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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

### Thursday, 6 March 2014

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## THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 2014


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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### The Queensland Plan


 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.31 am): The Queensland Plan will be a community vision for the future. It is the road map for where we want to go as a state and signposts our priorities in making sure that Queensland remains a great place for generations to come. The Queensland Plan working draft captures the feedback offered by more than 78,000 Queenslanders last year and is currently open for public comment. I am pleased to report that engagement on the plan continues to grow. Last week, hundreds of Queenslanders took part in a robust exchange of ideas and opinions with some of our state's leading industry and academic experts via a webjam, or online discussion forum. Queenslanders' interest was high, with more than 8,000 people visiting the website to find out more.

Throughout the course of the week, 931 people took part in the webjams either as registered participants or observers. Each day had a different focus. For example, Tuesday considered education while Friday concentrated on ways to make our government better. Participants debated the issues, posed questions to our guest experts and voted on alternative targets suggested by their fellow Queenslanders. The webjams generated close to 1,200 comments and were a great opportunity for Queenslanders from across the state to have their say.

In my own portfolio of state development the recently released Governing for Growth strategy will ensure that all departments are working together to deliver on the aspirations and targets to be set out in the Queensland Plan. This plan sets out a clear strategy to achieve the sustained high levels of economic growth that Queensland will need over the next decade to address Labor's legacy of debt. Governing for Growth is a whole-of-government action plan to grow the four pillars of our economy: construction, tourism, agriculture and resources. The strategy will ensure that the state government establishes the right economic policy settings and programs to allow businesses, both big and small, to get on with the business of growing their business. We know that healthy, profitable businesses create the jobs and wealth that help us deliver the Queensland identified in the working draft of the Queensland Plan by Queenslanders themselves.

So what is next for the Queensland Plan? As members know, the public review period for the working draft ends midnight tonight, Friday, 7 March. So to everyone who may not have found the time to have their say, today is their last chance. Momentum is building as we draw closer to the release of the final plan in mid-2014. It is not only reassuring but also uplifting to see so many Queenslanders continue this journey with us. I have said it before and I will say it again: I truly believe that the Queensland Plan, with the power of all Queenslanders behind it, will deliver great success for our great state.

#### Queensland Economy

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.34 am): This can-do government has a plan for taking this state forward. We have a vision for where we want Queensland to go. It is a vision that we first outlined at the 2012 election—a vision for growing a four-pillar economy, for revitalising front-line services, for easing the cost-of-living burden on families and businesses and for restoring accountability in government. The Newman government is already well on the way to delivering on that vision.

Queensland's economy is the envy of all other states, growing at a rate of 4.1 per cent in the year to the September quarter of 2013. In 2014-15, we will have the fastest growing economy of any state in the nation. All the latest economic data points to 2014 being the year when it all comes together for Queensland: building starts are up, tourism is rebounding, confidence is high, and jobs continue to be created in Queensland. Undoubtedly, we are on the cusp of a period of sustained economic growth.

But this government knows that we also have to plan for the future so that we can invest in the infrastructure that is necessary to make sure that Queensland realises its full potential. We are developing a long-term plan for our future through the Queensland Plan, as the Deputy Premier has mentioned. But we are constrained. What is holding us back? Labor's \$80 billion black cloud of debt. It is a debt that costs us \$450,000 an hour in interest repayments and limits the government's ability to invest in the infrastructure and services that this growing great state of ours needs. Since we sat here yesterday afternoon, Labor's interest has added another \$8.5 million to repayments that Queenslanders have to pay—another \$8.5 million of Labor interest going out the door.

It is time for all Queenslanders to consider the choices that we want to make to reduce our debt—to reduce Labor's \$80 billion debt, to reduce Labor's deficit and to secure the state's financial future. The choices before us are straightforward. We can increase taxes and charges massively, we can reduce services or we consider the sale or lease of some mature government businesses with the capital being used to pay down debt and to fund new infrastructure and new services that a growing state needs.

In the coming weeks and months we will be undertaking an unprecedented level of community consultation on this issue and the choices that we face. We will be asking Queenslanders to tell us their priorities for reducing the debt and deficits that we inherited from the previous Labor government together with Queenslanders' priorities for the future. Next week I will begin travelling around the state to listen to Queenslanders' views.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** Where are you going?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** The first phase of the consultation will involve roundtable meetings with community leaders in Brisbane and at a number of regional centres.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** You're not prepared to release that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson):** Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** How rude! If only they would exercise that well-known plan of theirs for paying down debt. Patience. Patience. Have a Bex and a nice lie down and all will be revealed.

**Mr Bleijie:** Pour some green tea for them.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members will cease interjecting.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I need some protection from the Attorney-General. The first stop on this tour to listen to Queenslanders' views—wait for it, Leader of the Opposition—will be Cairns. There you go. A little more patience. Just hang on there. I will also be visiting—just wait for it—Townsville, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Emerald, Longreach, Toowoomba, the Gold and Sunshine coasts and a host of other communities as well. All they needed to do was wait a moment or two more, show a little bit of courtesy, and they would have had it all revealed to them, as it has been.

This is the first stage of our conversation with Queenslanders, which will be broad and many faceted, encompassing face-to-face meetings, submissions and an information and consultation campaign. We want to engage as many Queenslanders as possible from all walks of life and from all parts of the state to have their say. We are used to hearing the shrill bleatings of those opposite and their backers in the union ranks, but we will not let them block out the sound of Queenslanders' voices when they tell us what choices they want to make.

This can-do government has a plan for opening up the great opportunities that our great state offers. We know that we need to fund the roads, the railways, the hospitals and the schools of the future. We want input from all Queenslanders on the choices that they want us to make so that their future can be secured.

### Fisheries



**Hon. JJ McVEIGH (Toowoomba South—LNP)** (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (9.40 am): The can-do government has a plan for Queensland. Fishing is one of Queensland's oldest primary industries and a key economic part of many coastal towns. It is also a major recreational pastime for many Queenslanders and tourists who come to our great state. Given the significance of fishing to our way of life, we have a role to ensure that the resource is protected and that it is well managed to allow all sectors to benefit from its use. In saying that, the management processes currently in place are not delivering these outcomes to the standard Queenslanders deserve.

The current state of fisheries management is a result of 20 years of neglect by previous Labor governments. The system is complex, costly to administer, inconsistent and has been weighed down by masses of red tape. To give members an example, there are about 900 pages of legislation for 1,500 commercial fishing operations. As a result of decades of incremental decision making our commercial industry is bombarded with red tape.

Today I announce that the LNP government will commence a full review to overhaul fisheries management in Queensland to modernise and simplify our systems. We need to cut the red tape that is strangling the sector. We want to protect our fisheries resources, provide the flexibility for industry to prosper, ensure recreational and traditional fishers have reasonable access to the resource, ensure the interests of the environment and ensure our lifestyle is maintained. At the end of the review we will work with those in the fishing sector to help develop new streamlined legislation that works for all. As part of the review I will convene appropriate ministerial advisory committees to ensure all stakeholders are fully engaged throughout the process. Cabinet has determined that the Agriculture Committee of Cabinet will directly oversee the review. I acknowledge that the process will take some time and that there are a number of pressing issues to be addressed.

As a result of this decision, the review of the Queensland crab fishery will not proceed at this time and the current management arrangements for this fishery will therefore be maintained for the foreseeable future. More significantly, initiatives may need to be considered in the interim to protect the export accreditation that the Commonwealth provides for many of our commercial fisheries. There are also processes underway to improve arrangements in fisheries such as the coral reef and freshwater fisheries. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis as the review proceeds.

The government is keen to explore approaches based on successful models both overseas and interstate. Previous Labor governments have shied away from this issue and placed it in the too-hard basket. This review is about the future management of our fisheries, not whether a particular area of water is open or closed to fishing or to review marine park boundaries. I have been in contact with David Bateman from Sunfish and Karen Collard from the Queensland Seafood Industry Association and I am keen to work with them and all other stakeholder groups to ensure we have the balance right. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues, particularly ministers Powell, Dickson, Elmes and others, on getting the balance right for commercial, recreational, environmental and traditional interests. It is all about creating a better system to manage one of our most important natural resources—our fisheries.

### **Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services**



**Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (9.43 am): A strong Queensland needs a strong economy and strong dynamic communities. At the very core of what I do as the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is a commitment to helping Queenslanders contribute to our great state. The draft Queensland Plan states that Queensland should have the highest rates of volunteering and community participation in Australia. Queenslanders are right: to create a vibrant state we need vibrant communities where everyone is willing to participate. The vision of changing our focus from me to we will go a long way to achieving that.

This is perfectly aligned with the vision for my portfolio. In Community Services we are supporting in an appropriate way hundreds of non-government organisations and groups across the state. These groups are helping their communities by responding to local problems with local solutions. It is pleasing that because the Queensland government has put in the hard yards we are in a better position now than when we came into government to provide these groups with the support that they need. One example is the Caring for our Community grants, a \$4 million election commitment over three years to help buy essential equipment so that community groups can focus their attention on the services they provide. I look forward to updating the House in the coming months on successful applications from the second round of this very important and popular initiative.

For some, participating fully in their community is not easy. There are those Queenslanders who need some extra help in order to overcome the difficulties they face in their lives. On coming to government we undertook a total review of the child protection system. We did this because fundamentally we want to strengthen families so there can be less children who enter statutory care. There is no silver bullet to achieve this, but the Carmody commission of inquiry and the government's

response outlines the work that must be undertaken. It is not an easy path, but it is a necessary one. We want to build on the good work already being delivered by child protection officers across Queensland. Last week when I was in Tully for community cabinet I was thrilled to hear that our efforts to get better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has started to reap rewards, with 69 children having been successfully returned to their communities in the last year.

Members will be well aware that we are also helping Queenslanders with a disability and their families. Not only did we sign the National Disability Insurance Scheme agreement with the federal government, a commitment that we have backed with an additional \$868 million, but last year I also launched the Queensland Disability Plan. The plan is a carefully considered and detailed road map for how we will prepare for and transition to the NDIS. The plan brings to life the Newman government's commitment to hand choice and control to individuals and their families so that they can make their own decisions, the right decisions, about their lives and the lives of their loved ones. This government is helping communities around Queensland to become stronger and more vibrant so that we can realise our vision for this great state.

### Electricity; Solar Bonus Scheme



**Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.46 am): As most members know, through national electricity market rules, electricity prices reflect the cost of supplying services. Queensland power price increases are directly linked to Labor's planning failures, reckless spending and interventions into the energy market. That is why the Newman government is embarking on the largest electricity sector reform to our power system. We actually have a plan for Queensland's future, not merely a plan for a plan. We will not solve it simply by being patient, taking the green tea that my colleague here enjoys so much, lying down and coming up and hoping time heals the problem.

