting out on the water and they know the importance of tourism. They realise that the Newman government is trying to grow a four-pillar


economy and that there is a place for that to be expanded in their part of the Whitsundays in terms of looking at possible sites for a new boat ramp. In summary, we need to grow our tourism industry. It is the lifeblood of places like Airlie Beach. There is great scope to do that on the back of attracting people to our community looking to go out on the water with their family and loved ones to have a great time in paradise.

Aurizon, Cattle Industry

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (3.30 pm): I rise in the House to discuss an issue relating to rail services in my area. I have been informed recently that Aurizon is proposing to scrap 120 cattle rail wagons from its fleet, stating that it has 122 too many wagons in the area. It is a common theme. The service has been run down over many years so people have walked away from it because they got fed up with the level of service. Instead of fixing the service to help cattle producers in the area, it has deliberately run down the service in order to let more mineral trains on that line because they are more profitable. I am concerned about this for a number of reasons. Firstly, it puts too many trucks on the road. Our roads are already overloaded. This is the last thing they need. That has a multiple effect, including additional driver danger, additional wear and tear on the roads and higher transport costs for graziers already hard hit by other factors. Secondly, this confirms the suspicions people in the north-west had for many years under the Labor government that cattle rail would be taken off the line for the stronger mining industry. There is real fear that this will be the winding down of cattle train wagons so essential to the industry in north-west and Western Queensland, where distances from paddock to market are enormous. Discussions with producers along the line have informed me that cattlemen prefer rail over road as their stock arrives in better condition on rail over distances than they do on road. It is an important element to a currently fragile industry that will burden many producers if no longer available.

I believe that this is the start of Aurizon walking away from taking livestock on that line. A US government study earlier this year published in *USA Today* reported that a 40-tonne truck does as much damage to the road as 9,600 cars. Even allowing for imperial and metric conversions, does the government want to put more costs for roadworks of this magnitude back on taxpayers? This poses the question to this government and to the wider public: do we want to preserve a broad industry base or do we want to ensure that these utilities make the most profit for the government? Based entirely on profitability of the line, then, yes, concentrating the available rail space on carting ore is probably a good idea. Surely we are not here though to make sure that governments are simply profitable. The government has a very important role to play in preserving a broad industry base to ride the mineral boom cycles. At the moment all other industry outside of mining is struggling and it is as imperative now as it will ever be to preserve other industries like cattle grazing so that it is still there during the downturns. Applying the rationale of providing a broad industry base means that you do not just shut down services like rail freight, as was done in the past, or wind down cattle rail. The priority should be that the rail line needs proper levels of maintenance so that locomotives can run at 80 kilometres an hour and not the 30 to 40 kilometres an hour as they do at the moment. This will allow greater access to this line and remove the requirement to bush the cattle wagons. The government needs to turn a great deal of attention towards this line as it may well be an affordable way for the government to do something great for the people of Queensland.

Mater Little Miracles

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.33 pm): I am very excited to rise today to tell the House about an event that happened in my electorate just last Sunday—the Mater Little Miracles five-kilometre walk. It is a great fundraising event for the Mater Hospital and its work with young children. It was held at the Capalaba Regional Park, which is a beautiful park that runs parallel to Tingalpa Creek. It has fantastic facilities such as walking tracks, bike tracks, barbeque facilities, picnic areas and a recently built state-of-the-art children's playground. It has all sorts of things such as wires that kids can swing across the paddock on. It is just a fantastic park. To be honest, it is an absolute credit to the Redland City Council for building such a facility for use by people of the Redlands. As the name Mater Little Miracles would suggest, the event was held for the Mater Hospital. The Mater Hospital has been going since 1906 in Queensland. It is a great organisation. My oldest daughter was actually born at the Mater.


Mr Dillaway interjected.

Mr DAVIES: It is a public-private partnership; exactly. My daughter Tanielle was born in the hospital and we have a great affiliation with the Mater Hospital. The event is to raise money for its program because it looks after many premmie babies. In fact, one out of every seven Queenslanders is born at the Mater Hospital. It is a great facility. The event was to raise funds for what it does. I will give the House some statistics. Every year it looks after over 2,000 premature or seriously ill babies and provides specialist care. Each year 9,000 surgeries are performed on children. It is without doubt that the Mater Hospital does great work for the children of Queensland. The Mater Little Miracles walk is about raising \$11 million for the program. I was there with the Lions Club of Capalaba at the sausage sizzle, cooking the old Pattemore's prize-winning sausages. I must admit that I had a few myself.

Mr Dillaway: You can't tell!


Mr DAVIES: I know; it is hard to believe. The group was just fantastic and it was well supported. I just want to mention one business though, because again it is about partnership. I refer to TASK Industries and one of its directors, John Shaw. It donated over \$10,000 to the program to make it happen. Isn't it just wonderful that government, private industry and private citizens can support a cause like this? Finally, I commend the people from the Mater Foundation including Nigel Harris and his team for putting on such a great event. It was an inaugural event, but we want it to happen more and more in Capalaba.

Hervey Bay Electorate, *My Kitchen Rules*

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (3.36 pm): There are some pretty famous people on the Fraser Coast, and the latest famous people are Dan and Steph Mulheron. Dan and Steph, the down-to-earth couple who were admired from all around Australia, took out the *My Kitchen Rules* grand final on Sunday night, 28 April. The last two teams standing in the competition were in fact from Queensland. Well done! Both of these teams' cooking skills went far beyond the home cook's normal weekly menu—well, my menu anyway! I am not going to speak for my wife, because she is a fantastic cook; she really is. The competition was pretty fierce. When you have to cook around about 40 dishes for every course over five courses, it is pretty torrid. Dan and Steph snatched the victory by two points with a perfect menu from the youngest couple ever to make the finals, Jake and Elle Harrison. Jake and Elle live in the member for Kawana's electorate and my congratulations also go to them. They did a fantastic job for a young couple, especially as Queenslanders. It just goes to show that Queenslanders are the best cooks in Australia at this point in time.

Both teams can be very proud of their efforts, wooing the tastebuds of well-known chefs in Australia and winning the hearts of Australian people. Well done again. Many times people pulled me up in the street and said, 'Are you watching Dan and Steph?' I was fortunate enough to catch up on a couple of the shows and was astonished by their maturity when they kept their cool and remained focused on the job. It was a very unforgiving competition, especially when it is all in front of the cameras. To be fair, there is a lot of heat in the kitchen when you are in front of the cameras and all of those people are putting the pressure on and you have to finish at a certain time. Dan and Steph also showcased Hervey Bay scallops in their first course. It is fantastic that they showcased products that come from Hervey Bay itself. Hervey Bay scallops are fairly well known right across Australia. We send them to the top restaurants in Sydney, so I thank Dan and Steph for also promoting products from Hervey Bay. Hervey Bay scallops are fantastic. I even have my own recipe for them. I know that there are a few people in here who have come to Hervey Bay and enjoyed Hervey Bay scallops. I would invite anybody to come to Hervey Bay and enjoy the seafood festival, when we put on a good show where one of the top dishes is Hervey Bay scallops.

Southport


 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (3.39 pm): I rise to update the House on the progress that has been made in respect of my election commitment to lead the charge regarding the reinvigoration and redevelopment of Southport as the natural central business district of the Gold Coast. As we look towards 2018 with the centenary of Southport and the Commonwealth Games, it is important that we work with the Gold Coast council and the community to maximise every opportunity. I am pleased to announce that this week the council at its full council meeting resolved to commence preparations for a priority development area declaration request for Southport and will be seeking the assistance of this government and our newly formed department, Economic Development Queensland, in preparing a PDA for that area.

I am particularly excited about this, because last November I had the privilege of hosting the Premier at a Southport Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Gold Coast Combined Chamber of Commerce breakfast at Southport Sharks—one of the premier locations in my electorate—and it was on that occasion that the Premier spoke very strongly and passionately about commitments that he made prior to the election when he was out campaigning with me about just how important Southport is and how important it is to make sure that Southport thrives in the future. The new light rail will be operating sometime in the next 12 months and the Commonwealth Games village expression of interest is out to the market now. The new Southport swimming complex is under construction. There are just so many other wonderful things happening in the area.

I particularly want to pay tribute to Councillor Dawn Crichlow, who has been the councillor for the area for some 27 years. She has been a great advocate for Southport. She has continued to fight and I know that Dawn particularly is very excited about the opportunities that will come as this government works closely with the council in making these commitments and dreams a reality.

I want to refer to an article in today's *Gold Coast Bulletin*, which states that Mayor Tom Tate is going to write to the government about this matter. I am particularly excited that the council is not just requesting that Southport be classified as a PDA but it has said that it is time for Southport to be recognised once again as the business capital of the Gold Coast. I remember as a child growing up that Surfers Paradise was always seen as the tourism capital—there used to be posters around that said that—but Southport was always marked as the business capital of the Gold Coast. I am excited to see that become a reality.


Toowoomba Range Crossing

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.42 pm): When I was elected and gained the trust of the people of the electorate of Toowoomba North I assured them that their voices would be heard in this place. Unfortunately, my topic today is yet again the Toowoomba range crossing. The Toowoomba range crossing is undergoing some serious upgrade works and I wanted to give the House an update on how that is going. Over the past week there have been delays of over three hours for people who are trying to get across the range, which is really making business very difficult for not only many businesses in Toowoomba but also those to our west. There have also been delays on the down range, which has caused tailbacks of up to two kilometres through the centre of town which has completely immobilised the eastern side of town at those peak hour times.

So what have I done? I have been speaking to the Director-General of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Neil Scales, and I have been speaking to the minister. Neil made a visit to Toowoomba and we talked about possible solutions, which ranged from ensuring that instead of having one lane for the 15 months that these roadworks will take, we get two lanes. Geotechnical work is being done in that area to ensure that it will be safe to do so. We have also tried to fast-track the repairs on Murphy's Creek Road, which will allow people to be able to drive their cars an alternative way up the range. We will shortly be implementing a program where people can register their mobile number to get SMS messages sent to them informing them of any delays or if there are any hold-ups or breakdowns on the range.

I thank the minister and I thank the director-general for coming up and listening to the people of Toowoomba. I would also like to thank my office staff who have taken over 200 calls in relation to this matter. It is a very important issue for Toowoomba. How to traverse the range properly is a 150-year-old issue. There is only one solution and that is for a federal government of any colour to make an appropriate allocation of funding for a second range crossing. Quite simply, western Queensland is being deprived of being productive and being able to run its businesses effectively and efficiently because this road has not been built. Further, I would like an investigation into a rail line so that we can get some double-stacked containers down the range so that some of this truck traffic is taken off the road. I would encourage the minister to allocate some funds in the budget this year so that the range crossing corridor can be surveyed accurately and we can be shovel ready.

Newman Government, Achievements

 **Mr SHORTEN** (Algera—LNP) (3.45 pm): I rise to speak about the bright future that our wonderful state has. On 24 March 2012 Queenslanders elected a dedicated, energised and focused LNP government—a government that had a plan and a clear direction for Queensland. Based on the four pillars of construction, resources, tourism and agriculture, our government has clear goals to drive the economic revival of Queensland. We knew that the Labor government was a shocking money manager and that the burnt earth that it left behind was not sustainable.

As a government we had to make some hard decisions, which we did. One year on and we are starting to see green shoots in our recovery. We still have a long way to go and we have seen that we are not going to get any support from the opposition—the debt deniers, tax and spend Labor that cannot even apologise to Queenslanders for bringing our wonderful state to its knees.

On coming to government, we commissioned an audit of the state's finances by three eminent people. That commission was headed by the most successful Treasurer Australia has ever had—a Treasurer who delivered 10 surpluses, paid off Labor's \$96 billion in debt and banked \$60 billion in a Future Fund. On Tuesday of this week the full Commission of Audit report was tabled in this House with the government's response.

We have a positive plan to get the economy going. As a government, we are unashamedly pro growth. The report is about supercharging the Queensland economy. Madam Deputy Speaker, would you build a house without a plan? The audit is a blueprint—a plan, a positive plan—to rebuild the economy of Queensland for all Queenslanders. We have heard the scaremongering from the Labor opposition members and their union comrades. They have no positive plans and no positive ideas to fix the problems they created. They do not want to solve the problems and they will not take responsibility for creating them.

The report talks about contestability. Every Queenslander needs to be very clear that contestability is a process, not an outcome. It is a journey, not a destination. Every Queenslander needs to know that as a government we are going for growth. We are focused on delivering for Queenslanders. I am focused on delivering for the electorate of Algeester. Queensland is the greatest state in the federation with the greatest opportunities.

Townsville, Public Transport



Mr COX (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.48 pm): This year I took on board the issue of public transport services in the Townsville region where my electorate of Thuringowa is based. Not content to simply hope that things would improve, I took a proactive approach, establishing a working group with the aim of creating a road map for public transport that addresses the short-term and long-term planning provisions for these services.

Since moving to Townsville in 2000 and witnessing the huge growth in both urban and industrial development, for a long time I have seen the need to establish such a group in Townsville. I did not want to see us slip behind in providing such an essential service in a major regional city. Every time the subject is raised publicly, the focus always goes straight to other and new modes and never deals with the here and now and the city plan in mind. I have established the public transport working group to facilitate key stakeholders working together to achieve improvements to Townsville's public transport system in line with the council's city plan imperatives, recognising key transport nodes for both local residents and visitors to Townsville.


The working group will consider opportunities and collaborate on opportunities to improve the effectiveness of public transport in Townsville. The primary objective is to achieve short-term improvements to public transport; to help achieve a public transport system that is efficient and meets customer demands and expectations, including those of tourists and visitors to the city; and supports and enhances the CBD and other key activity centres.

The working group is very mindful of the following: Townsville is Australia's northernmost major city and gateway to the tropics; Townsville has a healthy growth rate; Townsville is recognised as the second capital of Queensland; Townsville's CBD needs revitalisation; key activity centres include the CBD, James Cook University Hospital, Thuringowa Central, Aitkenvale, Deeragun and the Northern Beaches and both Magnetic and Palm Island; and private sector investment is lagging.

Some of the issues identified at our first meeting that should also be in front of mind are the perception and reality of inadequacy of public transport; poor utilisation of public transport; and lack of alignment between federal, state and local government policy frameworks. The wheels are now in motion, after our second meeting where I invited Marie-Claude from the chamber of commerce to address the group, with our first proposed action as a working group. Townsville Chamber of Commerce is taking part as it has been awarded \$10,000 by this state government to undertake a desktop study of one of our major transport nodes. This will look at how to improve public transport between the CBD and the Douglas precinct. I have also been approached by the CBD nightclub strip to see if we can help transport patrons home on weekends. I wish to thank the Premier and the minister for their ongoing support with this project and all the stakeholders for getting on board and embracing the process.

After the release of the Commission of Audit final report I think it is more important than ever that this project is underway considering that we need to look differently at how we do things. The status quo cannot remain. Transport is definitely something this government is looking at. With my other local members I look forward to success.


Greenslopes Electorate, Anzac Day

 **Mr KAYE** (Greenslopes—LNP) (3.51 pm): I rise today, as other members in the House have, to speak on one of the most important days in the Australian calendar—Anzac Day. This year I had the honour and privilege of delivering the special address at the Greenslopes Private Hospital. The service was well attended and, whilst it was difficult to gauge the numbers, I would estimate there would have been at least 2,000 people in attendance. Each year Greenslopes Private Hospital hosts a very moving service which is a fitting tribute to our fallen soldiers and those who have returned from conflicts around the globe. The service is followed by a gunfire breakfast which is enjoyed by those who attend. A special thanks to the CEO Mark Page and his staff for making the event possible. Incidentally, the staff commence setting up for the event at 1.00 am in the morning.

Following the Greenslopes service I attended the Holland Park RSL subbranch for another fitting tribute to our diggers. Thanks to the President Alan Hellier and his wife Sonja and their team for their hard work organising the event every year. After Holland Park it was off to the Coorparoo RSL. Coorparoo RSL President Nev Veale and Secretary Richard Jefferies presided over the service which was well attended by many locals. Of course, I must not forget the services at both the Coorparoo Secondary College and the Coorparoo State School. Both schools presented wonderful tributes to our Anzacs and current service men and women.

The services I attended on Anzac Day were also attended by numerous schools and community groups. It was not that long ago that commentary in the media suggested that numbers were dwindling at Anzac events. I am pleased to say that numbers are, in fact, increasing substantially and I am of the belief that this trend will continue. It is so vitally important that we pass on to our children the importance of Anzac Day and make sure that they know the freedom that we now enjoy did not come cheaply. We must always remember the over 100,000 men and women who have died in defence of this great country. We must always remember the over 800,000 men and women who have served in our armed forces in conflicts and peacekeeping operations around the globe. You have the gratitude of myself and the residents of the Greenslopes electorate. Then there are the family and friends of war veterans for whom Anzac Day is more than a calendar entry. Every day is Anzac Day. When they get up in the morning they remember their cherished family member or friend they have sacrificed. When they go to sleep at night, the last thing they think of is their absent loved one. Finally, we must not forget our brothers and sisters from New Zealand who stood shoulder to shoulder with our diggers in several wars. Lest we forget.

Mary Valley Tenant Purchase Scheme; Well Person's Health Check Day

 **Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (3.53 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise in this chamber today to talk about a fantastic initiative, one that I can reflect on both as the member for Gympie and as the chair of the Mary Valley Economic Development Advisory Group. Today in the post long-term residential tenants in the Mary Valley are receiving notification of the government's tenant purchase scheme. Seven years after the Labor Party arrived in the Mary Valley and proceeded to kick that community in the guts by destroying it, we are today seeing a very major step forward with the tenant purchase scheme. This is an opportunity for long-term tenants in residential properties, be they rural, residential or otherwise, to buy back homes in which they have been living. We want the Mary Valley community to become strong again. We want them to take ownership of their own properties. We know that if they own their properties they will manage them and look after them far better than any government department or public servant could.


The people of the Mary Valley have until 30 May to express their desire to purchase back their property. There are conditions and I wish to flag them. If the tenants are not in accordance with their lease, if they have rent in arrears or if they have not been maintaining the property, they quite appropriately will not be considered for the tenant purchase scheme. They need to be good tenants showing that they are abiding by the terms of their lease. They will then have the opportunity to purchase the property.

I note that members in this House have raised spurious allegations that there would be sales to mates. Can I put those allegations to rest by informing the House that the process that is being put forward is that tenants' properties, once they indicate they wish to purchase, will be valued

independently and that will be the purchase price. There will be no negotiation. It is appropriate to do this because they have the inside run. It is not like they are purchasing the property on the open market or at an auction. I believe the tenant purchase scheme will go a long way to ensuring that long-term tenants will be able to purchase the over 300 properties that are currently now tenanted and we will see a sense of community come back to the Mary Valley.

In the short time I have left I wish to touch on another issue. On Saturday the North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health ran a well person's health check day. I wish to thank Uncle Tom, the chair, and our local Indigenous elder Auntie Olive for their commitment to the health of Indigenous people in our local area. It was a shock for me to have my health check. My weight is not where it should be, nor is my blood pressure and other factors, but it was about identifying those issues and, along with other members who attended the day, making the changes that we need to. I thank them for their leadership.

Gladstone Electorate, Anzac Day

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (3.56 pm): I rise to thank the community of the Gladstone electorate for their continuing and growing support for Anzac Day. There are dawn services in Gladstone and at Boyne-Tannum. There are 9.30 and 11 o'clock services at Boyne-Tannum, Calliope, Mount Larcom, Gladstone and I believe that the Boyne Valley also have a service. At the dawn service in Gladstone it was calculated that there was around 5,000 people and another 3,000 at the 11 o'clock service. The numbers at Boyne-Tannum are growing as well, as I believe they are in Calliope.

We have no World War I veterans and the ranks of the World War II veterans are thinning out considerably. Those who still live in Gladstone were respectfully transported in old military vehicles or vintage cars. The welcome and recognition they were given was breathtaking. Also we have the Vietnam vets and veterans from other theatres of war as well as those who have been engaged in peacekeeping experiences. The veterans do not talk much of their war experience. Indeed, I learnt more of my dad's experience in the war from his war record and historical records that I have accessed since. His experience, and the experience of most veterans, is horrendous. Those experiences stay with them through very vivid and recurring memories.