Today as part of the reform agenda I announce that we will be making changes to the 8c Solar Bonus Scheme. One of Labor's biggest failures when it comes to electricity was intervention into the energy market with initiatives such as the carbon tax, the Solar Bonus Scheme and the Renewable Energy Target. The Solar Bonus Scheme introduced by the Bligh government was one such scheme. That is why I took the chance last year to write to all opposition MPs to find out more about the former government's decision making behind its Solar Bonus Scheme. Surprise, surprise! Seven letters went out asking for details; zero came back. If members would like, I will table every single one of them. It was in July 2013. There was stony silence coming back.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.


**Mr McARDLE:** I take the interjection from the member for Noosa: they are waiting for a plan for a plan. They have to show a bit of patience.

**Mr Cripps:** Eight soy chai lattes.

**Mr McARDLE:** I take the interjection. This Labor scheme was such a disaster that the chairman of the QCA, Malcolm Roberts, recently said on *4BC* that the modelling of the take-up and cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme was 'one of the worst forecasts you will find in recent history'. In 2012 the Newman government closed the 44c feed-in tariff Solar Bonus Scheme to new subscribers and changed the criteria thereto.

However, let me be clear: those who are now in receipt of the 44c feed-in tariff signed a contract in good faith with the former government and this government will honour those agreements. Today I announce that, as we first stated in 2012, the mandated 8c tariff paid to PV solar owners by network businesses Ergon and Energex will end on 30 June 2014. However, from 1 July 2014 retail businesses will continue to offer a rate per kilowatt, but the 8c FIT paid by Ergon and Energex will not be paid. If left unchecked, the 8c feed-in tariff would cost Queensland households and businesses an extra \$110 million on their power bills over the next six years. The change announced today will lift the cost burden from all Queenslanders, making the scheme fairer for all Queensland consumers. These reforms will mean electricity retailers will pay any newly negotiated solar tariff direct to users for the power they export. These are common-sense decisions that will produce a positive outcome for existing customers on the 8c rate, as well as new solar owners. This is a real plan. We are not going to be patient waiting for change to happen. We are taking the bull by the horns and making this work.

## Social Housing


 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (9.51 am): In a great state like Queensland, it is important that everybody has access to safe and affordable housing. The social and economic changes of the past 20 years, coupled with the systematic neglect of the Labor Party, left the housing system struggling to accommodate a demographic completely different to the one it was set up for. The profile of our tenants had changed dramatically, but the system had not.

The Queensland government has a plan to overhaul both the delivery and the perception of social housing. Long-term taxpayer subsidised housing is a privilege that should be reserved for the most vulnerable members of our society. It is not and never should be a permanent home for people who have the potential and the capability to own their own home or rent in the private market. Wherever possible, our vision is for social housing to be transitional; a temporary stop on the road to independence; part of the journey, not the final destination.

Of course, there are those who will always need our assistance and to whom we have an enduring responsibility. However, there are many others whose barriers to the private market can be overcome with the right support. Our vision is about recognising those barriers and helping people work through them, instead of Labor's tactics of assuming that they cannot, handing them a set of keys and walking away.

Turning this vision into a reality is going to take some time, but we have a plan. Last year, the government launched new housing and homelessness strategies. Over the next seven years, between them those strategies will deliver 12,000 additional social and affordable dwellings. We will unleash the potential of the non-government sector to help support our most vulnerable, providing more holistic care. We will divert 250,000 people away from long-term subsidised housing by providing alternative products like bond loans and RentConnect services. We will halve the rate of homelessness in Queensland by 2020. We will do this by partnering with community service providers to deliver a far more strategic and coordinated approach to tackling this scourge, which will ensure that more funds go to front-line service delivery than administrative overheads. This government cares deeply about our most vulnerable and will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that this great state is a true home to all who live here.

## Get in the Game; Nature Play

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (9.53 am): The Queensland can-do government has a great plan for the future of Queensland, unlike those opposite who just have a plan to have a cup of tea. Currently throughout Queensland, about one-quarter of children aged between five and 15 years of age are being diagnosed with obesity, which is becoming a terrible problem for the state. The people of Queensland need to understand that roughly 26 per cent of the Queensland budget goes to our health system. In my department, our plan is related to our Get in the Game policy. On a daily basis we are encouraging children to get out from behind computer screens and onto the green paddock.

In the past three weeks, we have released 29,500 Get Started vouchers. Up to 30 per cent of those vouchers have gone to kids who have never had the opportunity to play sport before. It is ticking the box, it is getting our children onto the sporting field and it is making a big difference. Obesity leads to heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease and, worst of all, diabetes. I know well about that because my father died from it at the age of 59. Let us make a difference. As united Queenslanders, we can get our young people involved in sport and physical activity and we can make a great difference.

The second component of our plan is about getting our young people involved in the environment and getting them out into the national parks by encouraging them to become involved in a policy that our government has called Nature Play. For the first time on the east coast of Australia, we are providing school aged Queenslanders with a passport that they can use to identify certain things, which they then record in their passport document. It shows, 'We have walked in a national park; we built with bush sticks; we have built tents'. Today young people are not doing those things that we all did as children.

Physical activity needs to be promoted and each one of us—as ministers, as members of parliament and as parents—has to get our children physically active. It is our opportunity to make a difference. United, we can save future generations so that they can be a part of our economic prosperity, delivering great outcomes in a great state. We have a plan for the future.

## 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) (9.56 am): I want to see a better life outcome and lifestyle for both Australia's oldest inhabitants and our very newest ones. The election of the Abbott government presents a great opportunity to progress Indigenous issues in Queensland, because our two governments share a belief that the best way to address historic disadvantage is through economic development. Employment, sustainable enterprise and land tenure reform to provide improved options for home ownership are essential to achieve better life outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders. Those priorities are at the centre of an economic Indigenous participation framework that I released at the end of last year. An action plan is being developed from the framework to help Indigenous Queenslanders have the same level of participation in the Queensland economy as non-Indigenous people in workforce participation, employment, careers, and business ownership.

In the past, much of the effort across the Indigenous portfolio has been directed at remote communities where about 20 per cent of Queensland's Indigenous population lives. The remaining 80 per cent live in regional centres and the south-east corner of the state. Many of them already have jobs and are participating in the economy. However, others face the daily challenges of discrimination, education, training and cultural barriers. This portfolio is a people portfolio. It values people and it values the future for all people, whether they are Indigenous or from the 220 different cultures that make up modern-day Queensland.

## ABSENCE OF PREMIER

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.57 am): I wish to advise the House that the Premier will be absent from the House today, as he is leading a trade delegation to the United States of America. The Deputy Premier has been appointed Acting Premier for the duration of his absence. Congratulations, Deputy Premier.

## STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

### Report

**Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (9.58 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 34 of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee. The report examines subordinate legislation tabled between 16 October 2013 and 19 November 2013 as considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 3 April 2014. The committee did not identify any significant policy issues or concerns regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles. I commend the report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 34—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 October 2013 and 19 November 2013 [[4599](#)].

## EDUCATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

### Report

**Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (9.59 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 30 of the Education and Innovation Committee, *Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 November 2013 and 11 February 2014*.

The committee has considered the eight pieces of subordinate legislation and found no significant issues in respect of fundamental legislative principles or lawfulness. Three pieces of subordinate legislation are proclamations of the commenced acts or remaining parts of acts, and no issues were identified. The committee notes that some of the remaining pieces of subordinate legislation progress matters that were previously considered by the committee during examination of the parent legislation.

A small number of issues were identified and considered in more detail, such as the introduction of new fees. On balance, the committee considered the issues to be justified. Two potential drafting errors were also noted, and the committee recommends these be corrected. I commend the report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 30—Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 November 2013 and 11 February 2014 [[4600](#)].

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE


### Report

**Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (10.00 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 38 of the Finance and Administration Committee. This report covers the portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 15 October 2013 and 21 November 2013 considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 20 March 2014. The committee did not identify any significant issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. I commend the report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 38—Portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 15 October 2013 and 21 November 2013 [\[4601\]](#).

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Queensland Health, Employment Contracts

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.00 am): My question is to the Premier—sorry, he is not here; I will ask the Acting Premier.

**Mr STEVENS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! I call the Leader of the House.

**Mr STEVENS:** There is a well-established precedent—and I refer to the Speaker's ruling—that there is to be no comment about the absence of particular members. This is absolutely disgusting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition is aware of the protocols. Leader of the Opposition, what is your question?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Acting Premier, it was reported last night that 900 doctors, which amounts to a quarter of the state's specialists, voted that they have no confidence in this health minister. Will the Acting Premier finally step in—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, to interrupt and interject during the asking of a question is out of order. Any member who does this I will eject from the chamber. Will the Leader of the Opposition please repeat the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. My question is to the Acting Premier. Given it was reported last night that 900 doctors, which amounts to a quarter of the state's specialists, voted that they have no confidence in this health minister, will the Acting Premier finally step in and fix up this crisis that is engulfing the public health system?

**Mr SEENEY:** Can I first of all thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. This is the first question that she has asked me in probably over two years in this place. Can I also congratulate my chief of staff who just won a good bottle of wine. He was the only person I could find this morning who would take a bet that the Leader of the Opposition would not ask me a question. The question this morning from the Leader of the Opposition is certainly appreciated by my chief of staff.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the number of doctors who met at the Pineapple Hotel. I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to be cautious about misleading the House about whether all of those people were actually doctors. I think there were quite a number of union activists involved. The Leader of the Opposition might like to correct the record perhaps about the number of doctors who were involved.

Madam Speaker, can I say that both you and I spent a long time in opposition and we know full well that question time is an opportunity for the opposition to ask questions of ministers who are responsible for their portfolios. That is why all these people come in here every day—to answer questions about their portfolios. The opposition has come in here every day this week and tried to hype up this issue and tried to create a crisis where there is not a crisis.

There is one thing that they have not done. They have not had the courage to ask the Minister for Health a question about his portfolio. So I am going to refer this question to the Minister for Health so that he gets a chance to do what the opposition should have given him a chance to do. I acknowledge there is not much time left, so I am going to refer the question to my colleague the Minister for Health and I foreshadow that I will move for an extension of time for him to answer it.

**Madam SPEAKER:** That is actually not in accordance with the standing orders. If members wish to ask questions they will have to ask the minister directly.

### **Queensland Health, Employment Contracts**

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My next question is to the Minister for Health.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! We will have quiet for the question. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Given the overnight vote of no confidence in the health minister and his assistant minister's threats to resign, what action is the health minister taking to prevent thousands of doctors leaving Queensland?

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I certainly do welcome a belated question from the opposition on the health portfolio. Quite importantly, the health portfolio is the largest portfolio in the Queensland government. It accounts for some 30 per cent of the state budget. I am absolutely delighted to answer a question because I thought I had to wait to get a question from the opposition on health laundered through the Acting Premier by proxy. I am very pleased that I have one directly.

It is not unusual for health ministers to be subjected to the circumstances which we actually saw at the Pineapple Hotel last night.

**Mrs Miller** interjected.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** We actually have an interjection from the honourable member for Bundamba. That is as close as we will ever get to a question to me from the member for Bundamba in this House. For her it was like she was returning to her spiritual home last night. If we go back some 10 years we see that the Pineapple Hotel was the place where she and Gordon turned up to capitulate to the doctors, and this is actually what saw the Queensland health system subject to an \$800 million scandal which the Auditor-General pointed out only recently. The only difference, of course, is that she did not organise a leave pass for the old duo to get back. We could have had Gordon there as well saying exactly the same thing. The architect of the original Pineapple Hotel agreement turned up last night.

I think it is very important that we look at what they put out on smoqld.org on 19 February as they organised this particular meeting. This is what they say they are going to do—

... we walk away in big numbers, they will come rushing back with a better deal (it happened in South Australia after a mass resignation campaign, it happened with the VMOs a few years ago in Queensland, and it will happen ...

Again. What we have always said is that we are happy to sit down and have discussions with regard to real issues. When we are dealing with these things listening is a two-way process. It is not just about the government listening and responding. It is about those people who are actually making erroneous statements taking the information and relaying it honestly and properly to their colleagues as we have done over and over and over.

A couple of weeks ago the Premier and I invited Steve Hambleton to discuss any unresolved issues with us. We also invited John Fraser to do the same thing. Unbeknown to them these meetings are underway. We are fair dinkum and they are not.

*(Time expired)*

### **Governing for Growth: Economic Strategy and Action Plan**

**Mr DILLAWAY:** My question without notice is to the Acting Premier. Could the Acting Premier please outline how the Governing for Growth: Economic Strategy and Action Plan will deliver on the aspirations and targets set out in the Queensland Plan?

**Mr Mulherin:** Shouldn't that be to the Treasurer?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Before I call the Deputy Premier, I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition under standing order 253A. That was for interjecting during a question. I remind members to respect that questioners should have silence. I call the Deputy Premier.

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the member for Bulimba for the question, because I certainly appreciate the opportunity to talk about the Queensland Plan and how the plans that are being put together by all of the ministers will contribute to meeting those goals that Queenslanders themselves have identified

within the Queensland Plan. Madam Speaker, wasn't it gratifying and indeed impressive this morning to hear minister and after minister in our government talk about the plans that they have put in place for their departments—all of which come together as an overall plan for our government to meet those goals and aspirations identified by the people of Queensland in the Queensland Plan process. In my own department, the Economic Strategy and Action Plan, which I tabled here in the parliament last parliamentary sitting, is a key part—just one part—of our department's efforts to ensure that our government delivers those aspirations to Queenslanders.

As in my department, in all departments there are a range of activities that we have already achieved that have taken us a long way towards those goals, and they are set out in that document that I tabled. It is something that our government has been determined to do. We went to the people of Queensland with a plan to get the state back on track. We are delivering on that plan. We had a six-month action plan. We delivered on that plan. We have department after department identifying the task, making their plans, developing their strategies and delivering. How different that is to what we see from the people who are paid by the people of Queensland to be the alternative government. They have no plans for anything. They have a plan to be patient, a plan to sit and wait for the problems that they caused last time they were in government to finally go away so that they can hopefully come back and do it all again to the people of Queensland.

This government develops a strategy and sticks to it. The alternative government in this state cannot stick to a single position for longer than a week. They have only had one major policy position and they have changed that three times. They flip and flop backwards and forwards, and it illustrates to Queenslanders the difference between the previous government, of which they were part, and the government that was elected nearly two years now.

We have a plan for Queensland. We have a plan to deliver the aspirations that Queenslanders themselves developed during the Queensland Plan process, and we will deliver on those plans just as we delivered on the plan that we took to the people of Queensland. We stick to our word. We stick to the promises that we make to the people of Queensland, and that stands in stark contrast to the Leader of the Opposition and the rabble that she leads into this House every day.

### **1 William Street**

**Mr MULHERIN:** My question is directed to the Acting Premier. Will the Acting Premier advise how much taxpayers' money has been spent to date on the Premier's tunnel between 1 William Street and Parliament House, as well as advise what the total estimated cost of this tunnel is?

**Mr SEENEY:** It is interesting that the opposition continue to try to criticise the 1 William Street project, a block of land that has stood vacant for the best part of 30 years, I think. The previous government had a couple of goes at investigating the development of this part of the city and did absolutely nothing.

**Mr Nicholls:** \$5 million for the planning charade they had.

**Mr SEENEY:** That is right. Remember the North Bank proposal, where they were going to build something three-quarters of the way out into the river? It cost \$5 million for some fancy drawings and pictures. The member for Mackay was part of that government. In fact, he sat where the member for Glass House now sits most days and contributed next to nothing to the government. He certainly was symbolic of a whole range of ministers who were part of that government who did absolutely nothing—absolutely nothing.

We very quickly developed the 1 William Street project when we came to power because we understood that it was the catalyst for the development of a major part of the CBD. Developing the 1 William Street project means that we can develop the Queen's Wharf precinct, and won't that be a great development for the people of Brisbane? That will bring Brisbane into the international tourist market with a competitive development. All of those things are possible with the development of 1 William Street. But the opposition do not want to know about those issues. They want to try to create some sort of political mileage for themselves by making an issue about an underpass under Alice Street. It is an underpass under Alice Street, member for Mackay. They are the words that you should be using if you want to talk about it. It is an underpass under Alice Street to connect to a tunnel that already exists.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** I can inform the House that we have looked at this proposition. We have looked at the proposition and we have decided not to proceed with it. It was something that was very appropriate for us to look at, given that 1 William Street is going to be a major part of this parliamentary precinct.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I warn members on my left. The question is being answered and there is no provocation in there with respect to members of the opposition. I want to hear the answer and I will warn members under the standing orders if they continue to interject. I call the Deputy Premier.

**Mr SEENEY:** I do thank the member for Mackay for the question, because, even though it is a bit hard to believe, I think he is supposed to be the shadow minister who shadows my portfolio. That is probably the first question he has asked me in two years. I will stand corrected, but I think it is the first. I cannot remember the last one. Perhaps the member for Mackay might reflect on the fact that he has 22 staff who are paid over \$1 million I saw in the report that was tabled here yesterday to ensure that he is able to ask me questions about my portfolio. Maybe he should start doing his job.

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Economy

**Mr SHORTEN:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer outline any threats to Queensland's future growth including any alternative views?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I thank the member for Algeester for his question as he is quite interested in what is going to be the year that comes together here in Queensland in 2014 and any threats to the future that may occur. It is good to be here and to be able to answer that question. I am still of course, Deputy Premier, waiting for my first question from those opposite for 2014. And still the interest repayments on Labor's \$80 billion worth of debt continue to grow. I have done a few quick calculations, of course. I have done the numbers since the last time the opposition asked me a question.

**Mr Pitt:** We know you have done the numbers.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** No, no. You can ask a question but do not interject.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Madam Speaker, I hear the members of the 'Tea Party' over there. There they are—the Labor 'Tea Party'. They are all going to go and have a chamomile tea, a lemon myrtle tea, a black tea perhaps—the 'Tea Party'—and be patient. This is Labor's very own answer to the Tea Party right here in Queensland.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Having had a look at the numbers—the last time the opposition asked me a question was 29 October last year; that is 128 days, members. How much interest payments do you think have accumulated in that time? With the biggest opposition staff in Australia, how much do you think it is? It is \$1.4 billion in interest that has been paid out since the opposition asked me a question in this place.

I think we need to look a little further afield. We know they do not have a plan. They have a plan to have a plan and it is to have patience. They are going to wait and manna will fall from heaven and that will solve the debt problem in Queensland. But there is another party in this place and they have a different plan. Well they have a couple actually. Of course, it is our friend Clive Palmer and the PUP. Their policy is to rip GST money out of Queensland in a desperate bid to win votes in other states. I should say that the Palmer United Party does not just have one policy on GST; it has different policies depending on which state you are in. The federal member for Fairfax—the federal member for flim-flam and Tim Tams—has made a habit of simply telling people what he thinks they want to hear, and his comments on GST are no different.

In doing his best to win votes in the lead-up to the Western Australian Senate election, Mr Palmer has been adamant that he thinks Western Australia deserves a bigger slice of the GST pie. In an interview on Sky on 4 December he said, 'Our policy will be ensuring that we use the balance of power to get that GST back for Western Australia.' Of course, there is a state election running in Tasmania. So what does he say in Tasmania to the local media, 'Of course, we will see Tasmania lose millions.' Lo and behold, at the launch of the Palmer United Party Mr Palmer's policy had changed and he said that Tasmania should get their fair share. They are all over the place—

*(Time expired)*

### **Accommodation Support and Respite Services**

**Mr WELLINGTON:** My question is to the Minister for Disability Services. I refer the minister to her ministerial statement delivered yesterday on the Accommodation Support and Respite Services, and I ask: what arrangements are proposed for the future care of high needs clients, currently the responsibility of the state government, for whom the non-government sector does not want responsibility?

**Ms DAVIS:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Yesterday in this place I was very clear about the path that this government was going to take with regard to government provided accommodation support and respite services. I want to repeat what I said yesterday, and that is our AS&RS clients and their families are our No. 1 priority in this transition. Everything we do will be about preparing for the NDIS. As I said yesterday, part of that preparation will be the transition of government provided Accommodation Support and Respite Services. The reason that is important is that we want to have people settled and ready to take full advantage of the NDIS when it comes into full operation in 2019 so that people have choice and control over the disability dollars they will receive through the NDIS.

We particularly care about people with a disability with very significant needs, and that is what the honourable member is referring to in his question. I can say that the non-government sector, which already provides around 90 per cent of these services, is well equipped to take on these very complex clients. In fact, recently I was in one of our regions speaking to the local disability workers and they were talking to me about a particular client who had been with government provided services and who was transitioning to the non-government sector who had significant challenging behaviours. We spoke the other night on the restrictive practices bill and the member made some comments that this was a good way to go forward. For this particular client there was a restrictive practice behaviour support plan.

We are working very hard in a considered and calm manner to do the transition over five years so we can work with families and strengthen the non-government sector to ensure they have the capacity and the staffing to deal with the extra challenges of people with very significant needs. I can assure the honourable member that front and centre are the needs of the clients, the needs of their families, support of our non-government organisations in preparing for this challenge and having the staff available. As I keep saying, we need 13,000 more trained staff in the disability sector, and they will be trained to support people both with significant needs and less significant needs. This government is about moving towards an NDIS in a calm and considered way, treating clients, their parents and their families with respect in regard to services as they transition across by 2019.

Interruption.