The Anzac Day services are our opportunity, and the opportunity of other sectors in the community like our primary and high schools, to say thank you for those hard-won freedoms that we must diligently defend. One such returned serviceman is Mr Arthur Deacon. Arthur is getting on in years now and he is not enjoying the very best of health, partly because of his war service and partly because of time that he put in as a railway worker in the sun. Arthur has been a stalwart at many of the school services. At Toolooa State High School he was instrumental in having a dedicated memorial erected. He goes to Gladstone South State School each year that he is physically able to. As I said, he is not enjoying good health but when his health allows him to he still comes and reads the odes at these schools. Over the years he has attended a great many funerals of returned service men and women so that at their interment the ode can be read. He does it respectfully and sensitively. He really is a credit to the RSL and to the services and the support that they provide. It is now that Arthur needs support from his family. His wife Pearl, who is also a bit of a stalwart, and his children have all been wonderful to Arthur. I want him to know that our thoughts are with him and we wish him good health.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Reports

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (3.59 pm), by leave: I lay upon the table of the House the following reports of the Ethics Committee: Report No. 131, titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 27 November 2012 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Leader of the Opposition*, and Report No. 133, titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 28 November 2012 relating to an alleged reflection on the chair*. I commend both reports and the committee's recommendations to the House.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee, Report No. 131—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 27 November 2012 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Leader of the Opposition [2567].


Tabled paper: Ethics Committee, Report No. 133—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 28 November 2012 relating to an alleged reflection on the chair [2566].

LAND, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1463, on motion of Mr Cripps—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (4.00 pm), continuing: Before the luncheon adjournment, in my second reading contribution to the debate I was responding to a number of issues raised and recommendations made by the committee in its consideration of the bill. In particular, I was talking about initiatives and responsibilities regarding water quality monitoring. The government recognises that local councils, community groups and industry are best placed to deliver real outcomes towards developing visions for their waterways and it is the Queensland government's role to support them. For example, my colleague and friend the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection recently committed \$800,000 to fund projects in the Pumicestone Passage, Bundamba Creek and Slacks Creek catchments. The Newman government is also replicating in Gladstone the open and transparent report-card model currently operating in South-East Queensland and is contributing \$200,000 towards the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership.

In relation to the amendments concerning the conversion of gas wells to water bores, the committee's report suggested I consider establishing a committee administered by my department as a forum for groups representing landholders and other stakeholders to work cooperatively through any issues that emerge with the conversion of gas wells to water and inspection bores. Alternatively, the committee has suggested the resolution of emerging issues regarding well conversions may be able to be dealt with through the GasFields Commission. To date, there have been a very limited number of those conversions. I can assure members that as this conversion process develops further, I am prepared to consider the need for formal arrangements, depending upon the issues that emerge and whether or not they are able to be dealt with through existing consultative mechanisms.

Now I will address some of the concerns raised through the parliamentary committee process. Firstly, I turn to the amendments regarding the Acquisition of Land Act 1967. Several power companies expressed concerns that the proposed amendments to the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, which provides for shortened acquisition processes in simple or straightforward matters only, may in fact extend to long powerline corridors or multiparcel purposes. Certainly this is not the case.

The shortened acquisition process introduced by this bill is only intended to apply in simple cases where parties agree or there are no objections. For such straightforward matters, if an agreement is entered into between the constructing authority and all relevant parties, those compulsory acquisitions will no longer have to be referred to the minister or to the Governor in Council. In such simple cases, the acquiring authority can acquire the land or easement and the property owner can receive payment much more quickly. However, it is imperative that the rights of affected landholders are not diminished by this process. It is for that reason that the amendment can apply only to simple cases where it is clear that no parties involved in the acquisitions have any objections.

Cases involving acquisition corridors or multiparcel purposes cannot be categorised as simple cases because they invariably involve objections. Determining the extent of the subject matter of an objection, such as whether or not an objection relates solely to the amount of compensation, is not always a straightforward matter. As I have said, protecting the interests of landholders who have an objection is paramount. Therefore, those more complex acquisitions are not suitable for the new streamlined process.

I turn now to amendments relating to the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1992. The Cape York Land Council has expressed concern about the proposed amendment that will allow the minister to remove or suspend a land trust member if the minister forms a view that the actions of the member of the land trust are hindering the proper operation of the land trust and grounds exist for removing or suspending the member. The Cape York Land Council is of the view that the amendments to give the land trust power to take action in appropriate circumstances should be adequate for the action to be taken without the need for ministerial intervention. Whilst in many cases that will be true, there have been circumstances where a land trust has not been able to make decisions, for example, where they cannot form a quorum.

The intent of the new provisions is that the land trust will manage its own affairs with regards to appointments, suspensions and, if necessary, the removal of a member. There are a range of safeguards built into the legislation that will protect a member if removal is proposed. These include the provision of a show-cause notice that details the action proposed to be taken and provides an opportunity for the person to respond; an information notice that details the decision taken, the reason for it and that the person has 28 days to appeal the decision to the Land Court; and time limits on immediate suspensions to ensure that if no further action is taken the suspension is lifted after 60 days. Therefore, I am satisfied that the amendments in this bill provide the necessary powers and safeguards with respect to appointing, suspending or removing land trust members.

I turn now to the proposed amendments to the Land Act 1994. During the parliamentary committee process, several environmental groups expressed concerns regarding amendments in the bill to repeal the future conservation area provisions from the Land Act 1994. Currently, at lease renewal stage, the State Rural Leasehold Land Strategy provides for the reservation of rural leasehold land and its acquisition in the future for inclusion into the protected area estate. I must point out that, since the future conservation area provisions commenced on 1 January 2008, they have never been used. Although the future conservation area provisions were intended to be a 30-year transition from lease to protected area for identified leases, the provisions have, in reality, created uncertainty for holders of rural leasehold land about the future of their leases at the time of the lease renewal process.

Security of tenure for lessees is important for the Newman government. The amendments remove provisions that diminish the rights of the lessee to use all or part of the land for agricultural, grazing and pastoral purposes during the term of the lease. This way, landholders need not fear that they are being disadvantaged for managing the land so well that it could be eligible to be incorporated into the protected area estate. This approach allows the lease renewal process to be about assessment of the land against the conditions of the lease rather than a process associated with conservation. Meanwhile, the sustainable management of the leased land continues to be ensured by the terms of a land management agreement entered into by the minister and the lessee under the lease renewal process.

While the amendments alter the process for identifying areas for conservation purposes, they do not alter the role of the administering agency of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 in determining whether the highest and best value of the state land is nature conservation. Therefore, environmental groups that are concerned about this issue can be assured that the removal of the future conservation area provisions does not restrict the government's capacity to assess land for conservation values on a rural lease. The administrative arrangements that will be in place will still allow the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to assess conservation values on rural leasehold land at any time during the term of the lease rather than just at the time of the lease renewal and, if they so desire, to negotiate a purchase price with the lessee if a decision is made to buy all or part of the leased land for conservation purposes where such an action is warranted.

Concerns were also raised by environmental groups regarding the amendment to the Land Act 1994 to raise the land area threshold for land management agreements from 100 hectares to 1,000 hectares or more. The process for negotiating a land management agreement includes an assessment of the condition of the lease land. Undertaking land condition assessments and preparing land management agreements for small rural leases has proven to be an unjustifiable, intensive investment of resources both by the rural leaseholder concerned and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. I stress that this amendment does not in any way compromise the state's capacity to proactively ensure good land management of small rural leases, allowing attention to be focused on leases at risk or in known problem areas.

Clause 78 of the bill empowers the minister to require a land management agreement for a term or perpetual lease for rural leasehold land. This applies where the lease is not subject to a condition that a land management agreement must be entered into and if the minister is satisfied that the lease land suffers from, or is at risk of, land degradation or the lessee is using the lease land in a way that is not fulfilling their duty of care for the land.

Under the current Land Act 1994, the only course of action to deal with severe land degradation or failure to meet a duty of care is remedial action, notice and ultimately forfeiture of the lease. These actions would not be undertaken lightly on the part of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. Instead, use of a land management agreement as an alternative approach

under clause 78 will address land degradation and duty of care issues for any rural leasehold land with both lessees and the government working together. This approach reduces red tape. It allows good land management of small rural leases to be pursued where required while, at the same time, providing a viable alternative to more costly and confrontational remedial action or forfeiture of the lease. This really is a win-win situation for lessees, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and the community at large.

The concerns expressed by environmental groups is another example, unfortunately, of their lack of understanding of the work that landowners do as responsible stewards of the land. The Newman government supports and respects landholders and thanks them for their ongoing commitment to manage their most important asset sustainably.

The change in land area threshold for mandatory land management agreements does not alter the lessee's obligations under other legislation for sustainable management of lease land. For example, under the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 the lessees must control pests on the land. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 the lessee has an environmental duty of care and must take all steps to minimise environmental harm or nuisance.

The view expressed to the parliamentary committee by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland about the proposal to convert decommissioned petroleum wells, especially coal seam gas wells, to a water supply bore or a water observation bore was that measures needed to be in place to ensure the safety and health of humans, livestock and the environment.

The amendments in the bill will streamline the process for the conversion of petroleum wells to water supply bores or water observation bores. I can assure members that the new streamlined process will ensure that safety and health issues are adequately addressed.

Amendments proposed will define a facility used in the conversion of a petroleum well to a water observation bore or water supply bore as an operating plant. By defining this equipment as operating plant, the safety provisions of the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 will apply. These provisions, amongst other things, require the operator of an operating plant for each stage of the plant to make a safety management plan that complies with the act.

Further, the conversion of a petroleum well will be restricted to those petroleum wells drilled on or after 1 January 2012 or decommissioned on or after that date. This is because certain wells drilled or decommissioned on or after that date have had to comply with the code of practice for the construction and abandonment of coal seam gas wells in Queensland. That code of practice was introduced to ensure, amongst other things, that all CSG wells are constructed and abandoned to a minimum acceptable resulting in long-term well integrity, containment of gas and the protection of groundwater resources.

A similar code, or additions to the current CSG well code of practice, will be developed and prescribed under regulation which will be specific to the conversion of a CSG well to a water supply or water observation bore. By converting CSG wells that have been constructed and abandoned to the code of practice, the cross-contamination of CSG and groundwater is extremely unlikely to occur.

During the parliamentary committee process, some environmental groups expressed concerns regarding the effects of the proposed amendment to remove the requirement for a riverine protection permit to remove vegetation from a watercourse. The amendments in the bill will remove the requirement in the Water Act 2000 to obtain a riverine protection permit to remove vegetation in a watercourse, lake or spring. These amendments do not mean that watercourses will no longer be regulated. It does not make much sense to regulate vegetation under the Water Act and so the bill will remove the duplication and confusion so that all vegetation matters are dealt with under the Vegetation Management Act 1999.

Landholders want to manage their land to produce the best outcomes—it is their livelihoods. This bill goes some way to removing the red tape that had built up under the previous government. This government respects and trusts the state's land managers to do the right thing. These amendments will allow them to get on with the job.

During the 2011-12 year, 131 riverine protection permit applications were made to the department. Members might be interested to know that only one riverine protection permit was issued for the removal of vegetation in a watercourse. Only a single permit was issued under the Water Act for the removal of vegetation from a watercourse. Some 49 riverine protection permits did not involve the removal of vegetation. However, the majority of these permits contain conditions for rehabilitation of the vegetation in the area excavated or filled. Some 47 riverine protection permits were issued for a combination of extraction or fill or just excavation or just fill which included the removal of vegetation.

It must be said in considering these matters that, before deciding to grant or condition a riverine protection permit where the removal of vegetation will occur as a necessary and unavoidable part of extracting or placing fill, the chief executive will also take into consideration the effects of the removal of vegetation on the watercourse. The remaining 34 applications were either withdrawn or were still outstanding at the end of the 2011-12 financial year.

So between 2009 and 2012 there were approximately 437 riverine protection permits with multiple purposes issued. In stark contrast, during the same period the department issued 2,400 decisions on clearing applications under the vegetation management framework. All clearing applications are assessed against the relevant clearing codes and policies which ensure that clearing is done in a way that protects water quality, habitat and bank stability associated with watercourses.

There is no evidence to suggest that the removal of the requirement for riverine protection permits to remove vegetation will result in large scale clearing of riverine vegetation, nor will it cause degradation to watercourses. The protection of watercourses always has and always will be an important consideration in the vegetation management framework. Consideration of vegetation clearing belongs under the vegetation management framework, not under the Water Act.

In addition, I am confident that landholders understand the importance of vegetation as part of maintaining the stability of a watercourse. As I mentioned earlier, there are relatively few applications for permits solely to remove vegetation from watercourses under the Water Act. The concerns raised by some environmental groups demonstrates once again that they have, in certain places, a limited understanding of how watercourses are managed, particularly in relation to preparation or cleaning up after wet season flood events.

It is absolutely correct that vegetation in watercourses can play a very important role in the stabilisation of banks which, if not managed correctly, can be a significant contributor to erosion and the build-up of sediment and negatively impact on water quality. However, in other situations, failure to remove vegetation from watercourses, particularly ahead of wet season flood events, can result in watercourses being unable to function properly, redirecting fast-flowing water and having serious consequences including the erosion of river and creek banks, banks slumping and the consequential damage to property and infrastructure that can occur.

Several submissions to the parliamentary committee expressed some concern regarding the amendment to remove land and water management plans from the Water Act. Land and water management plans are one of two mechanisms that are designed to regulate water use if there is a risk of land and water degradation, the second being water use plans. The difference between the two plans lies largely in the areas to which they apply. Land and water management plans are property scale plans that are required for the use of water for irrigation in certain circumstances. In comparison, water use plans are ministerial plans that are able to manage risks associated with water use on a landscape scale.


The water use plan framework is a mechanism to manage land and water degradation risks. It has very broad applicability to any part of the state and is targeted to high-risk areas which may be on a property or landscape scale level. A water use plan identifies outcomes that landholders are required to achieve to deal with degradation issues such as rising groundwater levels and salination. It may specify how individuals are to meet the objectives, including setting standards for water use practices and water quality targets.

The risks addressed by water use plans are very similar to land and management plans including but not limited to the following: rising underground water levels; increasing salinisation; deteriorating water quality; water logging of soils; destabilisation of bed and banks of watercourses; damage to riverine environment; and increasing soil erosion. While the bill removes the requirement for land and water management plans, the retention of these water use planning provisions will ensure that mechanisms to manage water use are available to protect those areas where water use may cause negative effects on land and water resources. As a result, the removal of land and water management plans does not mean that the Queensland government is lessening protections against land and water degradation. What this amendment does achieve is the removal of a regulatory burden on irrigators that has not achieved its intended outcome and whose outcomes may be better realised by landholders working together with the government at a landscape level.

Finally, several submissions to the parliamentary committee expressed concerns with the amendment to the Water Act to extend the term of water licences to the year 2111 because it will restrict the department's ability to implement any changes to water resource management policy. Originally, the water licence renewal process was designed to provide an opportunity to review the

licence and implement any changes to natural resource management policy that may have occurred during the licence period. However, water resource plans and resource operations plans now cover about 90 per cent of the state and are the principal mechanism for ensuring the sustainable management and allocation of water in Queensland.

Water licences may be reviewed as part of the development, amendment or review of water resource plans and resource operations plans. This means that the strategic review process will not be lost but will occur through the development of these plans. In addition, the extension of the term of a water licence does not change the chief executive's ability to amend or cancel water licences where appropriate. These existing powers apply across the state, including those areas where water resource plans and resource operations plans do not apply. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.23 pm): The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 is an omnibus bill which makes changes to no fewer than 18 separate pieces of legislation and one regulation. It continues the Newman government's sneaky, underhanded practice of bundling deeply controversial, risky changes with some that are benign and others that will be welcomed by people across the state.

The latest omnibus bill before this House was the so-called Economic Development Bill 2012, and it did exactly the same thing as this one—put in a few good ideas with some potentially disastrous ones in the hope, the faint hope, that people would not realise. It is a disingenuous tactic by a disingenuous government. It figuratively muddies the waters between entirely unrelated proposals and, in the case of the removal of riverine protection permits, the bill will literally muddy the waters as well.

Mr Rickuss: What about the flood commission report?

Mrs MILLER: I take that interjection by the member for Lockyer. Hold on, my friend. I am about to get to that.

There are, of course, parts of this legislation that Queensland Labor is happy to support, but the fact that they are lumped in with changes such as removing riverine protection permits and future conservation areas is worrying. In doing so, the government is deliberately trying to evade scrutiny for those regressive changes. But let me tell those on the other side of this House that Queensland Labor will not let them run away from scrutiny on these issues. But in trying to cover controversial changes with popular ones, the government also undermines the reception of those worthwhile changes. So I say to the government through Madam Deputy Speaker that there is no point in bringing these gigantic omnibus bills into the House in the hope that we will not spot the widely irresponsible changes that they conceal.

Mrs Menkens: Of course Labor never did that, did they? How ridiculous. People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Mrs MILLER: I take that interjection from the member—wait, just wait. We will go through each and every piece of legislation with a fine tooth-comb, member for Burdekin—just like picking out lice with a fine tooth-comb—and we will point out every single underhanded, sneaky change that this government makes.

The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 acts on recommendations from the flood report that levees should be assessed on a consistent basis around the state. Both major political parties accepted the flood commission's recommendations, and the opposition of course approves of these changes. Through the chair, member for Lockyer, I hope you are listening.

Mr Rickuss: I am listening.

Mrs MILLER: Levees can be an effective tool to manage floodwaters and prevent flooding in particular areas. After the floods of 2010-11 and those of this year, we should be exploring whether the construction of new levees and the improvement of existing ones could lessen the effects of flooding, particularly in a number of regional towns across Queensland. But levees are not a silver bullet in protecting one area from flooding. They can exacerbate flooding in other areas. It is therefore critically important that any levee infrastructure works are properly assessed. It is significantly better that the assessment of levees is consistent around the state instead of the piecemeal regulatory framework that is currently in place.

The opposition strongly supports the recommendations from the flood inquiry. Through Madam Deputy Speaker, I hope the member for Lockyer is continuing his interest in my contribution.

Mr Rickuss: I certainly am.

Mrs MILLER: And the Labor opposition are pleased to see the government is acting on this one at the moment. However, the flood commission was established by the previous Labor government not just to identify individual improvements the state could implement but also to satisfy Queenslanders, particularly those who have had their lives up-ended by floods, that everything possible will be done to minimise the risk of the same thing happening again.

Precisely because so many people were horribly affected by the 2011 floods, there are people all around this state of Queensland who have a real and personal interest in the implementation of the flood commission's recommendations. Therefore, I think it does these people a huge disservice to lump in legislative amendments arising from the flood commission with amendments that are altogether unrelated. It is an especially bad idea to lump them together with amendments that may even exacerbate flooding.

The electorate that I represent was severely affected by the early 2011 flood. Five suburbs in my electorate were flooded in 2011 and many of my constituents in Bundamba, Redbank, Riverview, Collingwood Park and Goodna have still not fully recovered from the devastation. In an ideal world the government would make all legislative amendments needed to respond to the recommendations of the flood inquiry in one bill. I am sure that the member for Lockyer would agree that one flood bill would be preferable so that all of our constituents who were so horribly impacted by the floods could go through and tick off the flood inquiry recommendations with what was contained in one bill. That would bring clarity and focus to the government's response. It would also help people who were affected by the floods understand the government's response. Dealing with these changes in a piecemeal manner alongside problematic government priorities confuses the issues and it creates further concern among flood victims.

Of course, the opposition understands that it may not be possible to move in lockstep on all of the flood commission recommendations for the simple reason that some may take longer to consult on and develop than others. However, if it is not possible to progress all the recommendations which require legislative change at once, it would certainly be best to deal with each as a discrete matter and not lump them in with other entirely unrelated changes. It also does the people of Queensland an enormous disservice when the government is less than entirely open and accountable on its progress in implementing the recommendations of the flood report.