## **PRIVILEGE**

### **Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister**

**Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (10.23 am): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I believe the Minister for Health made a statement this morning which might be in contempt of the parliament under standing order 266. He said that I attended a meeting at the Pineapple Hotel several years ago in relation to senior medical officers' pay negotiations. I advise the House that I did not attend such a meeting, and I advise that I will be writing to you, Madam Speaker, about this matter.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

### Queensland Health, Employment Contracts

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. There is a lot of talk of Labor aligned unionists resigning, but can the minister provide an update on the real and highly respected doctors who will be signing?

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I thank the honourable member for her question and for the way that she has proactively and positively represented the interests of her constituents including doctors. Before I go there, if I have in some way misled the House in terms of the member for Bundamba, I am more than happy to correct the record. She certainly attended last night. If she did not attend several years ago, she was certainly hand in hand, hand in glove, side by side and hip to hip with Gordon Nuttall as they went about negotiating the system which was consequent upon the debacle we saw at the Pineapple Hotel at that particular time.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend somebody who is a real force in professional clinical leadership in Queensland, and that is Dr Ross Cartmill. He has engaged with Queensland Health over the last seven to eight months to reach a good conclusion for VMOs in Queensland. I take the opportunity to table a letter which he has now circulated to the 650-plus VMOs in Queensland recommending that they endorse the contract which the Queensland government has negotiated with them.

*Tabled paper:* Document by Ross Cartmill, Chairman, VMO Committee AMAQ to colleagues, dated 5 March 2014, titled 'VMO Report Number 3', regarding VMO employment agreement [\[4602\]](#).

In this letter Dr Cartmill states—

This report is intended to inform you of the final outcome after my negotiations with Qld Health on your behalf.

He further states—

The VMO committee has endorsed the negotiated outcome.

He points out some of the additional benefits such as a 2.2 per cent base salary increase. He goes on to state—

There is no major loss of benefits because of the transition to contracts ... The contract is to be reviewed annually. The last 3 VMO agreements were achieved after lengthy delays. The current agreement was signed 3 years late so that every VMO had no change in their terms and conditions for a 4 year period.

Shame on those opposite! He continues—

I doubt there was any other group of employees in our country treated as badly as Qld VMOs.

Who treated them that badly? The Labor Party opposite.

The change to employee contracts will prevent a repeat of such industrial impropriety.

This is what happens when you sit around a negotiating table and you remain consistent and true to the cause from day one. The problem we have is that others have not done that and people are making commentary who were not even around the table at the time. Again, I simply say that people should look at what is actually on offer, not what they have been told is on offer, because listening is a two-way thing. Dr Cartmill, who is highly regarded and highly respected, has sat down with integrity in his negotiations and has achieved something four years ago ahead of what VMOs have ever achieved before in Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### 1 William Street

**Mr PITT:** My question without notice is to the Acting Premier. I refer to reports today on the 1 William Street project, and I ask: will the Acting Premier confirm that taxpayers face an additional loss of up to \$200 million under the government's so-called good deal to rent space in the building at a cost of almost \$1.2 billion over the term of the lease?

**Mr SEENEY:** I appreciate the question from the opposition Treasury spokesman, the member for Mulgrave. He, too, does not ask the Treasurer many questions.

**Mr Nicholls:** I answered this question two weeks ago in a ministerial statement.

**Mr SEENEY:** Mate, I am not going to refer it to you.

**Mr Nicholls:** Please.

**Mr SEENEY:** There is no way. I get so few questions I am going to keep this one. I think the member for Mulgrave is referring to a report in the *Financial Review* this morning. Was it in the *Financial Review*?

**Mr Nicholls:** The *Financial Review*.

**Mr SEENEY:** Yes, it was a report in the *Financial Review* this morning. Before I deal with the detail of it, it illustrates how this opposition operate. They get up every morning, grab the paper, see what is in the paper and say, 'What can we find in the paper to ask questions about?' Maybe the 22 staff that they have are all assigned a paper to read. You give them all a paper to read and say, 'Find something in the paper we can ask a question about when we go into parliament.' This is the most overpaid, underperforming opposition that this parliament has ever seen in its long history.

I now get to the specifics of the question. 1 William Street is rapidly becoming a reality. It is rapidly coming out of the ground and it will be a major opportunity for everyone who works in government to work in a modern office environment—the sort of modern office environment that was denied by the incompetent government that the member for Mulgrave was a part of. The member for Mulgrave was a part of the cabinet at the time. He sat around the cabinet table and could not deliver anything to the people of Queensland, let alone the Queenslanders who work for the government.

The report in the *Financial Review* this morning presupposed, as I understood it, that we were not going to be able to lease the available space that we have reserved in that building for the private sector. It presupposed that nobody would be interested in renting space in a building where all of the senior people in the government have their offices.

**Mr Stevens:** Tell them they're dreaming.

**Mr SEENEY:** I think they are dreaming, member for Mermaid Beach. I think the private sector will be very keen to take up that opportunity and share a building with ministers and senior bureaucrats—all of whom will form the core of the government. I think that will be a very desirable rental opportunity. I do not think the supposition that we will not be able to rent any of that space is worth a story in the *Financial Review*. Time will prove that the private sector, especially that part of the private sector that works closely with the government, will be keen to move into 1 William Street, just as Queensland's public servants will.

*(Time expired)*

## Education

**Mr COX:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. Can the minister outline the Newman government's vision for the future of education in Queensland?

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I thank the honourable member for the question and acknowledge his great advocacy for schools in his electorate. The challenge that we face in education, which is the second biggest portfolio in the government behind health, as the honourable Minister for Health has already mentioned this morning, is that we did not just need a vision for the future—which of course is so important, and the Queensland Plan definitely told us that people know that education is the key to improving our economy, our productivity and our society—but we also had to fix the problems that were left behind, and patience was not going to do it.

Patience was not going to fix the maintenance issues that those opposite left behind in my schools in Surfers Paradise, where principals over the years would be given \$8,000 to \$10,000 for maintenance issues that totalled \$300 million across the state. So we had to fix those problems, and that has meant \$2 million in the honourable member for Thuringowa's electorate, including up to \$600,000 at Kirwan State High School, which I have been to. That is a magnificent school. It is basically like a minitown because there are so many people there every day. They have a passionate executive principal and a wonderful cohort of students, including a great number of Indigenous students, and the support they are given is to be admired. So they are getting \$600,000, compared to the \$8,000 to \$10,000 a year they were getting in the past. Every member in this House, including those opposite, would have to acknowledge that that is a significant commitment made by this government to fix those maintenance problems before we could get on to the future in our plan.

Our plan, as exemplified by the Queensland Plan, is to say that education is the key. To that end, we said that we want to focus on improving outcomes. We want to make sure we do that via teacher quality, so we have announced \$537 million through Great Teachers = Great Results and we have announced the Great Results Guarantee. In the member for Thuringowa's electorate, that means \$1.3 million going to his schools this year alone. That is a long-term economic plan. No state government in the history of Australia has actually said that it would focus on the prep to grade 2s to prevent the problems that have happened in the past as students got into the senior levels of school. Even the Secondary Principals Association has acknowledged that. Every state school in Queensland is better off this year to the total tune of \$130 million.

There are so many other areas, such as principal recruitment where we are giving communities a greater say in who runs their schools. We have had IPS, independent public schools, with 80 schools now doing that. We have had changes in discipline measures to make sure our principals are back in charge. For the first time ever, as acknowledged by the principals, we have removed a lot of red tape. We want to work with the union but we cannot work with a union which likes to say that we need bigger classrooms because kids are getting bigger, and we cannot work with a union which says that NAPLAN and My School are a waste of time. The union wants parents to go back to the dark ages and I know that parents do not want that at all.

### 1 William Street

**Mrs SCOTT:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. I refer to reports today on the 1 William Street project. Will the Deputy Premier confirm reports today citing CBD property experts who say the saving of \$60 million a year in rent costs, as quoted by the government, has more to do with the government's mass sackings of government workers and the reduction in its total accommodation needs and has nothing to do with the new executive building?

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I think I might have to buy 'Poppy' two bottles of wine.

**Mr Nicholls:** They are still not asking me.

**Mr SEENEY:** The point the Treasurer makes is right; they are still not asking the minister responsible. I do not want the Treasurer to take all of the credit for 1 William Street. He tries to, but it is a joint effort. He should not forget that both of us went down there with the silver shovels and turned the sod, so I do contest the point that the Treasurer should answer every question about 1 William Street. It is fair of him to suggest that the question about the actual financial details of the 1 William Street project really should have been directed to Treasury, but I will do my best to answer this and I am sure the Treasurer will be able to fill in any gaps that I might leave.

There is no question that 1 William Street is a great deal for Queenslanders, for the Queensland government and for Queensland public servants. It is a great deal on many levels.

**Mr Nicholls:** Creating 1,000 jobs.

**Mr SEENEY:** First and foremost, it is creating 1,000 jobs—thank you, Treasurer; I knew you would help me out. It will create 1,000 jobs in the near future, and we will see those jobs ramp up. Every day when I get up in my little bedroom on level 23 and lean out the window and have a look, I see that the number of orange shirts and yellow shirts working on the 1 William Street site gets greater and greater and greater. They are real jobs for real Queenslanders that they would not have had if it had not been for this government. That example is being repeated right across the Brisbane CBD where on construction site after construction site we are finally seeing people working on projects. This is not just happening in the Brisbane CBD; it is happening right across South-East Queensland and Queensland generally. We are starting to see a ramp up of that construction activity.

This building also allows the development of the Queens Wharf precinct that I spoke about earlier. It allows the government to move out of some of the dated buildings that we are paying rent on at the moment, and that is what the opposition do not factor into the accusations that they make. The government is currently paying rent on buildings that are out of date and that have not been updated to the level that is expected in modern office buildings because their government did not care about Queensland's public servants. They were not prepared to provide them with decent working conditions. They did not care about creating jobs for the people they expected to support them. We believe that 1 William Street is the catalyst for major development in the Brisbane CBD. It is also great news for the construction industry and great news for Queensland's public servants.

*(Time expired)*

### Department of Transport and Main Roads

**Mr WOODFORTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister please outline how the government will deliver better infrastructure and better planning in transport and main roads for Queenslanders?

**Mr EMERSON:** I thank the honourable member for Nudgee for that question because I know he is very committed to getting better roads and better public transport not just in his own area but across Queensland. Obviously we can see that wonderful project in his electorate, with the overpass at Robinson Road at Geebung well and truly underway, along with the Telegraph Road overpass. Those two projects are worth \$200 million. They were talked about for many, many years by Labor but they were never delivered. I remember going to public meetings in the lead-up to the election campaign and seeing the disappointment from locals there because of the fact that Labor had never delivered them. I remember the then member claiming that Labor might think about it at some stage in the future, and there were moans from the locals there because they had heard it over and over again from Labor.