Mr RICKUSS: I rise to a point of order. The member is straying well off the bill almost to the point of irrelevance. Could you rule on relevance, please?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! I would remind the member for Bundamba that she needs to stay relevant to the bill. She has the call.

Mrs MILLER: I am speaking in relation to levees in relation to floods which are part of this bill.

The Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier a question on notice on 13 February about the government's progress on implementing the flood inquiry's recommendations. The opposition leader asked for detail on the progress of each recommendation and the cost of delivering each recommendation. The Premier in his usual arrogant, conceited fashion provided a list of which recommendations have been finalised. This list contains no explanation of how these recommendations have been finalised. He also refused to provide information on the cost of these recommendations.

The opposition leader asked that question in good faith, responding to the flood commission's recommendations which should be a bipartisan undertaking. We substantially agree on these matters. Both sides committed to implementing them before the 2012 election. But because the government had not provided a comprehensive update on its progress, the opposition leader gave the Premier the chance to do so in that question on notice. So instead of acting magnanimously and actually taking the opportunity to detail to the opposition and the people of Queensland the achievements of his government in flood resilience, he acted politically and refused to provide what should be public information. So much for the Premier's commitment to open and accountable government!

While the opposition welcomes the amendments in this bill that deal specifically with the regulation of levees, we deplore the cynical tactics of this government to bundle positive changes in with unrelated and even deeply troubling amendments. As I have already mentioned, whilst this bill contains the measures to properly regulate levees to assist in potentially reducing flooding, it also contains a measure that can indeed exacerbate flooding: the removal of riverine protection permits. There is a real, dark irony to including such deeply contradictory measures in the one bill. It would be laughable if it were not so concerning. The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 proposes removing the requirement for landholders to obtain a riverine protection permit prior to clearing vegetation in a watercourse. The government's attempts to justify this change have been disingenuous all along the way. The first justification that the minister trotted out was that vegetation in watercourses is protected under both the Vegetation Management Act 1999 and the Water Act of 2000. If this were always true, it would be a reasonable explanation. Unfortunately, it is not always true. There are rivers across Queensland where riparian vegetation is only protected under the Water Act. This means that these changes strip away protection for vegetation in watercourses.

I wish to quote from the World Wildlife Fund submission to the inquiry. It states—

WWF conservatively estimates (based on Queensland Government data on watercourses and protected vegetation) that around 100 000 kilometres of waterways will now be able to be cleared. About 60 000 kilometres will be open for clearing in the Fitzroy catchment alone. Of the remaining 40 000 kilometres a large proportion is contained in the South East Queensland catchments.

As the member for South Brisbane said in her dissenting report, it is absolutely appalling that the government has not provided any assessment on how many waterways will no longer have any protection. It is a dereliction of duty that the minister has not seen fit to provide an estimate and it is a disgrace that the people of Queensland need to rely on a non-government organisation to provide one. I suppose I should not be surprised though; this government is quite fond of outsourcing to the private sector. We can safely assume that the WWF estimate must be pretty close to the money; it must be because the government has not even tried to refute it. Instead, they did what they so often do when caught in a mess of their own making: they tried to change the argument.

The next argument they tried to make was that riverine protection permits would still be required for works that involved vegetation clearing and excavation or filling works. This means that people can clear vegetation in a watercourse to their heart's content as long as they do not do anything else. The government has tried to argue that it is relatively rare for permits to only be granted for vegetation clearing, that they usually involve more than one activity. That ignores the real issue that removing the need to even apply for permits is certain to encourage more vegetation clearing. So make absolutely no mistake: removing riverine protection permits will mean more clearing of riparian vegetation. Riparian vegetation is integral to biodiversity, ecosystem protection and ensuring healthy waterways. Vegetation along watercourses helps to stop erosion in flood events and therefore reduces turbidity.

I will quote from the Floods Commission of Inquiry on the importance of riparian vegetation. The report states—

The riverbank erosion and slumping process is further complicated by landholder activity. The effect of floodwater on riverbanks may, for example, be mitigated considerably by vegetation growing on and around riverbanks. Where flooding occurs in areas where vegetation has been cleared, bank slumping is likely to be greater.

The report goes on to state—

In considering the factors involved in riverbank erosion, Dr Abernethy gave his opinion that significantly less slumping would have been observed in the mid-Brisbane River region if naturally occurring vegetation had not been cleared from the riverbanks.

Dr Bruce Abernethy, who is the manager of Southeast Australian Water and Environment Operations at Sinclair Knight Merz, was engaged by the flood commission as an expert.

I find it extremely troubling that the government is making it easier for landholders to remove riparian vegetation when the expert advice to the floods commission detailed that less erosion would have occurred if vegetation had not been cleared. Bank slumping and erosion cause greater turbidity in floodwaters. Earlier this year parts of Brisbane came within hours of running out of water due to

excessive turbidity. It is more than short-sighted to be making legislative changes that are likely to increase turbidity when turbidity caused major problems for South-East Queensland water treatment plants just months ago.

The fact that the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 makes further changes to the Water Act to extend the period for all water licences to 30 June 2111 causes some concern for the opposition. Members need to understand that date: 30 June 2111. We understand that under water resource plans and resource operation plans water licences can be amended outside of the renewal process. We also recognise that the renewal process can cause unnecessary paperwork for both the government and water licence holders. However, we can see no logical reason or convincing public policy argument for the choice this government has made to extend all water licences for an extra 99 years. This puts water licences completely out of kilter with all other planning frameworks. Water resource plans themselves operate for a period of 10 years, after which they must be renewed. It also puts water licences out of step with the government's statutory regional planning frameworks, which are being developed on a 30-year time frame. Whilst the opposition can easily understand why water licence holders and the government want to extend water licences, the 99-year period that the government has proposed just appears to have absolutely no underpinning public policy logic.

Further, water resource plans do not cover the entire state. The government's own explanatory notes state that they only cover approximately 90 per cent of the state. The government's own justification for extending water licences is that they are governed by water resource plans. By definition, this is not the case in the 10 per cent of the state that water resource plans do not cover. I invite the minister to comment on why he thinks it is appropriate for this 99-year period to extend to areas that are not under water resource plans.

I move on to yet another area in which the government is winding back environmental protections in this bill—that is, of course, the removal of future conservation areas. Future conservation areas were introduced to Queensland through the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007 and came into force on 1 January 2008. They are a useful method for the government of the day to expand the protected areas of Queensland in a thoughtful, considered and steady fashion. They are a method for consideration.

With future conservation areas the government is able to identify land that will be added to the protected area system some time in advance. The government can earmark leasehold land with high environmental value and declare it as a future conservation area. The government would then work with the leaseholder to ensure it was managed in an environmentally sustainable way for the duration of the lease. When it came time for the lease renewal, an area that had been identified as a future conservation area would automatically not be subject to lease renewal. The leaseholder would then receive compensation at fair market value for any improvements they had made to the land.

Future conservation areas were not a controversial addition to the Land Act. Let us make that very clear. They were included in the landmark 2007 Delbessie agreement between the Queensland government, AgForce and the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society. The Delbessie agreement showed that governments, the agricultural sector and the environmental movement could work together in a constructive manner to secure the environmental heritage of Queensland and support agricultural industries. In fact, future conservation areas were so uncontroversial at the time of their introduction that the then coalition opposition supported their introduction. That is how uncontroversial they were, although I guess some allowance needs to be made for the fact that the member for Condamine was the National Party spokesperson on natural resources at the time and he has since gone off to the Katter party! But who knew that the member for Condamine was the moderating influence within the LNP on green issues? Who would have thought? I trust that the member and his fellow Katter party MPs will join with Labor in opposing the removal of future conservation areas from the Land Act.

This is yet more evidence that this government deliberately misled Queenslanders on their environmental credentials before the 2012 election. It is clear that during the long, hard, dark years of opposition the conservative parties of Queensland have learned nothing and forgotten nothing as well. They have not changed their views since the days of the Bjelke-Petersen government, when Queensland's national parks estate grew at nothing more than a small rate. As some of my Labor colleagues have pointed out before, this is a government that has no plan to continue the expansion of Queensland's national parks estate.

The responsibility overlaps between three different ministers. The Minister for National Parks is responsible for existing national parks and he is doing everything in his power to remove their protection. He is considering—wait for it—logging in national parks, he is considering grazing in national parks and of course he has opened them up to private development. The Minister for Environment is in charge of acquiring new land for national park estate. Not only has he done nothing in this area; he has removed the performance measure on which he can be judged for it. Unbelievable! Then of course the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is responsible for state forests and he has already opened them up to logging. Now the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has got involved and he is removing a useful tool to expand our national park estate. The only reasonable conclusion that can be made from the government's actions on this matter is that this government has no plans to increase the size of our national park estate. Instead, it wants to trash the ones that we already have.

The bill also proposes moving Starcke National Park from claimable land to transferable land. This would allow Starcke National Park and, I understand, three neighbouring parks to be transferred to an Aboriginal land-holding body. This change was being considered by the previous government and the opposition is happy to support this transfer. However, I would ask the minister a couple of questions. What negotiations have occurred with Indigenous owners on this matter? Has the government entered into discussions on a possible transfer and how will the land be managed if it is indeed transferred to traditional owners? The legislation proposes to redefine the Cape York Peninsula region to include the Eastern Kuku Yalanji parks and therefore transfer them to joint management with the area's traditional owners. Once again, these changes were mooted under the previous government and the opposition has no objections to these changes within the bill. However, I would ask the minister the same questions in relation to Starcke National Park. What discussions have taken place with the Indigenous owners and what agreements have been made on how the land will be managed under joint management?

The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 makes a number of changes to other pieces of legislation including, as explained in the explanatory notes, the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 to streamline acquisitions where the parties are in agreement or where there are no objections, other than native title, by removing the need for consideration by the Governor in Council; amends the Foreign Ownership of Land Register 1988 to remove the notification requirement for interests that do not represent a long-term possession or control of land; amends the Petroleum Act 1923 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 to, among other things, provide that petroleum wells can be converted to water observation bores or water supply bores by a petroleum tenure holder; amends the River Improvement Trust Act 1940 to streamline a number of governance and administration requirements for river improvement trusts; and finally amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to facilitate two-tier cooperative structures, define dual reticulation and clarify transitional provisions. I want to flag that the opposition has no specific objections to these changes.

Before concluding my contribution today on behalf of the Labor opposition, I want to return to one of the major problems in this bill. It is highly concerning to the Labor opposition that the government is continuing with its deceitful and tricky approach of bundling changes to address flood inquiry recommendations, which the people of Queensland know have bipartisan support, in with deeply controversial changes. As I have already stated, communities across Queensland like the one I represent and, I am sure, the one that the member for Lockyer represents and the member for Ipswich West represents—

Mr RICKUSS: I rise to a point of order. I find that offensive. I do not expect the member for Bundamba to be making comments on my behalf. I ask that it be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Member for Lockyer, I do not see that there was a personal reflection in the comments that she made.

Mr RICKUSS: She was making recommendations on my behalf. I find that very offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I said, member for Lockyer, I do not see that there was a personal reflection in the comments that she made.

Mr RICKUSS: I still found them very offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, the comments have been deemed offensive and I would ask that you withdraw.

Mrs MILLER: I withdraw. The community that I represent would prefer to see changes that improve Queensland's capability to deal with floods dealt with either all at once or, if that is not possible, by themselves. The government should not be confusing the issues by adding them in with entirely unrelated amendments. The bill makes changes to the protection of riparian vegetation which have the potential to in fact exacerbate flooding. It continues this government's record of winding back environmental protection with its removal of future conservation areas. The opposition is happy to support some elements of the bill and is seeking more information on a couple of the others. We will, however, be opposing some clauses during the consideration in detail stage.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Member for Mackay, Queensland Plan Summit

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (4.56 pm), by leave: I understand that the member for Mackay has taken objection to my allegation that he did not want the Queensland Plan summit to be held in Mackay. In making my claim, I relied on a news article published by AAP on Tuesday, 26 February 2013 titled 'Mixed reactions to summit on Qld's future', which referred to comments by the member for Mackay. This article reads—

The ... opposition says Premier Campbell Newman is too scared to hold his 'future' summit in the southeast ...

Further, the article goes on—

... Mr Newman should have held the summit in the southeast ...

The only opposition MP referred to by name in the article is the member for Mackay. I do not believe the member for Mackay has disputed the accuracy of this AAP news story and I am not aware of the opposition seeking to have anything in this story corrected. A story published the following day in the Mackay *Daily Mercury*, which directly quoted the shadow minister for health, natural resources and mines and housing and member for Bundamba, said—

Campbell Newman's decision to host The Queensland Plan Initiative summit in Mackay on May 10 has been labelled a 'joke' by Bundamba MP Jo-Ann Miller. Ms Miller has criticised the Premier's decision to host the summit in Mackay.

I table the two articles.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 26 February 2013, from AAP to Scott Whitby titled 'Mixed reactions to summit on Qld's future' [[2568](#)].

Tabled paper: Article from the *Daily Mercury*, dated 27 February 2013, titled 'Welcome decision: The Queensland Plan Initiative, State summit comes to city' [[2569](#)].


Given these articles, I believe any reasonable person would be entitled to conclude that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and member for Mackay did not, from the outset, support the Mackay summit. If the member has taken offence at my comments, I apologise. I am pleased to note that he now seems to support the Mackay summit.

LAND, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1492, on motion of Mr Cripps—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. GW ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier) (4.59 pm): I rise to make a blessedly brief contribution to the debate on the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. I am pleased to support this legislation, as it clarifies a number of important issues within my portfolio and reflects a key Queensland government commitment to reduce red tape. I also congratulate the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines for developing legislation that facilitates access to land and natural resources that are of vital importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

The bill is clear evidence of the Queensland government's commitment to reduce red tape and unnecessary regulation. The bill amends various acts across the resources and mining portfolio to streamline various operational land, water and petroleum provisions, eliminate inconsistencies and achieve red-tape reductions. These include amendments to a number of key pieces of legislation,

including the Aboriginal Land Act 1991, the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 and the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007. Although the bill is administrative in nature, it provides scope for real improvement for individuals and communities. For example, the bill supports the streamlined transfer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and provides land trusts with greater powers over trust members. These provisions will better equip organisations to deal with internal governance issues, build internal capacity and increase transparency for stakeholders.

I am also pleased that the bill accommodates my department's request to make the Starcke National Park transferable rather than claimable under the Aboriginal Land Act. This will ensure that the Starcke National Park can be treated in the same way as three nearby parks and eventually converted to national park to be jointly managed by traditional owners and the government. In the same fashion, the Eastern Kuku Yalanji parks on the southern edge of the Cape York Peninsula region will also now be included in that region. This will pave the way for their future conversion as jointly managed parks subject to available funding and should result in the withdrawal of the Aboriginal land claim over the Cedar Bay National Park, resulting in a substantial cost saving to the government. These are significant developments and I am pleased to note that they have received very strong support from the relevant land council.

The Queensland government continues to recognise that more efficient utilisation of Queensland's resources is vital to delivering enhanced economic outcomes for Queensland. Given our commitment to red-tape reduction, it is timely to ensure that our existing legislative arrangements provide the most effective and efficient framework to regulate Queensland's valuable resources. The Queensland government recognises the ambiguity inherent in the previous legislation and is committed to providing necessary clarification to better manage Queensland's natural resources. Furthermore, the legislation appropriately recognises and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders by providing very real improvements in processes for developing and dealing with relevant lands and resources.

As I mentioned earlier, a key objective of this bill is to reduce red tape and regulation. The bill achieves this by removing unnecessary regulatory requirements and streamlining frameworks. I welcome the amendment to the existing Water Act 2000, which provides Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders with access as of right to water for carrying out traditional and customary responsibilities on country. In general, the state issues entitlements to take or interfere with water by following the processes described in the Water Act 2000. Although these processes are necessary to advance the sustainable management and efficient use of water, there are situations where they do not apply—situations where persons may take or interfere with water without having to apply or to hold a water licence or other Water Act approval. These situations are specified in section 20 of the Water Act. The bill amends that section to identify additional situations where a person may take water without a water entitlement, effectively streamlining the process and requirements for accessing water in Queensland. Section 20 has been redrafted to clearly identify situations where a water entitlement is not required.


One of the few exemptions provided by the bill authorises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties to take or interfere with water for traditional activities or for cultural purposes, for example, taking water for performing rites or other ceremonies. This amendment recognises the spiritual relationship between Indigenous people and their traditionally owned territories and waters and embodies in Queensland law the recognition of Indigenous rights to water that are provided in the Commonwealth Native Title Act. In doing so, it builds upon the rights recognised under the Native Title Act.

Importantly, the definition of traditional activities inserted into the Water Act reflects the definition in the Native Title Act. Using this definition in conjunction with the existing definitions of Aboriginal cultural heritage and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage that are provided in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act will ensure the consistent use of terminology, minimising confusion about when authorisation applies. While the definitions used in the new section 20B specify that this new authorisation does not extend to commercial activities, access to water for commercial purposes and economic development will continue to be addressed through the catchment based water planning process. In addition to authorising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties to take or interfere with water for traditional

activities or cultural purposes, the amendments to section 20 also authorise the taking of water for firefighting, testing firefighting equipment and constructing water observation bores and water monitoring laws.

Another red-tape reduction initiative implemented through amendments to section 20 is the streamlining of environmental approvals for diverting watercourses for resource activities. Currently, a proponent of a resource activity who wishes to divert a watercourse as part of their operations must obtain an environmental authority and a water licence to interfere with water. The amendment to section 20 removes the requirement to obtain a water licence for the diversion, providing the impacts of the diversion are assessed as part of a grant of the environmental authority and the environmental authority was granted with conditions about the diversion. This amendment will enable the impacts of a diversion to be assessed as part of a single application process, making it easier for project proponents to do business with the government.

I am pleased to support this bill. I thank the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines and his department for its development. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (5.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. The bill contains amendments reflecting a number of the Queensland government's commitments, including several matters that are relevant to the Environment and Heritage Protection portfolio. In particular, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the many red-tape reduction benefits that are contained in this bill.

The bill removes the requirement for a licence to interfere for diversion of a watercourse on a mine site, instead relying on conditioning under the environmental authority. Currently, a mine operator needs approval under both the Water Act and the Environmental Protection Act to manage watercourse diversions. This bill removes the need for an approval under the Water Act, as each mine's environmental authority can be conditioned to adequately address the management of watercourse diversions. This will apply to all resource activities, saving industry time and money whilst still upholding strong environmental standards. Other red-tape reduction benefits included the removal of the requirement under the Water Act to obtain a riverine protection permit, as this will be managed under the Vegetation Management Act. This means that potential duplication in applying for a permit to remove vegetation in a watercourse, lake or spring can be avoided.

The bill amends section 20 of the Water Act 2000 to allow additional low-risk activities to be undertaken without a water entitlement. Low-risk activities are those that pose minimal risk to the sustainable management of the water resource if undertaken without a resource entitlement. These include traditional or cultural purposes, as the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier just spoke about; minor consumptive take for activities such as dairy or weed wash down—and as the member for Glass House, I acknowledge and applaud this move by the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines as a number of my constituents, particularly dairy farmers in my electorate, will applaud this amendment; the take of water by a constructing authority or water service provider to operate public showers or toilets; and the take of water for firefighting, including the testing of firefighting equipment. That is an eminently sensible amendment. Further amendments to the Water Act will provide far greater flexibility when publishing public notices about water planning and water management activities.

This typically would involve publishing a notice in a newspaper, publishing a gazette notice or, in some instances, placing information online or announcements on the radio. With the decline in newspaper readership, increasing uptake of alternative information resources and the fact that owners of land do not necessarily reside on that land or even in that state, these are not necessarily the most effective methods for informing interested parties. Since the inclusion of the publishing requirements, a vast array of electronic communication methodologies have been adopted in common usage by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Department of Energy and Water Supply and my Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and by the community at large. The bill amends the definition of 'publish' to provide the departments with the flexibility to tailor the notification method to the intended audience, easing the regulatory burden on departments and clients by enabling the most effective methods of publication to be used.

This bill offers a further substantial contribution to the LNP government's commitment to cut red tape and regulation by 20 per cent. These benefits are in addition to the green-tape reduction amendments that I brought before the House last year which have recently commenced. The green-tape reduction reforms have changed the face of environmental licensing in Queensland and are

estimated to save up to \$20 million in costs of approvals of which over \$18 million are savings to business. I am pleased to say that obtaining environmental approvals in Queensland is now more simple and affordable in order to support strong economic growth without compromising environmental standards. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (5.11 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak on the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I congratulate the minister on this piece of legislation. I also congratulate my committee whose members worked extremely hard on this complex piece of legislation. We hid it under a bushel so that no-one knew about it. It was only on the table for two months. We only had hearings. We only published it on websites. There was a devastatingly devious and dastardly plan that the minister let no-one know about it. We wrote to AgForce and SEQ Catchments and wildlife funds so that they could come and make representations before us. That is how sneaky we were. We actually let people in to talk about it. It was a terribly sneaky piece of legislation.

On a serious matter, the member for Bundamba raised the issue of the Floods Commission of Inquiry report. I have read the 607 pages of the Floods Commission of Inquiry report. On the last page is a reference to levees and how no-one actually manages them. Since we have been in government I have spoken to the minister and I have brought up in speeches that levees need to be managed.

Mr Cripps: And what have we got?

Mr RICKUSS: We have levees managed. Thank you very much. As the member for Bundamba said, responses to the floods commission report could have all been put together in legislation, but I am very happy to have the levees rushed through—if what we are actually doing is rushing through the levees. It is two years after the devastating floods that the member for Bundamba was talking about. That is hardly rushing through levees. The committee recommends that the Department of Natural Resources and Mines continues to monitor pre-existing levees which will not be affected by the provisions of this bill to ensure that these levees do not endanger landholders and infrastructure. The reason that this recommendation was made is that the dozers, backhoes and Katos have been working and the levees are being built right now.

This legislation will come into effect on 1 January 2014. The government's response is very relevant. The government will, as part of its implementation of a regulatory framework for the management of levees, establish a monitoring system for the approval of new levee construction and modification of existing levees. The monitoring system will also include the ability for the government to identify existing levees that currently or as a consequence of their failure may pose a threat to the population or have significant potential economic impacts. The only thing I can say to the minister is that, after the words 'consequence of their failure', 'or impact' should be put in place simply for the fact that some of the levees that I have seen being built will actually impact on main roads. It will actually push water onto main roads which could make it dangerous for passing motorists. Flood plains are flood plains. Let us manage them as flood plains. That is really what is required.

I was quite amused by the member for Bundamba. She is complaining about an omnibus bill, but then she wants a flood omnibus bill. My family and I have been riparian landholders for a long time. There were recommendations about Slacks Creek. I spent my youth in Slacks Creek. Since then I have owned land at Cedar Creek and Lockyer Creek. It is extremely important that we manage riparian areas properly. That is what this bill is about. The Vegetation Management Act already covers riparian permits. Let us be serious. WWF and the member for Bundamba at times were a bit like the drunk who uses a light pole. They do not actually use the statistics they quote to shed light on anything; they use it to try to prop up their argument.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr RICKUSS: I will take that interjection.

Ms Trad: Yes, you take that interjection.

Mr RICKUSS: What did you say?

Mrs MILLER: I rise to a point of order. I find the member's language, about a drunk using a light pole, to be personally offensive and I ask it to be withdrawn.

Mr RICKUSS: I am more than happy to withdraw.

Mrs MILLER: Have you ruled?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): The comments have been withdrawn.

Mr RICKUSS: This Saturday night I hope there are no drunks using light poles.

Mrs MILLER: I rise to a point of order. Just before I said that I found that language to be personally offensive to me the member withdrew it and now he has repeated it. I still find that language personally offensive. It is unparliamentary, unbecoming to this House, and I would ask that he consider withdrawing.

Mr RICKUSS: I will withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has already withdrawn.

Mr RICKUSS: There was conversation about riparian landholders in relation to trees and vegetation. Unfortunately all vegetation in creeks is not good vegetation. One of my neighbours' aunties had planted moreton bay fig, jacaranda, moreton bay fig, jacaranda, moreton bay fig, jacaranda for a strip of a kilometre along the Lockyer Creek. After this flood event three of those trees slumped in. The hole would be an arced area from me to Madam Deputy Speaker. It was an enormous hole with three or four enormous trees slumped into the creek. Part of it is vegetation, part of it is management. I have a creek bank that has limited vegetation, but it is on the inside of a curve; it does not slump.


Turbidity in the water was brought up. This is an issue that I would like to raise. I am glad to see that the Minister for Energy and Water Supply, as well as the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, is in the chamber. This is a great opportunity to bring up the issue of the turbidity of water. I am sure that both the ministers realise that it is not only the responsibility of landholders to supply Brisbane with water. They need assistance to manage some of the damage that has been done to riparian areas over the 150 years of white settlement. The areas of red cedar along the Brisbane River, the Logan River, the Albert River and the Lockyer Creek were logged out within the first 30 years of white settlement. A lot of these would have been growing on riparian land. There are two million ratepayers in the South-East Queensland corner who benefit from landholders managing the riparian area properly.

This is a great opportunity for me to highlight to the two ministers that these landholders need assistance. I know some assistance is given through SEQ Catchments, but I want to highlight the issue: the landholders need assistance. There might be a couple of thousand riparian landholders on waterways such as the Lockyer, the Bremer, the Brisbane, the Warill, the Logan, the Albert and a few others. The Albert River is undammed. Probably the Wolffdene Dam should have been built on it, but we will not go there. There are probably several thousand landholders who need some assistance in managing their riparian land. The people who benefit from that good management are the two million residents of South-East Queensland who use the water for drinking, washing their cars, watering their gardens and so on. This is a great opportunity to look to the future and work out how to manage that riparian land, with assistance from Seqwater, the Department of Natural Resources and the appropriate funding of groups such as SEQ Catchments.

The recommendations that the committee put together are extremely good ones. The committee recommended that the government continue to monitor the sediment levels, water quality and environmental impacts on downstream ecosystems. I am glad to see that the minister has wholeheartedly taken on that recommendation. Healthy Waterways and other bodies are very involved in that sort of thing. They are funded not only through the department but also through the Council of Mayors. The whole South-East Queensland community takes those issues very seriously.

The committee invites the minister to advise whether he will establish a small committee to be administered by the department, as a forum representing landholders and other stakeholders in relation to the conversion of gas to water wells and inspection wells. Admittedly, as we said in the report, I am not sure whether that should be the responsibility of the GasFields Commission or DNR. Given the minister's good working relationship with the Minister for State Development, the Hon. Deputy Premier, he will solve that problem as well.

This is very complex legislation. I will not speak about the Great Barrier Reef recommendations. Some of my northern colleagues are more than excited at having the opportunity to talk about some of the things that will happen there. This is a great piece of legislation. I am glad to see that the recommendations of the flood commission have started to fall into place. I am sure this will continue.

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (5.22 pm): I wish to thank the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Hon. Andrew Cripps, for supporting this bill and my fellow members of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee for giving close consideration to the many aspects of the bill. I commend the minister for helping industry through his introduction of this bill, which was a commitment that the government made.

The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 amends a number of acts within the Natural Resources and Mines portfolio to streamline various operational land, water and petroleum associated provisions. The bill streamlines various operational land and water management provisions, establishing various administrative and operational efficiencies, which will benefit both government and stakeholders. This government has committed to work with the people of Queensland. Of course, this is simply doing what this government set out to do where it can, to help rejuvenate the four pillars for economic recovery.

The bill makes changes to the Water Act 2000 to implement recommendations from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry's final report relating to levees. I am sure that South-East Queenslanders will have been eager to see those recommendations implemented following a recent run of extreme wet seasons. Unfortunately, there seems to be an exception to that: the member for Bundamba would like the people of South-East Queensland to wait longer in order to present a separate bill, rather than do what this government has done, which is to answer the requests of the people in relation to the Floods Commission of Inquiry report.

The bill contains seven major policy objectives—'policy' is the operative word; it is something that those opposite appear to have forgotten about—that support and implement the government's commitments. Since forming government we have outlined two six-month plans as part of our commitment to be an open and accountable government for all Queenslanders. The policy objectives are: to progress the recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry; to reduce red tape and regulation, which is another commitment of the LNP Campbell Newman government; to facilitate the conversion of water authorities to two-tier cooperative structures; and to clarify the safety regime that applies to pipelines carrying produced water. Stakeholders raised concerns about safety requirements during the committee's public hearing held on 10 August 2012 for its examination of the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Bill 2012. Another objective is to listen to our communities and ensure that they are part of the development, giving them a true voice. We also wanted to clarify an amendment made to the Regional Vegetation Management Code 2009 and extend timelines for the interim assessment process for water and sewerage issues for South-East Queensland.

During the examination of the bill, the committee looked at some key policy areas. While some of this only involved provisions to realise administrative efficiencies and operational efficiencies, they are very important to both government and stakeholders. Other issues raised in this bill include amendments to the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991, which will streamline a number of transfer related issues on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. The amendments will also improve governance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land trusts. I believe the member for Bundamba supported that. The committee had previously examined the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Bill 2012 and we know the importance of this issue. It is the first real step in providing land tenure in Indigenous communities that have been left untouched for too long, holding them back in part from developing their towns with all the opportunities we expect across this state to attract investment.

Amendments to the Land Act 1994 will repeal the provisions dealing with future conservation areas so that lessees facing renewal of their grazing leases under the State Rural Leasehold Land Strategy will enjoy greater security of tenure because the changes remove doubts about lease renewals. That was imposed by those wanting to put the environment before people, which is an old culture that has been replaced, finally, under this government by a true balance of sustained co-existence of the environment and productivity of the land. A number of other minor improvements to the strategy will also be achieved, including the ability to grant short extensions of up to two years to prevent rural leases from expiring pending the outcome of the parliamentary inquiry into the future and continued relevance of government land tenure across Queensland. This part of the bill will address a long-standing issue that has hung over many landholders in relation to their long-term tenure arrangements and the available uses. It can be tough enough for some operators to deal with seasonal conditions, such as they are experiencing this year, market values and day-to-day operational issues without the threat of losing valuable land.

Amendments to the Land Title Act 1994 will allow for the creation of statutory easements, providing significant savings in the development of small lots, as well as facilitating a range of housing affordability solutions. This will help those parties in the construction industry, which is one of the four pillars of the economy, and will help local governments—this government said we would work with local governments—with their town plans. That is very relevant to my electorate of Thuringowa.

A range of amendments to the Water Act 2000 will reduce red tape and streamline processes. For example, the bill extends the stated period of all currently issued water licences until 30 June 2111. I know that the member for Bundamba was most upset with this part of the bill. Today, plans for land management are far more comprehensive. Extending the term of the water licence will result in significant government savings as departmental officers will no longer have to process licence renewals.

The amendments to the Petroleum Act 1923 will streamline the process for conversion of unutilised petroleum wells to water supply bores. However, these amendments will not negate the need to obtain a water entitlement or works approvals if required or address water quality issues that may arise from using former gas wells. We have a situation now where the offshoot to some of these wells is that they will be an asset to landholders who can now make good use of the water source and improve their infrastructure and, in most cases, the productivity of their land. That was lacking under the previous government.

The committee has proposed that the minister consider establishing a small committee, administered by his department, as a forum for groups representing landholders and other stakeholders to work cooperatively through any issues that emerge with the conversion of gas wells to water and inspection bores and to ensure that the resolution of emerging issues regarding well conversions will be an ongoing role for the GasFields Commission. I am sure the minister will take that into account.

I turn to the issue of consultation which the member for Bundamba brought up. According to the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the draft bill was not widely disseminated for consultation as there were no major deviations in terms of policy intent when it comes to the amendments contained in the bill. The department further explained to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee that a number of amendments contained in the bill are minor and technical in nature and are premised on reducing red tape and streamlining processes to benefit stakeholders. Although the consultation was not as wide as some submitters thought it should be, it was explained by the department that it was not considered necessary due to the amendments being sought and the fundamental legislation principles not being breached.

I turn to the removal of provisions relating to future conservation areas. The provisions relate to future conservation areas on state rural leasehold land and other provisions designed to achieve closer settlement of agricultural areas. WWF expressed concern about the provisions. They believe that it is a fundamental purpose of the Land Act to determine the highest and best use of state land. In some cases this will be pastoral production and in others nature conservation. They believe it is critical that the agency administering the Nature Conservation Act have a formal role in helping the chief executive determine issues related to section 159 of the Land Act. WWF believe that the removal of that role as proposed by the pending amendments undermines the purpose of the Land Act. WWF also stated at the committee's public hearing—

Removing it, sorry, will now mean that the government, in order to expand the protected area estate—

It is as though it is something it owns—

will have to stand in the marketplace in order to expand the protected area.

I thought this would help, as they stated, to determine the highest and best use of state land. WWF continued—

So removing that provision I suppose removes the ability for the government to forewarn property owners or leaseholders that have areas of the state that have got very high biodiversity value. So it really doesn't make any sense to us what the benefit is in removing that provision. Basically all it does is just says to that property owner at some point in the future, whatever that time frame is, your property will be required.

That is how these people think. That is their view. I believe that the landholder will now not have that threat automatically hanging over their tenure and will be able to run and operate their property with that in mind.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, GBRMPA, also asked that the provisions be retained. It asked that the future conservation area provision, which allows the reservation of rural leasehold land and its acquisition in the future for the protected area estate at the time the lease is renewed, be retained as a tool to assist the Queensland government to protect ecosystem functions


that may be critical for the health of the Great Barrier Reef. GBRMPA commented in the hearing that they believed that landholders had become much more responsible in matters of land degradation and as a whole were now taking the sustainability of the environment as part of their day-to-day management very seriously.

In their submission AgForce Queensland supported the removal of the provisions which they advised had caused anxiety and uncertainty for its members. AgForce submitted that the future conservation areas policy implemented in 2008 had created enormous angst amongst lessees by providing a power to allow the environment department to not renew leases on some of the best cared for areas of leasehold estate. AgForce stated that it has always maintained that the properties that are identified for future conservation purposes should be paid for by the government on the open market and so supports this move to provide more certainty for lessees. It believes these landholders have had to wait too long for this sort of security for no just reason other than others wanting to lock up land with no further management of it in mind.

The committee asked the department to respond to the concerns raised in the submissions concerning the removal of the future conservation area provisions. The department advised that the removal of the provisions will not affect the ability to resume conservation areas as there are other measures to achieve this outcome. The department's advice was that the administrative arrangement which will be in place still allow the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to assess conservation values on rural leasehold land at any time during the term of a lease, rather than at lease renewal, and to negotiate a purchase price with the lessee if a decision is made to buy all or part of the lease land for conservation purposes.

The committee noted the concerns raised by WWF and GBRMPA about the proposed removal of the future conservation area provisions of the Land Act 1994. The committee is satisfied however, based on advice provided by the department, that the removal of these provisions will not prevent the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection from assessing the conservation values of rural leasehold land. The committee also notes that land management agreements will continue to be a tool for the sustainable management of leasehold lands.

In conclusion, the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 is a necessary piece of legislation that will bring a range of minor and important changes to various acts in the Natural Resources and Mines portfolio. By cutting red tape and amending outdated or unclear legislation this bill allows for the streamlining of land and water management services throughout the state and we will see the benefits flowing—pardon the pun—into communities as a result. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak to the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. This bill makes amendments to a significant number of acts. Parts of this bill are of particular interest to me because of my previous career as a property valuer. I will mainly address my comments to those parts of the bill.

There are number of amendments relating to the Land Valuation Act 2010. This primarily deals with the assessment of property values for statutory purposes such as rating and land tax purposes. The bill will amend the definition of a market survey report to provide flexibility for a report to include not only sales within the local government area as currently but also include sales from adjoining local authority areas and, in some cases, from further afield depending on the type of property for which the report is being prepared.

There is nothing more frustrating to a property valuer than being denied the opportunity to use appropriate sales evidence on the basis of an arbitrary line drawn on a map. It leads to an inappropriate report which has further consequences when decisions are based on that report. I note that AgForce in its submission supported the amendment, particularly given the lack of current comparable sales evidence for some types of large properties.

A number of other amendments to the Land Valuation Act 2010 relate to modernising processes for the delivery of statutory valuations to the landowner—for example, the capacity for it to be delivered electronically. The process for lodging objections by the landholder to the assessed statutory valuation will also be amended to ensure that objections must be lodged on an individual basis for each valuation with the appropriate supporting data. This same process will also be required for lodgement of an appeal to the Land Court. This amendment is designed to streamline the process, saving both time and money for the department as well as the landholder.

Civil litigation has been an ongoing issue for valuers over many years. This bill will amend the act to provide immunity from civil liability to chairpersons, who are usually valuers, who are appointed to oversee the objection process. The lack of immunity for an act or omission made honestly and

without negligence in the carrying out of their role has made many highly qualified persons reluctant to take up the role of chairperson for the objections process. I note that both AgForce and the SEQ catchments in their submissions have supported these amendments.

The proposed amendment to the Land Title Act 1994 for a new mechanism for the creation of statutory easements over small terrace type housing lots containing buildings with shared common walls is a very different mechanism to that currently practised. The current situation is that easements over common party walls are surveyed 'on the ground', drawn on a plan and registered on the title of each property affected by either a benefit or burden of the easement. This proposed new mechanism will register the easements 'as constructed' and will refer to the building as erected rather than a line drawn on a plan. This is a significant shift away from the traditional way of documenting an easement.

Departmental staff provided advice that this process had been developed in conjunction with the construction industry and that government documents providing guidance to surveyors in the preparation and registration of survey plans, along with the range of information sessions, will provide support to surveyors in the preparation of the new form of statutory easement. This amendment should result in a significant reduction in red tape both for the construction industry and also reduced conveyancing costs for prospective purchasers, although I do believe that some of the 'old timers' in the property industry will be somewhat bemused by the different form of registering party wall easements.

Further amendments to the Land Title Act 1994 allow for the identification, surveying and dedication of a watercourse or creek with the ownership vested in the state and a number of other minor amendments to streamline processes relating to the land titles. I note that SEQ Catchments, the Cape York Land Council and the Queensland Farmers Federation were supportive of the various amendments.

Amendments to the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 will amend the process for the taking of land or an easement by a resuming authority for public purposes in the case where there is agreement between the parties and there are no objections, and I note the comments of the minister. My experience has shown that often the process of acquiring land or an interest in land for public purposes can be a long and drawn out process.

In the case where there is agreement, it will be possible to streamline the process, taking out some parts of the process which under these circumstances are no longer needed. It is noted that this shortened process will not apply where native title or Indigenous interests are involved, thus protecting the right of those people to exercise their objection. This shortened process will allow constructing authorities to move much more quickly on the construction for which the resumption has taken place.

There were a significant number of submissions made to the committee in relation to amendments to the Land Act 1994. One of the areas which could be considered most controversial is the amendment to repeal the future conservation area provisions which allow the reservation of rural leasehold land, and its acquisition in the future, for the protected area estate at the time the lease is renewed. Again, I note the minister has addressed this issue in his speech.

AgForce in their submission probably best expressed the angst among lessees, particularly those who had expended time and money caring for and maintaining their lease. They could never be certain whether at the expiry of the lease they would be required to give up all or part of the lease for a conservation area. This made it extremely difficult for long-term financial and management planning for the lease and certainly gave very little incentive for leaseholders to expend money and time in maintaining and improving the quality of the lease and increasing the productivity.