We continue to deliver on major projects for Queensland, and this year it all comes together. Let me talk about the Bruce Highway and the \$10 billion record deal with the federal government. I have to pause there because I am sad today because I discovered that the shadow minister for main roads has been sacked. He has been sacked from the main roads shadow ministry. I do not know why that would be. He has been determined on that issue—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr EMERSON:** I have to say to the Treasurer that he is not the only one who does not receive many questions from the member. Over the last two years—

**Mr Springborg:** Breaks his promise on road building.

**Mr EMERSON:** Again. Many members may not realise that he was the shadow minister for main roads before he was sacked. Over the last two years he has asked four questions—one every six months. Do honourable members remember his wonderful contribution in terms of roads policy for Labor? What was it? It was that state money being spent on the Bruce Highway was a waste of money. That was his policy. That was Labor's policy. That was his one effort. No wonder he was sacked as the main roads spokesman.

I do welcome the fact that the member for South Brisbane has now taken up that portfolio because of the wonderful contribution she has already made in terms of Main Roads policy! I do point out the Blacksoil interchange project.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Minister, I apologise. We have a problem with the sound system. I am going to reset the sound system and see if we are able to get it going again. This is important for the benefit of not only members in the House but also Hansard. I will ask if we could have it confirmed that the sound system is back on? Minister, I believe the sound is back on. I call the Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

**Mr EMERSON:** That brings me to the Blacksoil interchange. There we had the great contribution on policy from the member for South Brisbane! She went out and claimed that we had overspent on the Blacksoil interchange, and what happened? They finally found out that Queensland—

**Mr Dowling:** Hansard is saying the sound is not on.

**Madam SPEAKER:** We will pause the clock. We will note the time—the time is 10.41 am—so we will not lose time from question time. While we in the chamber can hear, apparently the sound is not connecting through to Hansard. I will just ask members to pause. I will ask members to respect the rules of the House. We do have a problem with the sound system, but we are going to continue. It is not an ideal backup system, but we do have a backup system. I call the Minister for Transport.

**Mr EMERSON:** Again, in relation to the Blacksoil interchange, the member for South Brisbane claimed in the paper that that project was overspent, and what happened? Then the *Queensland Times* came out, and what did they say? They talked about 'Labor's deceit', because in reality they knew that Anna Bligh knew what the real figure was. The member for South Brisbane misled the public, and that is her great contribution on Main Roads! I welcome her appointment! I cannot wait! Hopefully she will ask a few more questions—

(Time expired)

**Madam SPEAKER:** Before I call the next member, I am advised that we are able to capture the sound in-house, but it is not being broadcast externally.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members. I know this is exciting news, but I ask for your order. I call the member for Dalrymple.

### **Aurizon, Jobs**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, will the government commit to its promise of growing regions through the Queensland Plan by using its veto powers as the rail regulator to block Aurizon's axing of 60 jobs in Western Queensland?

**Mr EMERSON:** I do not know if this is actually useful, but I do appreciate the question from the member for Dalrymple. We are working in terms of increasing freight movements on our rail system. There are so many things we have done already. For instance, there is the \$50 million we are spending on those passing loops at Toowoomba and the \$17 million to make the tunnels deeper so that we can get those high cube containers through. As honourable members would know, we have also released our Moving Freight strategy. That strategy shows that over the next decade there will be a 70 per cent increase in the number of freight movements across Queensland, and we need to deal with that. In that freight strategy it is indicated very clearly that we want more and more freight moving on rail. As the minister, I have referred the matter to the parliamentary transport committee, headed by the member for Warrego, to look at the issue of freight on train and getting more freight on train. I know that is particularly important to both the member for Warrego and the member for Gregory.

We are continuing to work on that. These are the things that we can do. The other week I was in Canberra with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure to announce that the federal government's own Australian Rail Track Corporation was going to have a look at the management of our network. Why are we interested in doing that? Because over the last decade the ARTC has spent \$6 billion on upgrading rail across Australia, but only one per cent of that amount of money—only one per cent of that \$6 billion—is being spent in Queensland. We want to try to get more of that money into Queensland. That is a sensible approach.

However, I say to the member for Dalrymple that I cannot rewrite history. The reality is that the previous Labor government, without a mandate and without consultation with the public, sold off QR National. That is now Aurizon. It is now a commercial organisation. It makes its commercial decisions.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr EMERSON:** As the Treasurer has just indicated to me, let us not forget who the member for Dalrymple and his colleagues continually vote with in this House. They continue to vote with Labor. They back Labor's moves. They vote with Labor, the same people who, without a mandate and without consultation, sold off QR National. The issue that the member raises is a commercial issue for QR National, or Aurizon as it is now known. We cannot rewrite history, but we can continue to deliver on the parts that we can with more money for passing loops, deeper tunnels, the ARTC move and the Moving Freight strategy. We are committed to our freight network and to getting more and more freight onto rail. What we are doing is exactly what Labor did not do. All they did was sell off QR National and all those in the Katter party do is back Labor over and over again. They are the north-west branch of the Labor Party.

### **Queensland Resources Sector**

**Mrs MADDERN:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Can the minister please outline his plan to ensure a prosperous future for Queensland's resources sector?

**Mr CRIPPS:** I thank the member for Maryborough for the question. Certainly the Newman government is committed to supercharging Queensland's economy and creating jobs for Queenslanders. It is a fact that the resources industry injects about \$36 billion into Queensland's economy each year. Resource companies provide around 27 per cent of total GDP, 75,500 full-time jobs and 225,000 indirect full-time jobs, \$2.8 billion in royalties to the state of Queensland and \$32 billion in exports. Labor had absolutely no plan for the resources sector. They ignored it. In fact,

they took it for granted and it suffered as a result. In contrast, we do have a plan. We promised to streamline policies and reduce red tape to restore the reputation of Queensland as a world leader in the resources sector, and we are delivering on that promise. As the resources sector is one of the four economic pillars, the Newman government is encouraging the development of a strong, competitive, agile and diversified resources sector.

Last week I officially kicked off the ResourcesQ initiative, which will help our government, the industry and the Queensland community to work in partnership to achieve a 30-year vision and action plan for the resources sector, a plan that will drive growth and jobs now and into the future.

ResourcesQ is an opportunity to shape the future of the sector in Queensland and ensure that our great state is a world leader in the industry. It is an exciting time for the government to be involved in setting the agenda; it is an exciting time for the industry to partner in that process. The initiative started with an industry leaders workshop last Thursday, and we heard vigorous and robust discussions throughout the day from a group of industry leaders who rolled up their sleeves to think strategically about the future of the resources sector.

It is very clear from those discussions that there are a number of areas on which we need to focus our attention. One of those is the need to focus attention on education and training so that we have skilled workers to ensure we maintain our competitive advantage and ensure we have an abundance of competent and experienced professionals to take the resources sector into the future. There has been a lot of discussion about traditional resource strengths in Queensland—coal, base metals and gas—and there is a continued desire to grow these industries to ensure that our regions thrive, but we must look into exploring and developing emerging industries such as shale gas, oil shale, uranium and rare earths, which are industries of the future and which will drive economic growth and create jobs beyond the 30-year horizon.

I am optimistic about the future of the resources sector in Queensland. I believe it has a bright and prosperous future and I look forward to taking ResourcesQ to the regions, with forums to be held in Cairns, Gladstone, Mount Isa, Emerald and Roma to help set the right path for the future of Queensland's resources sector to make it a leader in Australia's resource development and create wealth and jobs for all Queenslanders—

*(Time expired)*

### **State Development Area, Mount Larcom**

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier outline any review of the state development area north of Gladstone and whether that review will allow progress in the Mount Larcom area?

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the member for Gladstone for the question. It is a good question and the sort of question that the opposition should be asking.

**An opposition member:** You cannot answer our questions!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr SEENEY:** They have a staff of 22; the member for Gladstone does it all on her own. No wonder they are envious of the type of questions that the member for Gladstone asks.

Member for Gladstone, I want to give you an answer. We are currently proposing a review of the management of all state development areas that are under the control of the Coordinator-General within my department. The one at Gladstone is certainly part of that process, but it is a review with no fixed outcomes at the moment. It is a critical part of our port strategy which, as you would be aware, is about ensuring that we limit port development to existing port footprints. The land use options within the SDA are a very important part of that.

We would be very happy to engage with the member for Gladstone and the local Gladstone community in that process to ensure that we can maximise the development opportunities within the port of Gladstone. The state development area that has been declared there for quite some time presents remarkable opportunities that can be best maximised in the development of Gladstone as a world-class port in the future. It is quite clear that the development of additional ports along the Queensland coast will present a number of challenges, and that is why we are keen to ensure that we can maximise the opportunities within existing precincts such as Gladstone. Gladstone has an enormous amount of potential, as do Abbot Point and Dalrymple Bay, and they represent great economic infrastructure for Queenslanders—not just now but into the future.

The development of those areas will be done in conjunction with the local communities so that we can clearly understand all of the issues that might impact on people who own property within those state development areas and communities that might co-exist or exist in close proximity, as Mount Larcom does, to the state development area in Gladstone. I give an assurance to the members for Gladstone, Burdekin and Mirani—and any local members who have an interest in the review of the SDAs—that we will work closely with them. The review is aimed at making sure that those state development areas can make the contribution that they have the potential to in terms of the economic growth that will be so important for Queensland's development, and I look forward to working with local members towards that end.

### **Tourism Industry**

**Mr BENNETT:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Minister, can you update the House on how the Newman government is planning for the long-term success of the tourism industry?

**Mrs STUCKEY:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I want to say what a pleasure it always is to visit his region, the one that he is such an absolute champion for, and of course it is home to those famous turtles on Mon Repos.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mrs STUCKEY:** Thank you, Leader of the House; I understand that I do represent the Gold Coast. I have to say that the Mon Repos turtle experience is awesome, and I commend everyone to visit more than once over the coming season. Today I am delighted to be able to report to the House yet another example of how this can-do government has delivered a plan for Queensland's tourism future. We are committed to working with the industry to develop a long-term plan that will see it prosper into the future.

Just recently I launched Destination Success, a 20-year vision for our tourism industry. Honourable members may well ask how this plan differs from so many other plans. Let me tell you that it has 129 actions across a range of portfolios, so it is more than a vision—it is an action plan with 129 items. Importantly, this will be reported in a state-of-industry report annually to the parliament so that we can advise how we are progressing. It was developed hand in hand with the industry itself, which is something that the former government would never, ever have considered. It was delivered through forums with students and industry across the state in regional workshops, online surveys and strategies that were developed at the annual DestinationQ forum. I would really like to put on record our thanks to the post forum working group for the hard work they have done on a volunteer basis.

The industry has ownership of Destination Success because they saw the importance of working closely in partnership with the government to achieve an agreed vision. We all know that much will change over the next 20 years and we cannot predict the future, but we can prepare for it. The clear direction for the tourism industry is that it will be strong and prosperous. It looked bleak two years ago under Labor—a government which did not even recognise it as a stand-alone department and did not recognise the value of the small businesses that comprise it. Today our visitors are returning, and the industry can look forward with confidence because they have a government that believes in it and a government that has made a commitment to double overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by the year 2020.

### **Beerwah State Forest**

**Ms TRAD:** My question without notice is to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. Will the minister confirm that he intends approving a megamotorsports precinct for the Beerwah State Forest, despite the existence of many endangered animals and ecosystems within this forest?

**Mr DICKSON:** I thank the member very much for the question. Our side of politics takes the impacts on national parks very seriously. I am the custodian of 12.5 million hectares right across Queensland, and the member opposite may be very much aware of the motorsport precinct at Wyaralong which has proven to be very successful. The Hon. Campbell Newman led the Council of Mayors at that time to deliver that particular precinct. That facility is about dragging illegal motorcycle riders out of national parks and forestry areas to deliver fantastic outcomes to protect our wonderful national parks and forestry areas, and I would be 100 per cent behind any implementation of anything that is going to preserve our national parks—as will our government.

Unlike the previous Labor government, we care about our national parks. What those opposite did over a long period of time was let our national parks and forestry areas run into disrepair. They did not look after them well at all and let them become infested with feral pests, weeds and people who would ride motorbikes within these protected areas. Our government has a plan, and those plans will be released in a measured time and in a measured way—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DICKSON:** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to answer the question, but those opposite do not wish to hear the answer.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, I want to hear the minister's answer and I warn members on my left. Your interjections are not being taken and they are not personally provocative. I call the minister.

**Mr DICKSON:** As I was saying, our government cares very much for our national parks and protected areas. In terms of that motorsport facility that was built in the Wyaralong area, yes, we are looking to put other things into place so that we can cater for these impacts on our national parks, and we will continue to do so. When the time is right for our government to release that information, we will do that openly and transparently—unlike those opposite who go out and say, 'We're not going to sell assets,' but guess what? They do! Our government is going to have a conversation with Queenslanders to talk about the future of our great state. We are putting our plans on the table. We are making the people of Queensland aware of the direction we are heading in—unlike those opposite, who sit back and have a nice cup of tea and think about a plan for a plan for the future.

Our plans are real, they are substantial and they will deliver great outcomes in a great state. As I mentioned earlier, we are looking to build a couple of facilities very similar to the one that has been constructed at Wyaralong. It will deliver good outcomes. When we are ready to release that information in the future, I will let this House know or those opposite will read about it in the paper, as the people of Queensland will read about it. We do not have secrets.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DICKSON:** We deliver for all Queenslanders, and our plans will be delivered in a very timely manner, but those people opposite do not deliver.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, there are now too many interjections across the chamber. Please have respect, on my left and my right, for the person with the call. I call the minister.

**Mr DICKSON:** As I was saying a moment ago, we do have plans in place and we will be letting all of the people of Queensland know, not just those opposite.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The time for questions has now expired.


## **SPEAKER'S STATEMENT**

### **School Group Tours**

**Madam SPEAKER:** I acknowledge Sheldon College from the electorate of Redlands visiting the parliament today.

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Further Answer to Question; Office of the Leader of the Opposition**

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Acting Premier) (11.01 am), by leave: During question time I made some comments about the amount of money that is paid to the opposition and I want to make sure that the record is absolutely correct. I have obtained a public report of the expenses of the Office of the Leader of the Opposition and the total salaries cost shown in that report is \$1,189,808. The opposition has 22 staff—the same number of staff that we had when we were in opposition when we had over 30 members.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** And you spent \$200,000 on charter flights.

**Mr SEENEY:** As the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about the other costs in the report, I might take a moment to go through them. Motor vehicle running costs, which is presumably to drive the opposition leader home for dinner every night, amount to almost \$40,000.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I rise on a point of order. The Acting Premier is misleading the House and I think he should clarify the record—

**Madam SPEAKER:** What is your point of order under the standing orders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—or we could talk about his charter flight costs of \$200,000!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Please take your seat. That is not a point of order under the standing orders. I call the Acting Premier.

**Mr SEENEY:** The report clearly shows motor vehicle running costs of almost \$40,000, but interestingly it also shows something called 'other administrative charges' of \$94,400. That is a total cost for the opposition office of \$1.551 million. The point is that the opposition in this House is well resourced by public money—very well resourced by public money: 22 staff and over \$1.5 million. The people of Queensland should expect some return on that money. They should be able to expect the opposition to come into this place and ask some questions of the ministers who come here every day for that purpose. The people of Queensland deserve better value for their \$1.5 million than they are currently getting.

## **TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Report, Motion to Take Note**

**Madam SPEAKER:** There being no mover, the notice of motion lapses in accordance with standing order 71.

## **HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

### **Report, Motion to Take Note**

**Madam SPEAKER:** There being no mover, the notice of motion lapses in accordance with standing order 71.

## **MOTION**

### **Member for Redcliffe, First Speech**

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.05 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That so much of the sessional orders be suspended to enable the member for Redcliffe to make a statement not exceeding 20 minutes noting her election.

Motion agreed to.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Before calling the honourable member for Redcliffe, I remind members that this is the member's first speech and should be listened to with the courtesies reserved for such occasions. I call the member for Redcliffe.

## **PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

### **Member for Redcliffe, First Speech**

 **Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (11.05 am): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak for the first time in this chamber to deliver my maiden speech as the new member for Redcliffe. It is an honour for a person to be chosen to be a member of the Queensland parliament, just as it is for all of the other representatives who serve this parliament and their communities and for those people who serve in our local, state and federal parliaments across Australia. I consider it an immense privilege that the people of Redcliffe chose me to be their representative in this Queensland parliament. I know that I am only the 15th person to have served in the federal parliament and then the Queensland parliament and the only female member to do so.

It is reasonable for people to ask why I chose to put myself forward at the Redcliffe by-election, having previously served as the federal member for Petrie for six years. To answer that question, I have reflected on my first speech in the federal parliament and the reasons why I chose to run as a candidate in Petrie so many years ago. I put myself forward as a candidate in 2006 because of the path that the government of the day was taking Australia down. At the time we had a government that had stopped listening to the people; that had sought to govern for some, not all. I was moved to want to make a bigger contribution—a personal contribution—by fighting for a change in the direction of our country's policies through a change of government. I knew that as a Labor candidate I could help make that change.

That passion and that desire that drove me back in 2006 has not wavered in any way. Governments need to ensure fairness in their actions and to ensure those most in need in our community are supported. Governments need to recognise that one of the most important investments we can make to strengthen our social and economic future is to invest in our youth and their education and training. These are the values I hold dear—values that are just as important today as they were in 2006. That is why the past two years has been so difficult. Since 2012 I have witnessed my local community of Redcliffe and our great state of Queensland being taken down the same path as the Howard government took us down in 2006. We now have a state government that did not stop listening—it appears to have never been listening to begin with; a government that said anything to get elected and has proceeded to let our communities down at every turn.

In November last year, with the resignation of the previous state member for Redcliffe, an opportunity arose that allowed me to once again make a bigger contribution—a personal contribution—to fight for a change in the direction our state is taking. I was approached by many in the Redcliffe community to nominate as a candidate. It was humbling to have so many people encourage me to put myself forward. These people are everyday people—working hard, raising families, running businesses, volunteering their time with community organisations. These are the people who have inspired me to do more. These are the people who deserve someone who will stand beside them and speak up for them. They are tired of being neglected and they are angry with what has been done to their communities.

As one of those people, I can see that the community I live in, am raising my family in and am passionate about is under attack. Jobs have been lost, services cut and funding stripped away. Those left behind in our hospitals, schools, the Public Service, TAFEs and community organisations have been unable to speak up due to fear of further repercussions. I had had enough, as had the Redcliffe community.

However, this was not all that Redcliffe has had to endure. It would be normal protocol in a maiden speech to acknowledge the efforts of the previous member for the electorate irrespective of which side of politics they represented. I cannot do this. The Redcliffe community has been hurt by the actions of the previous member, Scott Driscoll. Mr Driscoll failed our community, he abused our trust and he caused real harm to many. It is because of this past member's failings that the people of Redcliffe were called upon to vote in this by-election. I only wish that the people of Redcliffe could have been spared this pain. And they could have because Mr Driscoll's conduct was known by many, including his financial dealings with the community organisation RCAMB, at the time he was preselected and before he was elected. The LNP let our community down by believing that this was a candidate who was worthy of being the representative for Redcliffe.

The community was certainly disgusted at the way they were treated by Scott Driscoll but the real anger was reserved for the Premier and the LNP government. The actions of the LNP government over the past two years have had far-reaching implications in Redcliffe. It is for these reasons that the decision the Redcliffe people made on 22 February was a decision that I believe they did not make lightly. The electorate wanted someone who will stand up for our community, who will fight for our community and who will listen to our community. The people of Redcliffe knew that they would get that with me. I fought hard to bring new housing, new school libraries, halls and science and language centres, trade training centres and education resources, the new Redcliffe headspace to support youth welfare and extra funding for the Gateway Motorway to the area, to name just a few of my achievements over the past six years.

The community also knew that I was able to deliver what nobody before me at any level of government had been able to achieve, and that is the funding for the long-awaited Moreton Bay Rail Link, with the cooperation of the Moreton Bay Regional Council and the then state Labor

government—a rail line that had been talked about for more than 100 years but never had funding committed to it. We now have this rail line under construction with a completion time of 2016, bringing many jobs with it.

However, being a strong representative is far more than the funding you bring to the electorate. It is about being a strong local representative, being out in your community, being involved in your community, being available and approachable. Redcliffe knows that this is the type of representative they get with me. I know that with such honour comes much responsibility. Redcliffe is a great electorate. The Redcliffe electorate covers the Redcliffe peninsula east of Hercules Road and includes the suburbs of Kippa-Ring, Redcliffe, Scarborough, Newport, Woody Point, Margate and Clontarf and includes the beautiful Moreton Island.

Of course, the Redcliffe peninsula is not just a bunch of suburbs; it is a community. Recently, someone said to me, 'Redcliffe is a village,' and in many ways it is. Across the various places that I have lived and visited in my life I have never seen such a strong community with a large volunteer base and many great community and service organisations. Our environmental credentials are the envy of many, with a marine conservation park, an internationally listed RAMSAR site and a strong tourism sector based around Moreton Bay and our surrounds. We consist of many small businesses that are becoming more engaged through the Redcliffe city chamber, and I look forward to working with the chamber to strengthen our local economy.

It is important, however, to acknowledge that Redcliffe has its challenges. As a community, as a region in South-East Queensland, we have many challenges and opportunities that present themselves. With a rapidly growing region, the need for services including health and education to keep up with expectations and community needs is ever present. We need to take measures to strengthen our local economy, support small businesses, grow tourism and invest in jobs. We need to protect our environment and to educate our community about our local jewels of Hays Inlet and Moreton Bay. We need to tackle homelessness, unemployment and particularly youth unemployment and discrimination against seniors in the workforce. We need to ensure that people with disability are able to get the support that they deserve and have the access to opportunities that others may take for granted. We need to make sure that our seniors, our pensioners and self-funded retirees are valued and listened to in our community, recognising the valuable contribution they have made and continue to make in our local communities and in society.