Departmental staff advised that the difference between the new process as proposed and the old process is that an assessment for a conservation area is not now linked to the lease renewal process but can in fact take place at any time during the term of the lease. If an area is identified as being of high conservation value during the term of the lease, rather than at the renewal the leaseholder has the opportunity to make business decisions based on that information for the balance of the term of the lease. In addition, if an area is identified as a conservation area which is required, the government through the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection will negotiate a purchase of the required area, not necessarily at the time of the renewal of the lease.

The LNP government has given a commitment as part of the acceptance of the relevant recommendations of the Commission of Audit report to increase productivity in the public sector but also encourage increasing productivity in the private sector to improve the financial status of the state.

As anyone in business knows and understands, perception of future conditions and risks plays a large part in decisions made in terms of investment and future management programs. This amendment to the act will give to leaseholders the certainty to go ahead and improve productivity on their leasehold land with the knowledge that at the end of the term their lease will be renewed and, if areas are required for conservation purposes, they will be compensated for the time, effort and money they have put into the care and maintenance of that part of the lease which is required.

This amendment is an exercise in the application of common sense, allowing leaseholders to get on with improving their productivity but still giving the capacity to the state to acquire areas for the protected area estate. Further the cost involved in acquiring these areas is an incentive to ensure that the appropriate maintenance and management of the conservation area is carried out.

The other area which has resulted in a significant number of submissions to the committee related to the removal of the need to apply for a riverine protection permit under the Water Act 2000. These submissions range from dissenting to supporting. In essence, the amendment removes the need to have a riverine protection permit for the clearing of—


Mr Rickuss: Do you think we got the balance right there, Anne?

Mrs MADDERN: Quite possibly. The amendment removes the need to have a riverine protection permit for the clearing of vegetation along a river or watercourse under the Water Act 2000, but this activity is still regulated under the Vegetation Management Act. Therefore, clearing of vegetation along a watercourse will not be permitted for remnant vegetation. It is further noted that the removal of vegetation will not be allowed within a 50-metre buffer zone alongside rivers and streams in important reef areas—a significant portion of Queensland.

Evidence provided by departmental staff indicates that only one riverine protection permit was issued in the 2011-12 financial year for the removal of vegetation above the surface, and I note the minister gave a quite detailed explanation of those permits. So, despite the suggestions by the member for South Brisbane and the likes of the World Wildlife Fund Australia, the removal of the requirement for a permit is likely to have little impact. All of the people I know who hold riparian land are horrified at the thought of losing the banks through erosion and will take every step they can to ensure that banks remain vegetated and stable. This was particularly obvious during the serious floods of 2011-12 and 2013. The management and maintenance of watercourses has become a key focus of the community who understand the negative impact of erosion.

In my local area I acknowledge the Tiaro Landcare Group and the Greater Mary Association and other groups like them whose members physically get dirt under their fingernails planting trees, fencing out the banks of the Mary River and associated watercourses, and generally working to maintain riverbanks. Like so much of the rest of the bill, this amendment is really a streamlining process and the removal of red tape, albeit in this instance only a relatively small piece of red tape.

Having been privileged to be part of the committee which perused the bill, listened to public and private briefings and noted the submissions received, I would like to commend the minister for his work and that of the department in preparing so many sensible red-tape reduction amendments. Although each is relatively minor, the cumulative effect is significant. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (5.46 pm): I rise tonight to speak in the affirmative to the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. Again I commend the minister and his department for supporting the people of Queensland by streamlining legislation. I also commend the committee who spent many meetings on these amendments.


The agricultural sector in North Queensland will welcome this government's initiative in cutting red tape by extending the expiry date of water licences. News that licences once renewed will remain in force until 2111 will be good news for farmers looking for ways to economise in a difficult market, particularly given an unusually dry wet season this year.

Mr Rickuss: You got a couple of licences up there, have you?

Mr TROUT: We absolutely do. A continuing issue on the Tablelands is water licences. This government has taken another step in reducing red tape and allowing businesses to proceed without interruption from the administrative process. While the assessment processes for renewing licences expend time, energy and therefore money from both the licensor and the licensee, most licences are approved without variation and consequently this expenditure is merely an impediment.

The main reason for this is that the role of water licence renewals and the implementation of natural resource management policy is now being undertaken by the water resource planning process. Water resource plans and resource operations plans currently cover about 90 per cent of Queensland. The draft water resource plan for our Wet Tropics region in Far North Queensland was released on 28 March 2013. Once a plan is in place, the water licence renewal cycle is no longer required to implement natural resource management policy aimed at the sustainable management and allocation of water. Maintaining the renewal process is merely duplication. Excessive regulatory obligations prevent businesses concentrating on the production and provision of services that provide employment and income.

I applaud all initiatives of this government that reduce red tape for industry and business. For too long our economic mainstays have been burdened by overadministration. The Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 amends the Water Act 2000 to implement the recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. Although my electorate remained relatively unscathed by the devastating floods further south in the state, very few constituents were not affected in some way by the hardships faced by family and friends in the flood stricken areas. The news in June last year that the Queensland government had committed to implement all 123 recommendations relating directly to the state was well received. Consistency in policy and regulatory framework governing the levees will go a long way to ensuring that development and control of levees is based on sound risk management and best practice in flood plain management. I commend this bill to the House.


 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (5.50 pm): This bill is another example of a government getting on with the job of simplifying regulation so we can have an economy here in Queensland which is growing. Governments should be getting out of the way and making things easier for people, in particular, primary producers, and there are a lot of them in my electorate.

I want to touch on a couple of issues tonight. A lot is dealt with in this omnibus bill. The provisions to extend the term of water licences will be welcomed by those primary producers in my electorate who have water licences. Giving them security of tenure for their water to 2111 will be very welcomed and I thank the minister for bringing that initiative forward.

One of the other issues I want to touch on briefly is the repeal of the future conservation area provisions. I understand that these provisions have never been used but their very existence provides an element of uncertainty about the tenure for leasehold holders. It is one of the unintended consequences of provisions put into legislation which might have noble meaning but do nothing except undermine the certainty for pastoral and grazing leaseholders at a time when undermining their tenure is the last thing that governments should be doing. As someone who has previously worked in a bank and financed rural leasehold land, I know that it is these types of provisions which create uncertainty and doubt and make it harder for banks and other financiers to lend to leaseholders. It is great to see that this minister is taking a common-sense approach and getting rid of these provisions.

The other thing I want to touch on briefly is the regulation of levees. Like the member for Lockyer, my region has been affected by flooding this year. No doubt there will be landholders who will be seeking to take advantage of provisions introduced here tonight in relation to levees, and I note that they were recommendations of the Queensland government commission of inquiry into the floods of 2010 and 2011.

I commend the minister for his common-sense, can-do approach. He has now brought a number of bills to this place which seek to free up the Queensland economy so that we can go for growth to get this economy moving again to pay back the debt left to us by those members opposite. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (5.52 pm): I rise to speak to the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The policy objectives of the bill are to progress the recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry that relate to levees, reduce red tape and regulation, facilitate the conversion of water authorities to a two-tier operational structure, address concerns raised by stakeholders during the parliamentary committee hearing into the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012 regarding pipelines carrying produced water, clarify an amendment made to the Regional Vegetation Management Code in 2009, extend time lines for the interim assessment process for water and sewerage issues for the South-East Queensland distributor-retailers and their owner councils to 1 March 2014 and implement a number of other miscellaneous amendments to address operational issues necessary to provide for continued effective implementation of a range of legislation.

I believe that this is good legislation as it will remove red tape, especially with regard to farm management, rural properties and vegetation management. It is good to see the removal of the riverine protection permits under the Water Act, and I think this is very important. These permits have been a thorn in the side of landowners, especially when they wish to clear vegetation in some of these areas. Honourable members need to remember that monsoonal rains fall in these areas and they need to consider the magnitude of those falls and the amount of thick regrowth of vegetation that grows within those creek systems, river systems and gullies. I give the example of Homestead where the whole railway track was destroyed during one of the recent floods because the vegetation growing in the creek that built up over the years had turned it into a form of dam and it filled to the point that it took out the railway track. It was a similar situation in Pentland where about 10 homes were flooded as a result of the vegetation that had built up in Betts Creek.

This bill will provide these landowners and local councils with an opportunity to clear vegetation in those riverine areas and creeks without being tied up by red tape. I do have to acknowledge that this is not about clearing remnant vegetation because it comes under the Vegetation Management Act. This is about doing something constructive and positive without being tied up with red tape.


I also believe that the repeal of the future conservation area provisions is a good move. I know that landowners were very concerned that their best land could be locked up. When I say 'best land', I am talking about the best land that they utilise, and they need to access that best land. We have seen legislation like the wild rivers legislation where the landowners were kicked out of the river system, which contained the prime land that they use. The very people who look after those river systems are the landowners. Likewise with those proposed conservation areas, the very people who appreciate them are the landowners. The best prime grazing area to utilise is probably those conservation areas. I believe this is good legislation.

I turn to the provision that will facilitate the conversion of water authorities to a two-tier cooperative structure. I feel this is also a good move. There is always a concern with regard to a corporate system of water delivery, and I use SunWater as an example. In the example of the Dimbulah-Mutchilba relift water irrigators, there is a concern that the price has increased by up to \$18 a megalitre when the LNP government promised that it would only go up by \$2 a megalitre plus CPI. What concerns me with regard to those irrigators—and I can see that this is a good thing—is that the government is giving those irrigators the opportunity to take on some form of cooperative arrangement and take ownership of the channels and run-down channels. However, they still have to fight for—and the minister might be able to clarify this—a percentage of water from the corporate provider such as SunWater. I will use the example of the Tablelands. The infrastructure costs \$1,000 a megalitre to provide water to the Cairns area, whereas it costs about \$40 a megalitre to provide it to the Tablelands irrigators. Therefore, it is going to be more viable for the corporate—even if it is sold—to provide that water where there is more money. My big concern in relation to these relift irrigators, who are now paying up to \$18 more a megalitre when they were promised a capped increase of CPI plus \$2, is that they are being given the opportunity to take ownership. In the Bjelke-Petersen government water was a public utility and was delivered at cost price or below what it cost the government.

It was then foreseeable that if you could provide water at affordable rates then farmers would invest in water infrastructure and there would be flow-on effects to communities and money would also flow back to the government by way of land sales and stamp duty. Water should be delivered at or below the cost of production to give landowners a chance to be viable and productive. If agricultural production is to be doubled over 40 years, we need to ensure that water is affordable to those irrigators.

My concern is that this has given the opportunity for those landowners to take ownership, but if they do they will own a run-down system. They will still have to fight for the allocation for all those irrigators but if they do not opt in the government will say, 'We are kicking the guts out of you, because we have increased prices by up to \$18, but you had the opportunity to take ownership yourselves.' This is a big concern.

I do commend this initiative because we want to see management in all different areas localised and removed from the state. At the same time, I believe that farmers want water delivered below the cost of delivery and back in public ownership, not corporatised. Water should never be a commodity; it should be provided and delivered to be utilised for the benefit of Queensland.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (6.02 pm): I rise to make a contribution to debate on the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. As has been suggested previously, this is a large and complex omnibus bill. It amends 18 pieces of legislation in multiple sections. It proposes significant changes in policy direction, and it has been undertaken without adequate and meaningful consultation with stakeholders.

Its predecessor the Economic Development Bill, introduced by the minister's mentor, the Deputy Premier, had only nine business days for consultation. It appears that the minister here tonight is much more of a soft touch. He actually allowed 21 working days for public comment and feedback on this significant bill. Obviously the purposes of the bill are manyfold. Some of it is quite reasonable and necessary; other amendments are simply indefensible.

We have come to know that when the LNP introduces an omnibus bill there is a particular strategy. It is the LNP strategy to obfuscate the issue by inserting unpalatable changes amongst important and routine changes in the hope that Queenslanders do not pick it up. They are again treating Queenslanders like mugs. The particularly unpalatable part of this bill has already been outlined by the shadow minister for natural resources, my colleague the member for Bundamba, but I do want to add my concerns regarding the removal of riverine protection permits from the Water Act 2000.

Riverine protection is critical to water quality, flood mitigation, biodiversity and the health of our economy. When we are speaking about the removal of riverine protection permits, those opposite assert that they are streamlining the process because there is sufficient protection under the Vegetation Management Act. That is an issue in contention. The only way we can actually resolve it is to have facts before us. So when the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee held public hearings I did want to get to the bottom of whether or not it was factual—whether there was evidence to support the assertion that the Vegetation Management Act had sufficient regard to riverine protection so as to ensure that riverbanks in this state would be protected. The submission of the World Wildlife Fund states—

The explanatory notes characterises the change as removing an overlap with approvals required under the Vegetation Management Act 1999 (VMA)—so that “all clearing/destruction of vegetation is regulated under one framework in Queensland”.

This characterisation of the proposed amendments is inaccurate. Whilst there is some area of overlap, there are many instances where approval for clearing of watercourse vegetation requires a Water Act approval but not an approval under the VMA. Therefore, the amendment means that many watercourses will now be open to vegetation clearing.

...

WWF conservatively estimates (based on Queensland Government data on watercourses and protected vegetation) that around 100 000 kilometres of waterways will now be able to be cleared. About 60 000 kilometres will be open for clearing in the Fitzroy catchment alone. Of the remaining 40 000 kilometres a large proportion is contained in the South East Queensland catchments.

That is what the World Wildlife Fund contends. During the public hearing I did ask Mr Hinrichsen, the executive director of water policy from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, whether that assertion was correct—whether he could provide for the committee the analysis done by the department to ascertain whether there were riverbanks in Queensland that would not come under the Vegetation Management Act 1999. His response was—

I am not familiar with the figures that I am aware Mr Hoobin presented this morning.

For the benefit of the House, Mr Hoobin was the representative from WWF who presented himself to the inquiry. Mr Hinrichsen continued—

I have not seen that report. As to the basis of those figures, certainly, our department has not done an analysis of that type to identify the length of watercourse that does have remnant vegetation versus that that does not have remnant vegetation.

I put it to the minister: how can this government claim that the removal of riverine protection permits will have a low or negligible impact on the protection of riparian vegetation in this state? The department, by its own admission, has not done the analysis. It has not done the work. I issue a challenge to the minister and to the government to provide the parliament and the people of Queensland with the scientific, factual evidence that will support their claim that the removal of riverine protection permits will not have an impact on the health of waterways throughout Queensland, will not have an effect on the quality of water in South-East Queensland and will not have an effect on the Great Barrier Reef or Moreton Bay.

We in South-East Queensland well remember how close residents came to losing water earlier this year after the flooding from ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald. We were a mere three hours away from losing water. The reason for this was the turbidity of the water due to silt, soil erosion and run-off because of the lack of vegetation. Removing the riverine protection permits from the Water Act 2000—

Government members interjected.

Ms TRAD: I take those interjections from those members opposite. If they listen to my speech, they will actually hear evidence provided by scientists—actual water scientists—on how that claim is made. All I can suggest is that members hold on to their horses and listen intently and I will give them the evidence provided to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee on exactly that fact. Removing the riverine protection permits from the Water Act 2000 will not flood proof Queensland. It will not build a resilient environment or economy. This is simply a disastrous move for South-East Queensland.

Yesterday I was privileged enough, as other members of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee were, to be privy to a presentation of a significant body of research from Healthy Waterways. For those members who do not know, Healthy Waterways is not an environmental organisation. It is an organisation of scientists who seek to help government, water utilities, industry and communities ensure best possible practice so waterways can be used by all—used and enjoyed by all. Dr James Udy, Chief Scientist at Healthy Waterways, and Professor Stuart Bunn, the Director of Australian Rivers Institute from Griffith University, are eminent men in their profession and their research was compelling. Legacy clearing throughout South-East Queensland has resulted in approximately 50 per cent of the 48,000 kilometres of streams in our area to have poor riparian conditions. These are legacy issues from colonial days. This means that our banks have little resistance, turbidity will be more intense and river flows, particularly during floods, will absolutely have more energy.

At a time when all Queenslanders should be hypersensitive to any suggestion of weakening protection of our riverbanks and subsequently the quality of our water, this government is doing just that: making it much easier for riparian vegetation to be removed without a permit, without a care. The economics of this is just mind-bogglingly stupid.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms TRAD: Obviously, member for Mudgeeraba, that was a very insightful and, I think, characteristic of your character comment. Thank you very much. Let us have a look at the economics.

Ms BATES: I rise to a point of order. I find the member and her comments offensive and I ask that she withdraw them unequivocally.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. The economics that go into treating water quality, the economics that go into the impact of flood mitigation on the environment and infrastructure and the economics around sediment protection in terms of important environmental assets, such as Moreton Bay and the Great Barrier Reef, are compelling.

To take the issue of water quality, yesterday the research presented an example of New York City and its drinking water dilemma from 1998. The city was given a choice in terms of how to deal with the growing problem of water quality and security of supply. Its choice was to make billions of dollars worth of investment in new water treatment facilities or to make an investment on purchasing and restoring natural ecosystems. New York invested \$1 billion in purchasing and restoring natural ecosystems and revegetating those ecosystems. What it did by doing that was save in real terms \$6 billion to \$8 billion in terms of water infrastructure capital costs and millions per annum in terms of maintenance and running costs. The economics are compelling.

In terms of Moreton Bay, Moreton Bay, like the Great Barrier Reef, contributes billions to our economy and the result of the 2011 floods was devastating on that environment, with sediment and nutrient plumes causing significant damage to the environment and impacting on the local economy. According to the World Wildlife Fund and leading scientists and advocates in the area of environmental protection, the removal of the riverine protection permits, as I said, will leave 100,000 kilometres of Queensland riverbanks without protection. Sixty per cent of that will be in the Great Barrier Reef in terms of the Fitzroy River catchment system, but the other 40 per cent in terms of South-East Queensland will be going to the Great Barrier Reef and the Fitzroy catchment particularly.

This is an area that is not covered by the Vegetation Management Act, and the minister well knows that. This means that around 60,000 kilometres of riverbanks along the Fitzroy River catchment will now be unprotected, will now not be subject to the application of a riverine protection permit in order to remove vegetation.

The Fitzroy River catchment is the second largest contributor of sediment into the Great Barrier Reef. Earlier the member for Thuringowa referenced GBRMPA in his comments—that is, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority—and it is very concerned. It registered very significant concern in relation to the removal of the riverine protection permits, and I have to support it in its concern. In fact, it was so concerned that it did provide the committee with documents that have been tabled with very easy to understand pictures and documents about sediment and nutrient run-off into the Great Barrier Reef and what it means for biodiversity and the ecosystem. I table these very simple, easy to understand illustrations of what it means but somehow has been unable to get through to those members opposite.

Tabled paper: Diagram titled 'Ecological responses to sediment, nutrients and pesticides in the inshore marine environment' [2570].

Given that this government has also weakened regulations in relation to mine water discharges courtesy of the last omnibus bill by the Deputy Premier, the Great Barrier Reef will now be under a significantly increased level of environmental degradation. What we now have is the ability for vegetation to be removed, we have an increase in mine water being discharged into those streams and the river catchment system, and we have it all running off into the Great Barrier Reef without any form of protection at all. This government is presiding over these policy changes. This government is presiding over this significant degradation in our environment and it is outrageous that the environment minister should stand in this place and support the removal of riverine protection permits. It is outrageous that he should stand in this place and assume achievement and success for the green-tape reduction bill when the only thing he did in relation to that bill was change the date. It is outrageous that this government has proposed these changes and asserted that they will have little impact and not have provided one skerrick of evidence to support that assertion at all.

The economics in terms of the repair after floods, the repair of infrastructure, the repair of the environment and getting businesses back on their feet, is well documented. We have a government that purports to be interested in building a resilient state, in flood mitigating—flood-proofing Queensland. One of the most effective ways of mitigating the effects of flood and flooding water is by having vegetated watercourses. Vegetated watercourses slow the flow of water, they reduce the velocity of flooding water and therefore they decrease the impact of water on roads and infrastructure and on downstream environments. It does not make economic sense to reduce the thing—the very thing—that reduces sediment run-off into the Great Barrier Reef, the Great Barrier Reef that provides our state with \$6 billion a year. As it generates \$6 billion towards our economy, it does not make sense to reduce the protection. It does not make sense to reduce the protection for the Great Barrier Reef, which also generates tens of thousands of jobs. It does not make sense. Why would we now turn around and take away the very thing that protects riparian vegetation in South-East Queensland and the protection of Moreton Bay?