I will continue to work with our local community and to engage with local businesses and chambers, with health professionals, with local community organisations as the new member for Redcliffe to gain their insight into ways that we can act in the best interests of our community. I look forward to continuing my strong association with our local schools and the broader school community.

I know that people are feeling the pressures of cost of living and particularly the cost of water and electricity. Many people have told me that households of one or two people are regularly receiving water bills of \$400 a quarter. Just this week a young couple who have not even moved into their new home in the region have received their first Unitywater bill and it is \$400. How can this be when they have not even used any water? How are people who have been in hospital or away receiving bills that show increases over that period? There are questions that need answers. There are promises made by the LNP government that need to be kept.

The same can be said about giving the Redcliffe community a voice on deamalgamation. These are not issues that I intend to debate as part of my maiden speech. However, to remain silent on these issues in my maiden speech would be to ignore the wishes of my community and would be sending a message to the people of Redcliffe that I have not listened. I have no intention of being that type of member.

I do need to talk about the Redcliffe by-election. The LNP took extreme measures to attack my character, credibility and integrity. Never before have I experienced such a personal campaign. I do not intend to go through the sordid details of the false allegations against me, but I will take up one issue. The argument put by those opposite that at the by-election the people faced a stark choice between a local, a mum and nurse or me, a union person. I am always amused by such comparisons, defining me as merely a union person or a union advocate. Firstly, I am proud to belong to a union and to have worked for a union, the Australian Workers Union. To have the privilege of spending your days fighting to ensure fairness and equity, to protect hard-won rights and to work to improve people's living standards into the future is not a bad occupation. In fact, it sounds very similar to the role of an elected representative.

However, I also want to highlight what other attributes I bring as a representative. I, too, am a local in Redcliffe, a mum and a wife. I have not always lived in Redcliffe. As a family we spent many years moving from rental property to rental property, from school to school. My parents worked hard to put food on the table and a roof over our family's heads. My parents ensured that we understood the value of hard work and being able to stand on your own two feet. My parents never complained when times were tough; they just kept going. Eventually, this led our family to the Redcliffe peninsula and I had the pleasure of attending Redcliffe State High School. However, I did what my siblings had done and what many of my age at the time did. I left school at 15 and went straight into the full-time workforce. I saw no point in remaining at school as I was never going to go to university—no-one in my family ever had. It made sense to get a job and pay my way in the household. That path saw me work in retail, clean tables, work as a receptionist in real estate, work in a bearing company spending many long nights counting small O rings and many other jobs.

It was in my early 20s that I realised the importance of an education. I witnessed firsthand the benefits of furthering your education, having missed out on many jobs just because others had a piece of paper that I did not. This spurred me on to enrol in night school and I completed my senior in English and Economics. I then moved on to TAFE and then on to university. I continued to work full time during this time and after 14 years of study I finished with a Bachelor of Laws and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, eventually getting admitted in the Supreme Court of the ACT, with the now Leader of the Opposition and the member for Inala, Annastacia Palaszczuk, being admitted alongside me.

Of course, if working full time and studying for 14 years did not keep me busy enough, I also started my family during this time, having two beautiful children. Just to make it a bit more exciting throughout this entire time and right through to today, my husband has been a full-time shiftworker. Our family certainly has experienced firsthand what it is like to juggle family, work and education commitments along with meeting the financial obligations of paying a mortgage and all of the cost-of-living pressures that come with having a home and family.

Having finished my studies, I then had the incredible opportunity to work overseas during 2005 in Canada and the US, giving me a greater understanding of our similarities and differences in policy development in important areas of social welfare, education, health and workplace laws of our great countries. Having completed all this, I then had the honour of being elected as the federal member for Petrie, having the privilege of representing the people of Redcliffe amongst other communities. I thank all of the constituents, businesses, schools and community organisations that I had the great pleasure of representing over those six years.

I wanted to outline this because I believe that our parliaments across the nation should reflect people from a variety of backgrounds and with different skills and experience. It is this type of life experience that we need in our parliaments and it is this type of life experience that the people of Redcliffe value. I appreciate that being elected in a by-election means I have my work cut out for me. There is at most 12 months before the next general election, and I must work hard during this time to fix the damage done to this community and to rebuild the trust. I intend to pursue with the same energy that I showed as the federal member for Petrie and I showed the people of Redcliffe over the past three months the issues important to my community and to hold the LNP government to account for the promises they made to the people of Redcliffe in 2012 and in this year's by-election. Redcliffe has gone for too long without a voice; without a representative in this parliament. I will not sit quietly. I will be the voice that the community wants and the voice that the community truly deserves.

I wish to thank the Leader of the Opposition for appointing me as the shadow minister for education and training, science, IT and innovation and shadow minister for disability services. It is widely known in my communities that education and training is one of my real passions. I believe that education changes lives and we, as law makers and those in government, must ensure that we are providing the pathways for people of all ages to take up those opportunities. I personally believe that more needs to be done to support trade training. A trade qualification is as valuable as a university degree and we need to ensure that those opportunities are there in our society and to provide support to people pursuing those paths. That is why I believe investment in trade training centres in our schools and in our TAFEs is a critical part of providing the infrastructure and resources necessary to provide those opportunities. I look forward to continuing my strong relationships with the Catholic education sector, the Independent Schools Association, our state schools, the Primary Principals Association, our P&Cs and P&Fs, the Queensland Teachers Union, the Queensland Independent Education Union and other unions covering school communities.

I also have the important portfolios of science, IT and innovation. Queensland is well known for its medical research, and as a state and country we are known for being innovative. However, the challenges are supporting and nurturing these areas and ensuring that we keep these discoveries in our own state and our own country because when we do we create opportunities, we strengthen our economy and we create jobs.

Last but not least, I have the portfolio of disability services. There is not one person in this parliament who could disagree with the statement that we are not doing enough to support people with a disability and their family and carers. I am proud to have been part of a government that introduced the National Disability Insurance Scheme. However, there is a long way to go to see that become tangible support for those in need in our communities. I look forward to working with the disability sector, providers, carers, families and people with a disability, to listen to their needs and to be an advocate on their behalf. These are important policy areas for the state of Queensland and I will ensure that I fulfil these duties with the same passion and enthusiasm that I will deliver to the communities of Redcliffe.

I end my maiden speech thanking those people who, with the great community of Redcliffe, led me to this moment. Firstly, I must thank my husband, George, who has stood by me for almost 25 years; a man who has always had faith in me, who inspires me and who supported me in all of my endeavours over the years: through studies, work and children. I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge my husband and his contribution to society with the great work he does as a serving police officer. I acknowledge all of the serving police officers in Queensland. I believe that the job of a police officer is far more difficult than the hardest day of a member of parliament. I thank the police and their families for the service they give to our communities. To my beautiful children, Emma and Cameron, our lives have certainly changed over the years with my time in federal parliament and we now start a new chapter in our lives. As any of us who have ever served in public life know, it is our families who make the biggest sacrifice when we choose to serve the people. There are many times that my children have missed out on having their mum attend a special event, or not had their mum around when they needed me. And, of course, as our children get older they are more aware and alert to the things that are said in the media in the thrust of a campaign. We must all remember that it is not just the candidates but also the families behind them who must deal with the emotions of politics. I hope my children learn from what I do and why I do it. It is important to me that my children grow up understanding that there is a difference between a politician and a parliamentarian. The former is there for their own gratification, the latter is there to serve the people. I hope we all strive to be great parliamentarians. To Emma and Cameron, thank you for your love and support.

I thank the leader of the parliamentary Labor party, Annastacia Palaszczuk, for her leadership and her personal support during the Redcliffe by-election campaign and the interest she has shown in the Redcliffe community over the past two years. Thank you to all the opposition caucus members for their support in my campaign. To the ALP state secretary, Anthony Chisholm, and to the party office staff, thank you for your support and guidance. I thank those who have worked most closely with me on the Redcliffe by-election campaign. I pay tribute to Laura Gowdie. Laura has been campaigning by my side since 2006. Laura has been someone I can confide in and trust and, like me, she has the community and Labor values at heart. To Ryan, Karl, Daniel and the two Jennys, thank you for your tremendous efforts in the campaign office and beyond; you kept me sane over the past three months with your humour and energy.

A special thank you goes to the ALP branch members and my local branch members in Redcliffe who have always supported me and who worked tirelessly during the Redcliffe by-election. To the many volunteers who walked in off the street, who contacted my office and volunteered their time to assist in the campaign, I say thank you. To the unions who came out and supported the campaign, I say thank you. The fact that unions are willing to advocate on behalf of their members to give workers in my community and in the state a voice and to fight the attacks by this LNP government on their rights and conditions should be applauded. To the essential service workers who came and campaigned, I say a huge thank you. To the firefighters, doctors, nurses, teachers and cleaners who were willing to stand up and be heard, I wish to express my deep gratitude to you all. It is unfortunate that the LNP government would rather criticise you when instead they should be thanking you for the important work that you do in our society. The Premier should be asking himself what would motivate these professionals to want to so publicly stand up against his government. The answer would be that the decisions made by the LNP government are having such a significant impact on their livelihoods and their ability to serve the community that they will not remain silent any

longer. These workers are standing up because they have had enough of a government that does not listen. I thank the Not for Sale campaigners who are willing to shine a light on the government's agenda for asset sales.

I finish by once again thanking the Redcliffe community for putting their faith in me and entrusting me with the important role of being their strong voice in the community and in the Queensland parliament. I promise to work with them and work for them as the elected representative for Redcliffe.

## PUBLIC SAFETY BUSINESS AGENCY BILL

### Message from Governor



**Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (11.25 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

PUBLIC SAFETY BUSINESS AGENCY BILL 2014

*Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68*

I, PENELOPE ANNE WENSLEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to establish the Public Safety Business Agency and for related purposes, to amend this Act, the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Evidence Act 1977, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Regulation 1990, the Prostitution Act 1999 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes and to make consequential and minor amendments of other legislation as stated in schedule 1 for purposes related to those particular purposes

(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 6 MAR 2014

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 6 March 2014, recommending the Public Safety Business Agency Bill 2014 [\[4603\]](#).

### Introduction

**Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (11.27 am): I present a bill for an act to establish the Public Safety Business Agency and for related purposes, to amend this act, the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Evidence Act 1977, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Regulation 1990, the Prostitution Act 1999 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes and to make consequential and minor amendments of other legislation as stated in schedule 1 for purposes related to those particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Public Safety Business Agency Bill 2014 [\[4604\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Public Safety Business Agency Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[4605\]](#).