Why would we take away the regulation of that? Perhaps it is because those opposite have a mindless mantra when it comes to streamlining. It is mindless. It has not been tested in terms of the evidence. It has not been tested in terms of facts that have been presented to the committee and that have been undertaken by the department. I understand that it is not the public servants' fault; they have not been asked to do a thorough job in terms of this process. Why would they be, because there is only one outcome in mind here? That one outcome is to make sure that landowners do not have any impediments to doing whatever they want in terms of the management of the land.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Member for Burleigh, if you are going to continue to interject, you need to move back to your chair. Otherwise you need to sit in silence.

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you. This is a mindless mantra—streamlining, reducing red tape, reducing green tape. That is fine if they want to do it, but they should inject a bit of rigour, inject a bit of science, inject a bit of evidence into the debate. There will be 100,000 kilometres of riverbanks throughout this state that feed into Moreton Bay, that feed into water catchment areas and that feed into the Great Barrier Reef that will now be made vulnerable to riparian vegetation removal,

riverine vegetation removal and that will lead to devastating consequences not only for our environment but also for our economy. It will make the effects of flooding in Queensland worse and it will make our ability as people, as a state, to recover from the effects of flooding, from the effects of natural disasters, even worse than before.

The government is tying our hands in terms of being flood resilient, in terms of being ecologically sensitive, in terms of being economically prudent. This is a backward step. It is indefensible. The minister will simply go down in history as the one minister who has failed the Great Barrier Reef, who has failed Moreton Bay and he will stand condemned for that.

Interruption.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (6.21 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the standing and sessional orders, for this day's sitting the House will not break for dinner at 6.30 pm but will continue to sit to conduct government business, followed by a 30-minute adjournment debate.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LAND, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.22 pm), in reply: I table the explanatory notes for the amendments that I will move during the consideration in detail stage of the bill.

Tabled paper: Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes to Hon. Andrew Cripps's amendments [\[2571\]](#).

I thank all members for their participation in this debate. I would like to reiterate again that the Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 is an important bill that delivers on the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations on the regulation of levees and will achieve significant red-tape reduction and administrative efficiencies across a broad range of acts within my portfolio.

I would like to take the opportunity now to summarise the amendments contained in the bill and then go on to address some of the issues raised in the debate. Firstly, the amendments to the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Island Land Act 1991 will streamline a number of transfer related issues on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. The bill amends the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 to streamline acquisitions, firstly, where an agreement about a compulsory acquisition of land or an easement is reached between an owner and the constructing authority so that the transfer may be immediately registered by the registrar of titles. Secondly, where native title or Indigenous interests are not involved and no objections have been lodged, the decision to acquire may be made by the chief executive or delegate.

The bill amends the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007 to amend a map of the Cape York Peninsula region to include the Eastern Kuku Yalanji parks. The Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988 will also be amended to remove the notification requirements for interests such as profits a prendre, covenants, plantation licences and carbon abatement interests consistent with other interests that are already excluded, such as mortgages and resource tenures. Notification requirements under this act remain for interest in land that give a person possession and control of land similar to that of an owner of 25 years or more, for example, a leasehold interest in land used for farming or a licence or permit granted under the Land Act 1994.

The bill amends the Land Act 1994 to change all application processes where third-party consents are critical to the approval of the dealings, for example, seeking the opinion of the local government about a proposal to permanently close a road. Other key amendments include providing cost savings and security of tenure relating to the implementation of the state Rural Leasehold Land Strategy and repealing the future conservation area provisions.

The bill also amends the Land Title Act 1994 to allow for the creation of statutory easements, providing significant savings in the development of small lots. Other technical amendments include providing greater clarity, correcting minor inconsistencies, allowing for improved efficiency in titles registry practices and providing greater flexibility for titles registry customers.

The Land Valuation Act 2010 will be amended to, among other things, improve flexibility for making market survey reports, allow for publication of valuations by methods other than paper notices and provide immunity for persons appointed to chair objection conferences. The bill amends the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 to address concerns raised by stakeholders during the parliamentary Agriculture, Resource and Environment Committee hearing into the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Bill 2012 regarding two acts applying to pipelines carrying produced water.

The Petroleum Act 1923 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 will also be amended to provide that petroleum wells can be converted to water observation bores or water supply bores by a petroleum tenure holder. The bill amends the River Improvement Trust Act 1940 to streamline a number of governance and administration requirements for river improvement trusts.

The bill also amends the Vegetation Management Act 1999 to provide certainty in relation to earlier decisions made under the act relating to clearing associated with watercourses shown on the vegetation management watercourse map. The Water Act 2000 will be amended to progress the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry that relate to levees.

The bill also amends the Water Act 2000 to authorise the take of or interference with water for low-risk activities, such as for the testing of firefighting equipment or to operate public toilets and showers; remove the requirement for a resource activity tenure holder to hold a water licence from diverting water on a tenure that has already been authorised under the environmental authority; extend the term of water licences until 30 June 2111; remove declared catchment areas that are used to control land use activities where an activity may adversely impact on water quality, for example, in a dam, which reduces duplication with the Environmental Protection Act 1994; provide the minister with flexibility when prioritising the replacement of water resource plans; and facilitate the conversion of the Pioneer Valley Water Board to a two-tier cooperative structure, which allows the water authority to split into two separate entities. One will own the infrastructure while the other operates the infrastructure and provides services to customers.

A further amendment will remove the requirement for a riverine protection permit to remove vegetation in a watercourse, lake or stream; remove the need for irrigators to prepare land and water management plans; and provide the chief executive with flexibility when dealing with surrendered and forfeited interim water allocations. The bill amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to facilitate two-tiered cooperative structures, define dual reticulation and clarify transitional provisions. The bill also amends the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retailing) Restructuring Act 2009 and the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 to provide for the extension of due dates and sunset clauses.

I will now take the opportunity to respond to a few issues raised during the course of the debate on the bill. I thank all members of the government for their contributions to the debate and their support for the bill. The member for Bundamba has a very short memory. Longer serving members would be aware of the capacity of the previous government to serve up omnibus bills at regular intervals. All of us enjoyed wading through very significant pieces of legislation in considering them in this place. I find it quite extraordinary that the member for Bundamba would now raise an issue in terms of an omnibus bill being presented to the parliament in areas of a single portfolio—that is, land and water management.

In respect of the member for Bundamba's questions relating to the Starcke National Park amendments, the Queensland government started negotiations with Aboriginal traditional owners in 2012 for the conversion of Starcke National Park and six nearby parks to national parks. Negotiations have progressed well and a further negotiation meeting is anticipated in June. The transfer of the park to national park is under active discussions with traditional owners. The park will be managed jointly by the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and by an Aboriginal corporation whose members are the traditional owners of the park.

I would now like to respond to some of the member for South Brisbane's comments in relation to riverine protection permits. Clearing vegetation in a watercourse will still be controlled through a range of other regulatory frameworks such as the vegetation management framework. I find it difficult to accept the member for South Brisbane's point of view that she believes that landowners will not

responsibly manage vegetation in a watercourse when accessing permits under the Vegetation Management Act to remove vegetation in a watercourse when they need to do so. As I have said on many occasions, the Newman government does not have that point of view. The Newman government has a point of view that landowners are appropriate and responsible stewards of their land and certainly that relates to watercourses on or adjacent to their land. They appreciate more than anyone the need to protect riparian vegetation to maintain productivity on their land and to protect water quality. Obviously the member for South Brisbane does need to engage with landholders more.

I note that the member for South Brisbane's substantial source of information was the WWF. Members will forgive me if I do not put a lot of validity in the views put forward by the WWF. It seems to be the source of most of the member for South Brisbane's contribution to the debate. The member for South Brisbane has challenged me to present evidence that the impact of the removal of the need for a riverine protection permit under the Water Act has been tested. Equally, given that the WWF is the source of most of the information provided by the member for South Brisbane during the course of this debate, it might be sensible for the member for South Brisbane to have tested the information used by the WWF in the calculation of their information. I think in the course of this debate, if it is fair enough for the member for South Brisbane to challenge me about the accuracy of the information that I provide to the House, surely it is reasonable for me to challenge her about the accuracy of the information that she issues to question mine. I put it to honourable members that to rely on information provided by the WWF in debating the matter stretches the credibility of the member for South Brisbane's contribution.

In the course of my second reading contribution to the debate I mentioned how few riverine protection permits had been applied for and issued under the Water Act for watercourses across the state. It is not the member for South Brisbane's error or fault that she was not present in the chamber when I was making my second reading contribution to the debate. In making my second reading contribution to the debate I try to address the issues raised in committee reports. I do, in all of the bills that I present to the House and respond to, go to as great an effort as I can to address the recommendations and the issues raised in committee reports. One of the reasons we do that is because we have adopted a new way of considering bills in the Queensland parliament, and I respect that, and I welcome the committee reports that come forward and try, to the best of my ability, to address the issues that they raise. I also do it to try to avoid a number of the situations where the member for Dalrymple simply comes in and repeats the text of submissions made by stakeholder or interest groups or individuals to the committee during the course of the parliamentary committee's inquiry into those various bills.

It can save a lot of time if the minister does go to some lengths to address the issues and the recommendations in the committee's report. So it is not the fault or the error of the member for South Brisbane that she was not present, but if she was she would have heard me say, in relation to and in addressing these issues, that the departmental figures on the number of riverine protection permits that have been issued dealing with vegetation in a watercourse under the Water Act for the financial year 2011-12 was one. For the financial year 2010-11 the number of riverine protection permits that exclusively dealt with vegetation in a watercourse under the Water Act was five out of 155. In the 2009-10 financial year the number of riverine protection permits that were issued for the removal of vegetation in a watercourse under the Water Act was 11.

Some fairly strong language was used by the member for South Brisbane during the course of her contribution to the second reading debate. If I recall correctly, the member for South Brisbane indicated that I would be the minister responsible for the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef and Moreton Bay. That allegation was made against me as the minister for this initiative in this bill and that is based on the issuing of 17 riverine protection permits under the Water Act exclusively dealing with the removal of vegetation in a watercourse in the last three financial years and the removal of this provision will cause untold damage to the Great Barrier Reef and Moreton Bay. That is the type of alarmist rhetoric that I refer to all the time in relation to responding to allegations made by members such as the member for South Brisbane and environmental organisations like the WWF on whose information the member for South Brisbane has based her contribution tonight.

The member for Bundamba also talked about the 99-year water licences and why the department would be moving to introduce a situation where water licences would be issued for 99 years. The member for Bundamba unfortunately demonstrated her total lack of understanding of the water resource planning process that we now have in place. I am happy to reiterate a couple of the things that I said in my second reading contribution to the bill because far from water licences not being able to be dealt with outside of the water resource planning process or in areas of the state that do not currently have a water resource plan, the chief executive officer may cancel, amend or

condition a water licence at any time regardless of whether or not a water resource plan exists or whether a water resource plan is not currently in the process of being reviewed. The chief executive officer under the Water Act still has a great deal of flexibility to deal with emerging water resource planning issues that may not be facilitated by the fact that a water licence has been issued for 99 years until 2111. It is a total misrepresentation that this is some sort of major problem for public policy in Queensland. It is not a major problem at all.

At the moment, we have two parallel processes for the licensing and the review of water licences in Queensland. We have the water resource planning process and, currently, we have a process whereby water licence holders periodically reapply for a water licence in addition to them being validated and reviewed under the water resource planning process. The member for Bundamba is just endorsing a process whereby water licence holders are constantly applying for their water licences when they expire under the current periods. You can apply for five- or 10-year water licences. With the passage of this bill, those water licences will exist until 2111. They can be reviewed under the normal water resource planning processes, the time lines of which are normally 10 years but can occur earlier if the minister or the chief executive sees fit. The chief executive officer retains the ability to cancel, amend or condition a water licence at any time. The rhetoric from the member for Bundamba in relation to those issues was a furphy.

I also address the issue of the future conservation areas, which the member for Bundamba spoke about at length. The member for Bundamba seems very attached to future conservation areas. She described them as a vital tool for the expansion of the protected area estate in Queensland. They are such an essential tool that they have not been used since their introduction in 2008. They are an instrument in the Rural Leasehold Land Strategy that has not been utilised since their introduction, such is their absolute necessity for the expansion of the national park estate in Queensland. At any time the minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, as the minister responsible for the administration of the Nature Conservation Act, has every opportunity to assess state owned land, which includes rural leasehold land, for conservation purposes. Should that land be assessed as having high conservation value, it can be acquired through a negotiation process with that landowner.

I will maintain that it is perverse to have, as part of the rural leasehold renewal process, a mechanism to take land away from a landholder who has managed their land so well that the land is considered to have environmental values worthy of conservation. I think that is an extraordinary and perverse proposition for the Labor opposition to put forward today. Those land managers have looked after that land so well that it is now considered to be worthy of incorporation into the protected area estate. You are disadvantaging people who have looked after their land to such a standard that it is considered worthy of going into the protected area estate. I find that quite extraordinary and perverse that we would attack the good reputation of landowners in this state who look after their land to that extent. On that basis, I do not accept the criticism from the member for Bundamba.

In its report, the committee raised the issue of levees that were in existence prior to the commencement of the bill. The member for Lockyer made an intelligent contribution about issues pertaining to levees. As I stated in my second reading speech, these amendments are only the first phase of establishing a regulatory framework for levees. The second phase will involve the development of a code to assess levees and necessary regulations under the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009. As part of the implementation of that regulatory framework, the Queensland government will establish a monitoring system for the approval of a new levee construction or the modification of existing levees.

The amendments in this bill in relation to levees are the first step in ensuring a consistent regulatory framework for future levees across Queensland. However, it would not be appropriate to apply a new regulation retrospectively to existing levees that were legally built under laws existing at the time. Many of those levees may pose no risk to the community and do not merit any action under these new regulations. Rather, for existing levees, the appropriate response in the first instance is to monitor and gather data and then, having identified levees that are posing a genuine risk, determine an appropriate course of action. I take on board the suggestion from the member for Lockyer in relation to the impact existing levees may have on infrastructure, communities or the environment. That is a sound and a salient point to make. Certainly, I will draw that to the attention of the relevant departmental officers. That will be part of the monitoring process. I thank the member for Lockyer for the suggestion.

In relation to the amendments that I will be moving in the consideration in detail stage of the bill, the majority of the amendments are minor, such as addressing smaller errors or omitting unnecessary references. However, a few amendments are necessary in relation to the commencement of certain clauses. Amendment 1 amends the commencement of amendments to the

Land Act 1994 and the Land Title Act 1994 that will be affected by the commencement of the Electronic Conveyancing National Law (Queensland) Act 2013 to ensure that the amendments commence after the act.

Amendment 2 amends clause 24 of the bill, specifically the definition of 'parcel' in relation to the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 amendments. As currently drafted, there is the potential for an interpretation that limits the meaning of 'land' and excludes easements from within that meaning. That shift in interpretation would be an unintended consequence.

Amendment 25 amends the commencement of provisions of the bill that relate to stream diversion. It is necessary for the commencement of clause 228 to be delayed to allow time for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to finalise a memorandum of understanding that will guide the assessment of those diversions and also develop standard conditions and a guideline for assessing applications.

Amendment 26 amends the commencement of provisions relating to the removal of declared catchment areas from the Water Act 2000. It is necessary for clause 264 of the bill to commence by proclamation to align with the release of the Single State Planning Policy to ensure there is no gap in the regulation of development in these catchment areas. Amendment 26 also amends the commencement of clauses that provide for the expiry of water licences on 30 June 2111. It is necessary for clauses 259, 260, 261 and 288 to commence by proclamation, not assent, to allow time for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to make the necessary licensing system modifications.

Amendment 31 amends clause 301, which inserts new section 972B, which addresses when an applicant may appeal to the Land Court against a decision about a development application. New section 972B is amended to remove the reference to development applications relating to referable dams, as it duplicates section 562 of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and is no longer required in the Water Act 2000. Amendments 39 to 43 amend the existing sections in the Water Act 2000 that reference section 20 to reflect the restructuring of section 20 by the bill and ensure accurate cross-referencing in the Water Act 2000.

I will also be moving an amendment outside the long title of the bill. This amendment is the most significant of the amendments and is required to ensure the effective operation of the provisions that enable the chief executive administering the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 to be the State Assessment and Referral Agency. The State Assessment and Referral Agency will assume the majority of the state's assessment manager and concurrence agency responsibilities and address interdepartmental coordination issues. The State Assessment and Referral Agency is an important part of the government's program of reform to ensure the planning and development system is more effective.

I would like to acknowledge the significant efforts of my staff and the officers of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines in the delivery of this piece of legislation. I commend it to the House.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Unparliamentary Language

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Leader of the Opposition wrote to me on a matter of privilege relating to unparliamentary remarks made in the House yesterday in question time. I consider that the matters raised are related to order not privilege and thus I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee. In respect of the matters of order complained about, I note that the remarks have been withdrawn.


In relation to the issue of unparliamentary language, on 5 August 2009 Speaker Mickel reminded all members that the behaviour of one member in the House reflects on all members. Speaker Mickel continued by saying—

Observers in the public gallery or those members of the public watching or listening via television or the internet gain a lasting impression of what they see or hear. Practice and procedure prevent unparliamentary language. The assessment of what is unparliamentary language by necessity lies in the realm of who is in the chair, but generally it is any language or expression that is unworthy of the dignity of this House as an institution. Sometimes language is used and not picked up immediately.

I remind members that our conduct in this House is under public scrutiny, and that statements made are recorded for history. I am aware that members can make unscripted statements in the cut and thrust of debate and that a member may later reflect upon their remarks as being unparliamentary or being able to be perceived as such. In this situation, at a minimum, members should withdraw the statements in question. I remind members of their responsibility to uphold the dignity of the House in the language and statements they use.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill; Order Discharged

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this afternoon the Leader of the Opposition introduced the Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill. I draw members' attention to numerous Speakers' rulings regarding the application of the same question rule in relation to bills contained in standing order 87. In particular, I refer to Speaker Mickel's ruling of 6 October 2010, Deputy Speaker Hoolihan's ruling of 25 March 2010, Speaker Reynolds's ruling of 9 September 2008 and Speaker Hollis's ruling of 15 March 2000.

Standing Order 87 provides that a question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative. Previous rulings indicate that there are three possible outcomes where a bill contains provisions dealing with the same issue as another bill (a) if the bill contains only a few clauses that deal with issues considered by another bill, the bill can proceed but the offending clauses are ruled out of order in consideration in detail; or (b) if the bill is substantially the same, in that it predominantly deals with issues contained in another bill that has been passed, the second bill cannot proceed further; or (c) if there are two bills substantially the same, in that they both deal with the same issues, they can both proceed up to the point at which one of the bills is accepted on the second reading.


The Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill deals with substantially the same issues as those contained in the Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill which the House passed last year. It essentially seeks to reverse the effects of the bills passed last year. Therefore, under standing order 87, the Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill cannot proceed and is discharged from the *Notice Paper*. Its referral to the committee is also consequently discharged.

LAND, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from p. 1511.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 85—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (6.59 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 26, lines 10 and 11—

omit, insert—

- (b) sections 93 and 118;
- (c) division 3 of parts 9, 11, 12, 13 and 19;
- (d) schedule 1, part 2.

2 Clause 24 (Insertion of new ss 3 and 4)

Page 45, lines 12 and 13—


omit, insert—

- (b) an easement; or
- (c) other land that is described in a way that is sufficient to substantially identify the land.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 85, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 86—

 **Mrs MILLER** (6.59 pm): The opposition has already made clear through the second reading debate this evening that we do not support this clause which removes future conservation areas from the Land Act. Future conservation areas were introduced by amendment in 2007 and came into

legislative force in January 2008. Their introduction was uncontroversial and they have not caused any problems for the agricultural industry since their introduction. Unfortunately, this is yet another example of this Newman LNP tory government giving up on environmental protection in this state and the people of Queensland will remember it.

Mr CRIPPS: I have responded to this issue in my response to the second reading debate. The members of the House are aware of the reasons why I do not agree with the member for Bundamba and the opposition.

Clause 86, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 87 to 203—

Mr CRIPPS (7.01 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendments—

3 Clause 93 (Amendment of s 322A (Severing joint tenancy by transfer))

Page 82, lines 8 to 15—

omit, insert—

Section 322A(4)—

omit, insert—

- (4) The chief executive may register the transfer only if the chief executive is satisfied the severing party has given, or made a reasonable attempt to give, each other joint tenant the following—
- (a) if the transfer is an electronic conveyancing document—notice of the severing party's intention to sever the joint tenancy under subsection (2);
 - (b) otherwise—a copy of the transfer.

4 Clause 118 (Amendment of s 59 (Severing joint tenancy))

Page 100, lines 19 to 26—

omit, insert—

Section 59(2)—

omit, insert—

- (2) However, the registrar may register the instrument of transfer only if the registrar is satisfied the registered owner has given, or made a reasonable attempt to give, each other joint tenant the following—
- (a) if the instrument is an electronic conveyancing document—written notice of the registered owner's intention to sever the joint tenancy under subsection (1);
 - (b) otherwise—a copy of the instrument.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 87 to 203, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

Mr CRIPPS (7.01 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendment—

5 After clause 203

Page 166, after line 12—

insert—

Part 15A Amendment of Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2012

203A Act amended

This part amends the *Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2012*.

Editor's note—

Sections 203B to 203G, legislation ultimately amended—

- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*

203B Amendment of s 2 (Commencement)

- (1) Section 2, first dot point, 'and (4)'—
omit, insert—
, (4), (4A) and (29A)
- (2) Section 2, after first dot point—
insert—
• sections 51A and 84A to 84F
- (3) Section 2, second dot point, 'section 944'—
omit, insert—
sections 944 and 944A

203C Amendment of s 35 (Insertion of new ch 6, pt 1, div 4, sdiv 2A)

- (1) Section 35, inserted section 255E(1)—
omit, insert—
- (1) This section applies to an application if—
- (a) the chief executive is the assessment manager or a referral agency for the application; and
 - (b) had the application been made before the commencement of this section, an entity (a **relevant entity**) other than the local government would have been the assessment manager, or the referral agency, for the application; and
 - (c) another Act imposes requirements on the relevant entity assessing the application as the assessment manager or referral agency.
- (2) Section 35, inserted section 255E(11)—
renumber as section 255E(14).
- (3) Section 35, inserted section 255E—
insert—
- (11) Subsection (12) applies if, under the other Act, a function is conferred—
- (a) on the relevant entity as the assessment manager or a referral agency for the application; and
 - (b) for an investigative or enforcement purpose.
- (12) For the purpose, the relevant entity is taken to be the assessment manager or a referral agency for the application.
- (13) This section does not apply to the *Airport Assets (Restructuring and Disposal) Act 2008*, chapter 3, part 2.

203D Insertion of new s 51A

After section 51—

insert—

51A Amendment of s 367 (What is a permissible change for a development approval)

- (1) Section 367(1), after 'that would not'—
insert—
, because of the change
- (2) Section 367(2), '(the applicable law)'
omit.
- (3) Section 367(3)—
omit.

203E Insertion of new ss 84A to 84F

After section 84—

insert—

84A Amendment of ch 8, pt 1, div 8, hdg (Conditions State infrastructure providers may impose for infrastructure)

Chapter 8, part 1, division 8, heading, from 'State infrastructure'—

omit, insert—

chief executive and State infrastructure providers may impose

84B Amendment of s 653 (Conditions State infrastructure provider may impose)

- (1) Section 653, heading, after 'Conditions'—
insert—
chief executive and
- (2) Section 653(1), 'A State infrastructure provider'—
omit, insert—
The chief executive or a State infrastructure provider (the **imposing entity**)
- (3) Section 653(5), 'State infrastructure provider'—
omit, insert—
imposing entity

84C Amendment of s 654 (Requirements for conditions about safety or efficiency)

- (1) Section 654(3), 'State infrastructure provider'—
omit, insert—
imposing entity
- (2) Section 654(3), 'provider is'—
omit, insert—
imposing entity is

84D Amendment of s 655 (Requirements for conditions about additional infrastructure costs)

- (1) Section 655(1), 'A State infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

An imposing entity

- (2) Section 655(1)(b), 'State infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

imposing entity

- (3) Section 655(3), 'infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

imposing entity

- (4) Section 655(5), 'State infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

imposing entity

- (5) Section 655(5), 'provider is'—

omit, insert—

imposing entity is

84E Amendment of s 656 (State infrastructure provider additional infrastructure costs in priority infrastructure areas)

- (1) Section 656, heading, 'State infrastructure provider additional'—

*omit, insert—***Additional**

- (2) Section 656(1), 'a State infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

an imposing entity

- (3) Section 656(2), 'State infrastructure provider'—

omit, insert—

imposing entity

84F Amendment of s 657 (State infrastructure provider additional infrastructure costs outside priority infrastructure areas)

Section 657, heading, 'State infrastructure provider additional'—

*omit, insert—***Additional****203F Amendment of s 122 (Insertion of new ch 10, pt 6)**

Section 122, inserted section 944—

*omit, insert—***944 Development applications not decided on commencement**

- (1) This section applies to a development application made but not decided on the commencement.
- (2) The development application must be dealt with and decided under this Act as in force immediately before the commencement.

944A Chief executive is assessment manager or concurrence agency for ch 6, pt 8, divs 2 and 5

- (1) This section applies to a relevant development approval if—
- (a) an entity other than the chief executive (the **relevant entity**) was the assessment manager or a concurrence agency for the application to which the approval relates; and
 - (b) had the application been made after the commencement, the chief executive would have been the assessment manager or a concurrence agency for the application.
- (2) For chapter 6, part 8, divisions 2 and 5—
- (a) the chief executive is taken to be—
 - (i) if the relevant entity was the assessment manager—the assessment manager; or
 - (ii) if the relevant entity was a concurrence agency—that concurrence agency; and
 - (b) if the relevant entity as a concurrence agency imposed a condition of the approval—the chief executive is taken to have imposed the condition.
- (3) In this section—
- relevant development approval** means a development approval—
- (a) given before the commencement; or

- (b) given after the commencement if the application to which the approval relates was made before the commencement.

203G Amendment of s 123 (Amendment of sch 3 (Dictionary))

- (1) Section 123—

insert—

- (4A) Schedule 3—

insert—

imposing entity see section 653(1).

- (2) Section 123—

insert—

- (29A) Schedule 3, definition *State infrastructure provider*, 'concurrence agency'—

omit, insert—

public sector entity, other than a local government,

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 204 to 259—

Mr CRIPPS (7.02 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendments—

6 Clause 228 (Amendment of s 20 (Authorised taking of, or interference with, water without water entitlement))

Page 184, lines 12 to 23 and page 185, lines 1 to 7—

omit.

7 Clause 259 (Amendment of ch 2, pt 6, div 2, sdiv 2 (Contents and conditions of water licence))

Page 211, lines 17 to 21—

omit.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 204 to 259, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 260 and 261—



Mrs MILLER (7.02 pm): Again the opposition has outlined our reservations to a 99-year extension of water licences. Unfortunately the minister has not provided a decent enough argument for why they need to be extended for 99 years. The opposition could happily support an extension for around 30 years in line with the statutory regional planning framework being developed by the government. We are also worried for the 10 per cent of the state that is not subject to a water resource plan.

Mr CRIPPS: I have responded to these matters in detail. The issues that the member for Bundamba has raised I responded to directly and comprehensively in my response to the second reading debate. Members are aware of the reasons why I do not agree with the member for Bundamba.

Clauses 260 and 261 negatived.

Clauses 262 to 292—

Mr CRIPPS (7.04 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendments—

10 Clause 264 (Omission of ch 2, pt 7 (Catchment areas))

Page 213, lines 29 to 31—

omit.

11 Clause 270 (Amendment of s 556 (Amending establishment regulation))

Page 215, lines 11 to 14—

omit, insert—

publish notice of the amendment—

- (a) in the gazette; and

- (b) in another way the chief executive considers appropriate having regard to the intended audience for the notice.

12 Clause 272 (Amendment of s 598A (Changing the composition of a board))

Page 215, lines 23 to 26—

omit, insert—

- (2) The chief executive must publish notice of the proposed change—
 - (a) in the gazette; and
 - (b) in another way the chief executive considers appropriate having regard to the intended audience for the notice.

13 Clause 279 (Insertion of new s 695A)

Page 217, lines 17 to 28—

omit, insert—

695A Closed water activity agreement

- (1) This section applies for a water authority if—
 - (a) the water authority carries out water activities including water supply or drainage for an authority area; and
 - (b) all the registered owners of the land in the authority area enter into a written agreement complying with subsection (2) (a **closed water activity agreement**) about carrying out the water activities for the land.
- (2) The agreement must state—
 - (a) the land and works to which the agreement applies; and
 - (b) if the water activities include water supply—
 - (i) the water to which the agreement applies; and
 - (ii) the arrangements for supplying the water to each registered owner's land; and

14 Clause 279 (Insertion of new s 695A)

Page 218, line 20, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

15 Clause 279 (Insertion of new s 695A)

Page 218, line 24, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

16 Clause 279 (Insertion of new s 695A)

Page 218, line 27, 'subsection (1)'—

omit, insert—

subsection (1)(b)

17 Clause 280 (Amendment of s 696 (Procedure before authority is dissolved to convert to alternative institutional structures))

Page 219, line 3, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

18 Clause 280 (Amendment of s 696 (Procedure before authority is dissolved to convert to alternative institutional structures))

Page 219, line 10, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

19 Clause 281 (Amendment of s 703 (Continuing legal proceedings))

Page 219, line 20, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

20 Clause 283 (Amendment of s 966 (Additional criteria for assessing development applications))

Page 220, lines 1 to 9—

omit.

21 Clause 288 (Insertion of new ch 9, pt 6)

Page 222, lines 6 to 19—

omit.

22 Clause 289 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))

Page 225, line 25—

*omit, insert—**institutional structure, priority***23 Clause 289 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))**

Page 226, line 9, 'supply'—

omit, insert—

activity

24 Clause 289 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))

Page 226, lines 12 and 13—

*omit, insert—***closed water activity agreement** see section 695A(1)(b).**25 Before clause 290**

Page 228, after line 8—

*insert—***289A Amendment of s 20 (Authorised taking of, or interference with, water without water entitlement)**

(1) Section 20—

insert—

(6B) A person may interfere with water if—

- (a) the interference is a diversion of a watercourse and is associated with a resource activity; and
- (b) the impacts of the interference were assessed as part of a grant of an environmental authority for the resource activity; and
- (c) the environmental authority was granted with a condition about the diversion of the watercourse.

(2) Section 20(11)—

*insert—***resource activity** see the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, section 107.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 262 to 292, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

Mr CRIPPS (7.04 pm): I move the following amendment—**26 After clause 292**

Page 234, after line 6—

*insert—***292A Amendment of ch 2, pt 6, div 2, sdiv 2 (Contents and conditions of water licence)**

Chapter 2, part 6, division 2, subdivision 2, heading, 'Contents'—

*omit, insert—***Contents, terms****292B Amendment of s 213 (Contents of water licence)**

Section 213(1)(a), 'be granted for a stated period'—

omit, insert—

state the term of the licence

292C Insertion of new s 213A

Chapter 2, part 6, division 2, subdivision 2—

*insert—***213A Term of water licence**

(1) A water licence expires at the end of 30 June 2111.

(2) However, if a water resource plan, a resource operations plan or a wild river declaration states a day for the expiry of a water licence granted by the chief executive in accordance with a process mentioned in section 212(1), the licence expires on—

- (a) if the process was stated in a water resource plan—at the end of the day stated, in the plan, for the expiry of the licence; or
- (b) if the process was stated in a resource operations plan—at the end of the day stated, in the plan, for the expiry of the licence; or
- (c) if the process was stated in a wild river declaration—at the end of the day stated, in the declaration, for the expiry of the licence.


- (3) The day stated for the expiry of a water licence under subsection (2) can not be changed to an earlier day after it is first stated for the licence in a water resource plan, a resource operations plan or a wild river declaration.
- (4) This section does not prevent a water licence from being cancelled or surrendered.

292D Omission of ch 2, pt 7 (Catchment areas)

Chapter 2, part 7—
omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 293 and 294—

 **Mrs MILLER** (7.05 pm): These clauses remove the need for landholders to seek approval before destroying vegetation within watercourses. They lease as much as 100,000 kilometres of waterway without any protection. As the opposition has already outlined, removing this requirement can only result in the destruction of riparian vegetation. Given the importance of riverine vegetation to waterways, the opposition cannot in any good conscience support these clauses.

Mr CRIPPS: I responded to the concerns raised by the member for Bundamba during the course of my response to the second reading debate. All members are aware of the reasons why I do not agree with the member for Bundamba.

Clauses 293 and 294, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 295 to 352—

Mr CRIPPS (7.06 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr CRIPPS: I move the following amendments—

27 After clause 300

Page 238, after line 19—

insert—

300A Amendment of s 966 (Additional criteria for assessing development applications)

- (1) Section 966(1)(d) and (2)(d)—

omit.

- (2) Section 966(3) to (5)—

omit, insert—

- (3) Subsection (2) does not limit section 282 or chapter 6, part 5, division 2 of the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*.

28 Clause 301 (Replacement of ch 8, pt 2)

Page 242, lines 16 and 17, 'is assessable development and'—

omit.

29 Clause 301 (Replacement of ch 8, pt 2)

Page 243, line 10, 'is assessable development and'—

omit.

30 Clause 301 (Replacement of ch 8, pt 2)

Page 243, lines 21 to 26—

omit, insert—

- (1) This section applies to a development application for development in a wild river area that is or involves the removal of quarry material for which an allocation notice is required under chapter 2, part 9.

31 Clause 301 (Replacement of ch 8, pt 2)

Page 244, lines 6 to 15—

omit, insert—

- (b) the work is related to an activity authorised under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* if the operations allow the taking or interfering with water; and

32 Clause 303 (Insertion of new ch 9, pt 6, div 1, hdg)

Page 250, line 19—

omit, insert—

Chapter 9, part 6, after heading—

33 After clause 303

Page 250, after line 22—

*insert—***303A Insertion of new s 1235**

Chapter 9, part 6—

*insert—***1235 Term of existing water licence**

- (1) Subject to any cancellation or surrender of an existing water licence, the licence expires under section 213A despite any period stated on the licence as being the period for which the licence is granted.
- (2) Also, section 213A(2) does not apply to an existing water licence granted by the chief executive in accordance with a process mentioned in section 212(1).
- (3) In this section—

existing water licence means a water licence in force immediately before the commencement of this section.

34 Clause 306 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))

Page 256, line 12—

omit, insert—

- (1) Schedule 4, definitions *declared catchment area* and *referral agency*—

35 Clause 306 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))

Page 258, line 23, after 'overland'—

insert—

flow

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 295 to 352, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 1—

Mr CRIPPS (7.06 pm): I move the following amendments—**36 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)**

Page 316, lines 3 to 5—

*omit.***37 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)**

Page 317, lines 16 and 17—

*omit.***38 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)**

Page 318, lines 1 and 2—

*omit.***39 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)**

Page 321, after line 5—

*insert—***1AA Section 24, heading, 's 20(3)'—***omit, insert—***s 20A(2)****1AB Section 24(1)—***omit, insert—*

- (1) If there is a shortage of water, the chief executive may, by publishing a notice, limit or prohibit the taking of water under section 20A(2) for—
 - (a) the domestic purpose of watering a garden; or
 - (b) stock purposes generally.

1AC Section 25, heading, 's 20(8)'—*omit, insert—***s 20C(3)****1AD Section 25(1)(d), '20(8)'—***omit, insert—*

20C(3)

1AE Section 25ZA, '20(6)'—*omit, insert—*

20(2)(c)

1AF Section 30(b), '(4) or (5)'—*omit, insert—*

(4), (5) or (6B)

40 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)

Page 321, after line 12—

*insert—***2A Section 47(e), 'section 20'—***omit, insert—*

chapter 2, part 2, division 1A

41 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)

Page 322, after line 2—

*insert—***6A Section 747(3), 'section 20'—***omit, insert—*

section 20A

42 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)

Page 323, after line 7—

*insert—***13A Section 1007, '20(7)'—***omit, insert—*

20A(3)(a)

13B Section 1013B(3)(a), 'section 20'—*omit, insert—*

chapter 2, part 2, division 1A

43 Schedule 1 (Minor and consequential amendments)

Page 323, after line 10—

*insert—***14A Section 1046(4)(a), '20(6)'—***omit, insert—*

20(2)(c)

Water Regulation 2002**14B Part 2, division 4—***omit.***14C Schedule 5—***omit.*

Amendments agreed to.

Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. AP CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (7.07 pm):
I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (7.08 pm): I move the following amendment—

44 Long title

Long title, after '*Sustainable Planning Act 2009*,'—
insert—

the Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2012,

This amends the long title of the bill so that the title now reads a bill for—

An Act to amend the Aboriginal Land Act 1991, the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007, the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Land Valuation Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the River Improvement Trust Act 1940, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, the Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2012, the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009, the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991, the Vegetation Management Act 1999, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes, and to make consequential or minor amendments of the other legislation as stated in schedule 1 for purposes related to those particular purposes.


Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVILEGE

Ethics Committee Report No. 131

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (7.09 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. In a question to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads on 1 November 2012 I said that the transport minister was refusing to release details of his diary and the people he had met with. I would like to correct the record. Firstly, it was the decision of the delegate of the minister, not the minister. The delegate had not yet formally refused the application; he had given notice of his intention to refuse to deal with the application.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (7.10 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 21 May 2013.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (7.10 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

St Mary's College


 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (7.10 pm): I am very pleased to rise tonight to pay tribute to one of the south-east region's finest educational institutions, St Mary's College, and the tradition and historically important work of the Sisters of Mercy. St Mary's College in Ipswich is my old high school and I am proud to be a graduate of a fine school, with a fine history and which continues to do fine work. It could not be a more apt time to pay tribute to the work of this school and church, a landmark in the Ipswich area, which this week is celebrating its 150th anniversary. I have certainly been looking forward to attending the 150th anniversary of what was one of the first Catholic schools established outside Brisbane.

It is 150 years since the sisters arrived in Brisbane from Ireland. After the great adversity of their journey they were taken into the hearts and the homes of the people of Ipswich. By all accounts, they faced immediate financial hardship but, thanks to the generosity of local Catholic families in the area at the time, they were able to remain and to settle to offer strong Catholic education. This order of sisters left Ipswich in 2009 to retire in Brisbane but their influence today could not be stronger. They possessed incredible resilience and steely determination. They selflessly gave to the community. They left behind the gift of caring for, nurturing and educating generations of women in the region.

The first St Mary's Church, made of wooden slabs and shingles, was built on the corner of Mary and Elizabeth streets in Ipswich from 1849 and was founded by Father Eugene Luckie. Father Luckie told his congregation at the time of his great plans to build the church, made possible by a government grant of £80. A second and bigger St Mary's Church was built on the same site in about 1860 under the guidance of Father William McGinty, a very active church leader who travelled extensively in the area and was the force behind several church buildings in the region. The church that stands today was built in 1904 after the original church was badly damaged in the 1893 floods. It stands as a proud monument to the Sisters today, as does the convent known as Mercy House. I am happy to report that after a three-year renovation process, it was reopened this week. This was also made possible with a small grant from the former Labor government.

I would like to pay tribute to the nuns and the teachers. They have done a brilliant job over the years and they deserve to be congratulated. I look forward to attending the 150-year celebrations at St Mary's, especially to those being held on Saturday evening when I look forward to catching up with current principal Deidre Anderson and my old debating team including Linda and Jackie.

Nudgee Electorate

 **Mr WOODFORTH** (Nudgee—LNP) (7.13 pm): I rise to talk about a few events that I attended in my electorate last weekend. The first was the drop-in forum for the Robinson Road, Geebung rail overpass held at the Geebung Bowls Club. Brisbane City Council staff told me that the feedback had been positive all week long. They tell me that all is on track to deliver this vital piece of infrastructure by November 2014. This is yet another pre-election promise of this government on which we will deliver.

The next event was at Boondall State School, one of my biggest state schools with 710 pupils. So unless the member for Bundamba knows something I do not, I am pretty sure that 710 will keep it safe. But rest assured I will keep an eye on it for her. I was at Boondall State School for the Gonski forum—I think it was a Gonski forum and not a polling day or a union meeting. The forum was put on by my local federal member who is none other than the 'world's greatest Treasurer', Wayne Swan.

Mr Ruthenberg: Outgoing Treasurer.


Mr WOODFORTH: Correct. With him was the federal minister for education, Peter Garrett. On entering Boondall State School one could have been forgiven for thinking that it was polling day given that I had to dodge half a dozen Wayne Swan A-frames and hanging off the fence were some 100 Wayne Swan balloons and there were another hundred balloons inside. Then I was greeted by forum staff wearing Wayne Swan red T-shirts, and about 20 of those people were walking around inside as well. Mr Swan spoke first and said that Peter Garrett would speak next, followed by a local parent and a teacher. Peter spoke for some 20 minutes, but I am not too sure about what. There was a car that he owned that was breaking down. Where best to get it repaired was his analogy with how Gonski will fix everything. I think he spoke about Gonski, but I started drifting in and out of consciousness so I am not too sure what happened.

Then the local parent got up to speak, Mr Paul Penny. He was asked to do this at the last minute as the local Boondall parent, for some odd reason, had to cancel. He started off acknowledging the traditional owners of the land. I thought to myself, 'What parent rolls that off the tongue?' In actual fact he is Wayne Swan's campaign manager. Paul went on to say—and really harped on the point—that, like oil and water, politics and kids do not mix. He turned to Peter Garrett and said, 'You would know from your Midnight Oil days that oil and water don't mix and neither do politics and kids. They just don't mix.' If there was not already a heap of politics keeping this messy thing going, it kept coming; there was more.

Next up was the teacher—hang on, no. He got up and the first thing he said was, ‘I just want to put the record straight. I am not a teacher at the moment. I happen to work for the Teachers Union.’ So it just went on and on. Then a 10-year-old child walked down the aisle in a union T-shirt. It just went on. Mr Penny, you are right: the minute politics is taken out of this and many other things we will get a result for the kids and people of Queensland that they deserve.

In closing, I say thank you and congratulations for no reason whatsoever to Cassowary council; you are the wise No. 13 and counting.

Road Safety

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (7.16 pm): The pressures of our 24-hour society often result in people not getting enough sleep. Interestingly, according to the RACQ’s latest magazine—and I appreciate the data they have sent me—a study has found that driving after 24 hours without sleep is as dangerous as having a blood alcohol concentration of .10—double the legal limit. I table the RACQ report and a brief report prepared for me by the Parliamentary Library on fatigue and motor crashes.

Tabled paper: Queensland Parliament Library and Research Service Brief: Fatigue and motor vehicle crashes—Queensland [2572].

Tabled paper: Article from *The Road Ahead* Apr/May 2013 titled ‘Wake up to the consequences of sleepiness’ [2573].


As people work longer hours, take work home, do more shiftwork, spend many hours on social media and develop an addiction to electronic devices, people miss out on quality sleep. An RACQ member survey shows that 71 per cent believe that more drivers are driving tired now than in the past. In Queensland, driver fatigue or sleepiness is one of the top five causes of injury in motor vehicle crashes along with speeding, alcohol, not wearing a seatbelt and distracted driving. There are several high-risk groups which studies show are more likely to be involved in a motor vehicle accident where sleep deprivation is considered a high-risk factor. These groups include shiftworkers travelling to and from work, including drive-in drive-out workers in the mining sector, younger drivers and more inexperienced drivers, drivers on rural and remote roads, drivers in the heavy vehicle road transport industry and motorcycle riders. Studies also show that persons diagnosed with specific sleep disorders may also be at a higher risk of accidents involving fatigue as a contributing factor. For those who are not certain, that is basically sleep apnoea.

In Queensland, statistics show that in 2010 there were 30 fatalities as a result of fatigue related crashes, representing 12 per cent of the road toll in the state, and we have a shocking statistic already this year. From 2006 to 2010 there were 221 fatigue related fatalities in Queensland. Key characteristics included that 82 per cent were light passenger vehicle drivers, 12 per cent were truck drivers and five per cent were motorcycle riders. A total of 180 were male and 40 were female where the gender was known. A total of 124, or 60 per cent, held an open licence and 21 per cent held a provisional licence. Of the 124, 25 were unlicensed, five held a learner licence, four were unlicensed interestingly within Australia and two held a restricted licence where a licence type was known. A total of 81 were also alcohol/drug related, 75 were also drink-driving, 38 were also speeding and 21 were also performing illegal manoeuvres. Honourable members will see that it is a cumulative thing and there are opportunistic offenders.

The Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety Queensland says that fatigue contributes to 20 to 30 per cent of all deaths on the road and may reach 40 to 50 per cent in particular crash types such as single-vehicle semitrailer crashes. The risk of dying as a result of a fatigue related crash is 13.5 per cent higher in rural areas than in urban areas. We have to do something about this problem of people not having enough sleep. I urge all members to help people in their electorates to understand that sleep is an important part of saving lives on roads in Queensland.

(Time expired)

Bulimba Electorate, Schools and Kindergartens

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (7.20 pm): I rise in the House tonight to talk about how I have been working hard for the excellent schools and kindies across the Bulimba electorate. Key components of our government’s commitment to give greater autonomy and decision making to both our principals and our parent bodies are our recently announced \$535 million Great Teachers = Great Results, our independent public schools and our \$300 million to fix the maintenance backlog in relation to which P&Cs can choose what projects should be done as a priority. This stands in very stark contrast to the commitment of the past Labor government to schools and P&Cs.

Last night at Parliament House I hosted a barbecue with the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, John-Paul Langbroek, for principals, P&C and P&F presidents and some of our local kindies. At the barbecue the minister was able to take 30 minutes of questions and address some of the local and broader concerns across the Education portfolio. This event enabled the attendees to follow up on a meeting held about 10 months ago at which all local principals met with Minister Langbroek at Bulimba State School to conduct a round table. I know that that meeting has been used as a model of engagement by the minister right across the state. This is a great way for the principals, teachers, P&Cs, P&Fs, kindy directors and parent representatives to have direct contact with the minister, and I will continue to ensure that this access is maintained and ongoing into the future. I thank the minister for being so available to Bulimba education leaders.


Yesterday I also had the pleasure of attending the first of many openings of local kindies that were funded through the R&R and the EU grants programs. We all know that early childhood is the cornerstone of a lifetime of learning and capabilities.

I will continue to fight for every dollar to fix the \$297 million maintenance backlog. The state schools in my electorate have already benefited, with \$1.1 million attributed from the 2012-13 budget. However, much more needs to be done. With the recent announcement of an additional \$100 million, we can continue to tackle the poor state of buildings like those found at Balmoral State High, which had a backlog of over \$1.1 million—five times more than the state school average.

The state of Balmoral State High School facilities is the main driver for my local fundraising event Queensland Week @ Balmoral, which will consist of performing arts by all local schools; my Queensland Week awards; and a citizenship ceremony that I shall be holding at the school on 2 June. I invite all members of the House to come out to Bulimba on Sunday, 2 June to see firsthand the outstanding work of the students at the Queensland Week @ Balmoral Showcase.

These new activities with local schools and the broader community are all in addition to the senior leadership forum and the primary leaders barbecue I held here at Parliament House which I have spoken of before. Members of the House can be assured that I am not just turning up at the opening of an envelope; I am ensuring the envelope has something of importance to the community contained within it.

Magnificent Milton

 **Mrs RICE** (Mount Coot-tha—LNP) (7.22 pm): I rise this evening to highlight a fantastic initiative in my electorate of Mount Coot-tha. A number of businesses, with the support of the Brisbane Inner West Chamber of Commerce and representatives from all levels of government, recently launched the Magnificent Milton initiative, the Magnificent Milton website. As we all know, over the past few years business has been pretty tough. Since the 2011 flood, businesses, particularly in Milton, have found it difficult to bounce back. Some have not reopened their doors at all.


The Newman government recognises the integral part that small business plays in the Queensland economy. We have been getting off their backs by cutting red tape and providing support through measures like increasing the payroll tax threshold. And we are starting to see some small green shoots of recovery showing through. The Newman government understands the benefit of having a vibrant and active small business sector. One dollar spent at a local business returns five times that amount through employee wages, rates and the purchase of materials and supplies.

Businesses in Milton have recognised how important it is to work together and support each other to boost business for their area. The Magnificent Milton initiative aims to achieve exactly that. They have developed a self-promotion strategy through a collective website that keeps customers in the loop with what is happening in the local area and to encourage residents to remember that there is so much on offer in Milton. The website www.magnificentmilton.com.au provides browsers with everything they want to know about Brisbane's inner-west suburb of Milton. There is a comprehensive business directory where people will find beauty and health businesses, restaurants, shops, services and much more. Visitors can stay up to date with the Milton events calendar and find out about the latest Milton deals.

These sorts of things do not happen overnight. The website and the promotion strategy were developed over many lunchtime meetings. A core implementation committee included people like Lynne Brown from the Brisbane Inner West Chamber of Commerce; James Golden, who is the manager of the Westpac bank; Councillor Peter Matic; Teresa Gambaro MP; and me. But we could not have done it without the broader support of a number of local businesses and organisations. These days we expect to find everything online, and now Milton is well and truly up with the times.

As the member for Mount Coot-tha I support this initiative because at its core this is about encouraging residents to support local businesses by buying local. The Premier and small business minister recently launched the 'buy locally' campaign to help boost sales and support jobs. This is all about helping the small business sector and strengthening local communities. Magnificent Milton complements the Queensland government's 'buy locally' campaign, and I commend all Milton businesses that have jumped online to kick-start the website. We know that Queensland is a great state with great opportunity and I would certainly say that the Mount Coot-tha electorate is a great area with great opportunity, too.

Public Service, Contestability

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—Ind) (7.25 pm): Dr Kathy MacDermott has taught in universities in Australia and the United States. In her writings, Dr MacDermott discussed the new public management reforms of the 1980s and 1990s as groundbreaking in terms of demonstrating how the public sector can deliver efficient and effective services in an internationally competitive economy. Today, in 2013, the Premier is talking about contestability like he has invented a new concept. The Premier is no visionary, especially in terms of improving front-line service delivery, including to the disabled. With Public Service morale now effectively destroyed, the word 'contestability' is essentially interchangeable with the word 'privatisation'.

Regarding people living with disability, yesterday I asked the Premier a question without notice about the Office of the Public Trustee. I specifically asked whether the Premier supports the Office of the Public Trustee attempting to charge a disabled client 33 per cent of a remaining amount of \$10,000. The Premier firstly failed to address the question, but then he also quipped –

I know that the honourable member is new to this place, but I would have thought that he would probably have had the nous to realise that this is something that could have been handled with a direct representation to me.


Well, there are few key issues to address from that statement. Firstly, the Premier is also a first-term MP and, frankly, I have never been in awe of his performance nor overwhelmed by his emotional intelligence for vulnerable Queenslanders. He appears more concerned with development projects than people—once tunnels and now skyscrapers paid for out of the public purse. Secondly, with regard to making direct representations to him, the Newman government is not known for being consultative. I refer to the recent threatened bus cuts.

The Premier says that he has the drive and desire to improve front-line services and claims that contestability as the answer. In my view he simply talks the talk but does not walk the walk. Arguably, the best resources are already available to the Newman government. The only problem is that the Queensland Public Service has been destroyed and demoralised by the treatment dished out by the Premier and his government. He chose to sack them despite making no mention of it during the election campaign.

If the Newman government is truly committed to genuine contestability, it must first restore the confidence of the Public Service, including to provide fearless and frank advice, because our public servants are most often the people who genuinely care most about the community. They are the ones who most often go above and beyond the call of duty to serve our society ahead of profit.

Tonight, for example, I urge the member for Lockyer to stand up for his electorate and challenge the Newman government to retain and restore confidence in the EMQ rescue helicopter service that saved his community during the 2011 floods.

Murrumba Electorate

 **Mr GULLEY** (Murrumba—LNP) (7.28 pm): I rise to talk about a great place: Murrumba, which is the local Aboriginal word for 'good place'. Tonight I will talk about a great organisation that serves the Moreton Bay region, including my electorate. Our Village Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation founded in early 2012. It was founded to support our community and in its short history has had striking success in providing a link between community and business, including funding of over \$250,000 in grants to community groups.


Under the leadership of Chairman Shane Newcombe, the following staff are real champions of the community: Christine Standfast, Begzada Bolic, Damien Doonan, Belinda Boyce, Ryan Morris and Ciara Clarke, to name just a few. I want to note its fundraiser of 20 April, Cirque De la Vie, a great night which importantly raised thousands of dollars to fund the next round of grants.

I also want to thank Jimna State Forest rangers for their hard work in restoring the Peach Trees camping area at Jimna. The recent flood damage to Yabba Creek was obvious and, due to their hard work, it was available for families, including my own, in time for Easter holiday camping. There were

plenty of kangaroos, possums and goannas, and I am pleased to report that the possums did not get our food—this year at least! A request to Minister Dickson: lack of hot showers at the camp site were not well received by my wife and three daughters and I would recommend that the reinstallation of hot showers would be popular and certainly increase patronage in all of our national parks and state forest camping grounds.

On a serious note, I want to take the opportunity to formally put on the public record the only in-depth conversation that I have had with Scott Driscoll MP, the member for Redcliffe. This conversation occurred early in our relationship. I have heard many descriptions of the member for Redcliffe, and I agree with most of them. Today I want to add the word 'prophet'. Our conversation was terse and his last words to me before he hung up were, 'Reg, we have nothing in common.' So true—not only with me but also with the values of the LNP. I want to take this opportunity to express my sympathy for all of the community members who have been hurt by the member for Redcliffe's actions. I also take this opportunity to contrast the LNP's prompt action to expel the member for Redcliffe to the ALP's protracted protection given to Nuttall and Thomson. Murrumba is a good place. To conclude, lest we forget.


Gladstone Electorate, Volunteers

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (7.31 pm): Each of our electorates has wonderful people in them, particularly those who volunteer their time. I want to acknowledge a number tonight—as many as time will allow anyway. Every Easter we have a wonderful Harbour Festival. Michelle from Gladstone Festivals and Events heads the team—some volunteers and some paid—who, for 12 months, organise this event. It is one of the largest free festivals with free entertainment and access on the eastern seaboard, whilst sideshow ally rides have to be paid for. There is plenty of family entertainment at the port authority's open sound shell and also plenty to do for kids and families alike. There are stalls, rides and, as I said, lots of volunteers who sell food for organisations such as Lions and indeed the Harbour Festival itself. This is an event that is much looked forward to in our community and it is accessible to many in the community because of the low cost.

On the May long weekend there is the Boyne Tannum Hook Up. Jeff Amos and his team of volunteers organise what is one of the biggest fishing competitions in the state. With plenty of sponsorship, there are boats and fishing tackle given away. There are also boats that are raffled. There are great prizes for fish. Again, it is another family oriented activity over a weekend with lots of free entertainment. The Boyne-Tannum Lions Club runs the bar—and the members of that Lions Club are just lunatics—so a lot of fun is had by all. There is food and activities for the family. Again, this is a very targeted family activity. Many families now travel great distances to attend. Even when our harbour was affected last year, the fishing competition was still a significant event and this year's will be even bigger and better.

The final organisation that I want to acknowledge tonight is Friends of the RSPCA. Judy Whicker, who used to be with Gladstone Festivals and Events, is a dynamo and she operates with a wonderful bunch of volunteers to provide housing and rehoming for animals, particularly dogs and cats, in the Gladstone region. They work tirelessly to educate people in better animal care and selection. They have open weekends where people can come and offer to rehome these animals, but again I reiterate that this is done by volunteers on a voluntary basis. They are great and it is what makes our communities so wonderful. We have great people in the workforce being paid, but our communities are the stronger for this horde of volunteers who give so freely to the fabric of our community.


Think Queensland, Buy Locally Campaign

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (7.34 pm): I rise here today to speak about a wonderful program the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games is currently running throughout Queensland—the Think Queensland, Buy Locally campaign. Small business owners are finally seeing a government that genuinely cares about their interests, a government committed to better outcomes for business and a government that does not create roadblocks for business diversification. Under the stewardship of the Hon. Jann Stuckey, the department has initiated a wonderful Think Queensland, Buy Locally program—a program dedicated to attracting attention to our local businesses in our local areas.

There are a number of studies that support the notion of a multiplying economic impact for each dollar we spend locally. Some studies suggest that every dollar we spend locally works out to be returned five times to the community through building employment, investing in our local area and supporting our community groups. Many local sporting teams rely heavily on the generosity of local businesses, because without their support many community organisations simply could not fund their programs. It is not just sporting groups that benefit. The electorate of Albert contains many young and middle-aged families. These families potentially have teenagers searching for their first job. Without their local community and local businesses, these future leaders would find it very difficult to find part-time employment at their local newsagent, fast-food outlets or stationery suppliers et cetera whilst continuing their studies. In the long run, supporting local business is supporting the future of youth in your area, so this is certainly a wonderful program.

The electorate of Albert is home to a diverse array of businesses—from small business shopfronts to light manufacturing. The electorate stretches from Oxenford and Upper Coomera in the south to Yatala and Mount Warren Park in the north. I ask residents and other businesses to support their neighbourhood by supporting their local businesses which, in turn, support families in the local area. Again, I remind our community that there are many great shopping districts in Oxenford, Upper Coomera, Ormeau, Norfolk Village, Mount Warren Park and Windaroo. By supporting our local businesses, we are supporting the future of our community and future growth in our local area. Please support your local businesses, because this is a wonderful initiative.

Ferny Grove Electorate, Australia Day Storms

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (7.37 pm): I rise in the House this evening to pay tribute to two organisations that have delivered outstanding service to the electorate of Ferny Grove—that is, Energex and the Rural Fire Service. It has been quite a long time since the Australia Day storms, but last Tuesday—23 April—I had the privilege to accompany Minister Dempsey to the Mount Mee Rural Fire Brigade when Energex was delivering its grants program to the Rural Fire Service. It was delivering \$75,000 worth of equipment ranging from pumps, chainsaws, GPS type equipment, weather meter kits, generators and so forth to a number of rural fire brigades around the local area. In attendance at the meeting, at which Minister Dempsey made a speech, was the CEO of Energex, Terry Effene, and the Rural Operations Area Director for the Caboolture area, Neil Kelso. Neil is a well-known entity throughout all of our local areas and is a much loved officer of the rural brigade. Getting back to the outstanding work of these organisations, particularly on that weekend of the Australia Day storms, my electorate, which contains Mount Nebo and Mount Glorious, was significantly impacted through fallen trees across the whole peak of the range. Essentially, the whole area became inaccessible for a number of days. The Rural Fire Service and a number of other organisations were able to clear the felled trees to allow Energex to do its outstanding work of ensuring that supply was restored as soon as possible. It still took five days, but there was a significant amount of damage and anyone who happened to be in the area or who saw some of the photos that were posted would provide testament to the fact that it was a very rare event. The damage that occurred was significant and was mitigated and repaired very rapidly in the circumstances. These outstanding organisations provide services in all communities across Queensland but particularly the Ferny Grove electorate with the provision of four rural fire brigade services in Samford, Mount Nebo, Samsonvale and Clear Mountain. All of those fine volunteers should be commended for their outstanding service to our community.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.40 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young