I introduce the Public Safety Business Agency Bill 2014. This bill demonstrates the government's commitment to stronger, more efficient and effective emergency services for all Queenslanders. In January 2013 this government commissioned former Australian Federal Police Commissioner, Mick Keelty, to undertake a comprehensive review into the Police and Community Safety portfolio. The review examined the two departments then within my portfolio, namely, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Community Safety, which comprised the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Queensland Corrective Services and Emergency Management Queensland.

On 10 September 2013, the review concluded in the release of its report titled *Sustaining the unsustainable*. The report made 127 recommendations, 77 findings and 402 observations. This government believes that adopting recommendations from the report will ensure a more cohesive approach to emergency and disaster management across this great state. Adopting these recommendations will also allow portfolio priorities to be better aligned and, therefore, lead to improved operational and corporate efficiencies. The objective of this bill is to make the appropriate legislative amendments necessary to bring these key recommendations to life.

As recommended by the review, the bill brings together Emergency Management Queensland and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service to form a new department called the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The bill also addresses the recommendation to move provisions in the Disaster Management Act 2003 relating to the state emergency service and the emergency services units into the new Fire and Emergency Services Act 2014. The bill creates the new position of Inspector-General of Emergency Management. The inspector-general will ensure disaster responses in Queensland are better coordinated by regularly reviewing, assessing and reporting to government with respect to the preparation for and the management of disasters.

The bill also facilitates the implementation of a key review recommendation to establish a new portfolio business agency called the Public Safety Business Agency. The Public Safety Business Agency, which commenced notional operations on 1 November 2013, is headed by a chief executive officer. The Public Safety Business Agency is responsible for providing corporate services to the Queensland Police Service, the new Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the newly established office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management. The nature of the corporate services that the Public Safety Business Agency will provide include such things as managing supporting infrastructure; fleet and information and communication technology assets; the provision of human resource, financial management, legal policy and media services; and strategic policy and planning functions. The Public Safety Business Agency will also have a role to play in managing other government services. In November 2013, responsibility for managing Queensland government air services was transferred to the agency. On 1 January this year, the agency became responsible for administering the state government protective security services, which provide security services to state government buildings.

Importantly, however, the bill and the establishment of the Public Safety Business Agency provide significant opportunities to drive efficiencies and focus on the delivery of core services in the Queensland community. The bill supports the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to focus on operational responsibilities and allows operational personnel to concentrate on front-line services. Ultimately, the bill will see a more cohesive approach to emergency and disaster management responses across this great state and will provide Queensland with the opportunity to continue to strive towards achieving best practice in important areas. The government is committed to revitalising front-line services and this bill will help us deliver on that commitment.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (11.33 am): 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**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

### **Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date**

**Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (11.33 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Public Safety Business Agency Bill by 29 April 2014.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## BIOSECURITY BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 5 March (see p. 452), on motion of Dr McVeigh—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (11.34 am): I rise to speak to the Biosecurity Bill. I take this opportunity to put on the record my thanks to Biosecurity Queensland staff. Biosecurity issues have the potential to have incredibly negative impacts on all primary production in Queensland, whether it is animal husbandry or agriculture. Therefore, it is important that we have a robust biosecurity process and protocols. I commend the minister for the changes that he is bringing in in relation to those matters. One of our greatest attributes and safeguards, which in trade terms are often used as a liability, is that we are an island continent. We have a huge buffer around us that gives us security against disease. However, with the globalisation of industry, more and more it is becoming a responsibility to provide protection from disease-laden products, including animals and other products.

In Gladstone, we have had several incidents in relation to fire ant incursions. The latest one was reacted to very promptly. I have to commend the minister's staff for the work that they did. Kim Wolfenden headed the Biosecurity team that came to Gladstone. She did an amazing job of informing not only my office but also anyone who would listen about what the fire ants are like. She had a little ant nest, which was incredibly interesting, but I reckon it was a pill to carry around. It showed what fire ants look like. They are much smaller than I expected. The pictures make them look like green ants, but they are not. They vary in size from quite small, the size of our house ants, to the size of green ants. Within that spectrum there can be mature adults of all sizes. They all have different jobs. She and her team did an amazing job of informing and keeping informed the community of Gladstone. However, more importantly the Biosecurity team responded to this last fire ant incursion and have been very proactive in their endeavours to exterminate the nests. They have also shown through DNA testing that this incursion was different from the previous incursion and they have been able to identify the potential source of the incursion.

I have the highest regard for the Biosecurity team and the work that they have done. When you hear about fire ant activity and the way they interact in the community, you soon realise that they are not a species that we want anywhere in Queensland, and certainly not in Gladstone. We are a very recreationally based state. When ants get a hold, they really dampen the ability of people, particularly children, to enjoy the outdoors. I commend the changes to this bill that will strengthen our biosecurity in Queensland. Because we are an island nation, we have some inherent safeguards. However, that does not lessen the need for us to be vigilant.

The other matter that I wanted to address was the compensation provisions in the bill. It is critically important that businesses, whether they are a big business or a family business, have an opportunity to be recompensed where, often through no fault of their own, they have an incursion of a disease that often tragically requires an entire herd to be euthanised or a crop to be destroyed. Those enterprises face a period before they can generate an income. It is very important that, while the compensation process has to be transparent and there has to be accountability, the compensation process has to take into account that the farmers are going through quite a traumatic time.

Farmers with animal based operations get connected to their animals. It is a huge trauma to see an entire herd destroyed on their property and then have to face the subsequent seclusion that has to occur as a result. I commend the compensation provisions in this bill. Whilst the compensation process has to be vigorous and transparent those people involved in the compensation process need to remember that these farmers will have been through a lot of trauma and will be incredibly vulnerable and will need to be dealt with with compassion and respect. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (11.40 am): I rise today to make a contribution to the debate on the Biosecurity Bill 2013. Primary producers particularly live with the constant threat, in addition to droughts, floods, fires and low commodity prices, of an imported plant, animal or virus, such as foot-and-mouth disease, devastating their industry. Australia has a world-class disease-free status on many of our agricultural products, and maintenance of this status is vital to our progrowth

aspirations and the competitiveness of our agricultural industries. The cost of a biosecurity event to the industry is huge. The threat may not be able to be contained or eradicated and there may be ongoing consequences. The red fire ant is a good example of how difficult a pest is to contain or eradicate and the costs involved once it has crossed our borders. While this pest causes painful bites, thankfully it has not devastated an industry and work is still ongoing to contain and eradicate this pest.

Not all threats relate to primary producers. The medical fraternity are obviously very cautious about avian bird flu as are others who understand the implications of this disease. The most frustrating part about biosecurity is that one hears about overseas visitors and Australians returning from overseas holidays with plant and animal material and foods that they have snuck back because they want to share it with their friends or family. It horrifies me that they simply do not understand or do not care about the consequences.

Minister McVeigh in his introductory speech noted that in 2012-13 there were 11 new significant animal incidents, four significant plant biosecurity incidents and a number of invasive plants and animals. Queensland suffers more risks of biosecurity breaches than other Australian states due primarily to its location and its open and extensive borders, particularly in the north where there is considerable traffic from New Guinea. This is a clear demonstration of the need to have effective and responsive legislation to address these events as they arise. As the state with the highest biosecurity risk we also have a responsibility to the rest of Australia.

The Biosecurity Bill 2013, apart from reducing red tape, brings all the legislation relevant to biosecurity into one location, at the same time shifting the focus of responsibility to a shared responsibility with an emphasis on those dealing with biosecurity material to take an active role in minimising the biosecurity risk. The bill also provides the chief executive with very extensive powers to deal rapidly with a biosecurity event. It is worth noting that these extensive powers are for a fairly limited period. At this point, I would like to refer anyone wishing to get a brief but concise overview of the bill to the committee report. In particular, I refer them to the sections on policy objectives, key clauses and key issues. Thanks are due to the parliamentary staff for their extensive and detailed work in the consultation process and also in the drafting of the report. Thanks are also due to departmental staff who responded promptly and in detail to requests for information and suggestions.

The current legislation is difficult to use, lacks flexibility in dealing with a biosecurity risk in an efficient manner and is not suited to dealing with pests and diseases which are not currently identified. In contrast this bill establishes a universal biosecurity obligation on all persons which requires them to take an active role in minimising biosecurity risks, provides for rapid but time limited powers to manage emergency biosecurity events, including the capacity of departmental officers to enter premises excluding residences without a warrant in a biosecurity event which poses immediate and significant risk. The bill also empowers local governments to carry out surveillance, prevention and control programs and maintains their function to manage invasive plants and animals in their respective areas. The bill allows for a risk based decision-making approach to the management of and response to biosecurity risks, provides for effective monitoring and enforcement of compliance with the requirements of the act and the provision of codes of practice to assist in the meeting of obligations.

One of the greatest strengths of this bill is the extensive powers given to the chief executive officer and the flexibility and responsibility of that power to declare a biosecurity event, the capacity of departmental officers to enter property without a warrant and seize material, the capacity to declare a biosecurity area, to restrict the movement of material and vehicles and to take or delegate activities to eliminate a biosecurity risk as a rapid response to a known or anticipated threat which is considered to be serious. However, this strength of the bill also provides a risk for the rights and liberties of the individual.

During the public hearing I noted the response of Mr Ian Burnett of AgForce and also the comments of Mr Sansom of the Queensland Farmers Federation. They stated that they believe the risks associated with a biosecurity event warranted the powers given to the chief executive. The importance of the capacity to act quickly, decisively and on the basis that the biosecurity matter the subject of the event may not yet be a confirmed threat but has the potential to be a threat outweighed the risk to the rights of the individual. It was noted that these are emergency provisions and subject to a limited time.

The department provided extensive advice to the effect that on the completion of a biosecurity event there is a process for handling complaints for individuals who feel that they have been adversely impacted by some aspect of the process for the handling of the biosecurity event. In essence, the department is committed to ensuring that complaints are dealt with in a transparent, responsive, efficient, effective and fair way. The detailed response from the department is included on page 18 of the committee report.

Most commercial enterprises involved in primary production and its offshoots, such as the nursery industry, are very aware of their responsibilities. They usually belong to trade organisations which provide their members with updates and educational programs. However, there are a very large number of hobby farmers and private individuals who have control of biosecurity material in the form of plants and animals. These people may not be as well educated in terms of biosecurity risks and their lack of knowledge can itself provide a risk factor.

Having said that, I am aware of a fairly major citrus orchard operation which some years ago imported new citrus stock only to find that it was diseased and this resulted in the destroying of quite extensive areas of citrus plantings. So even those who are probably considered to have appropriate knowledge can make costly mistakes. This again illustrates the need for a very effective management regime to prevent breaching of our biosecurity borders.

The issue of education was raised in a number of submissions, particularly given the change of onus to a shared responsibility. Requests were made by the submitters to government to provide sufficient funding and resources to provide to all who have control of or responsibility for biosecurity material adequate information on their responsibilities under this new legislative framework. A significant number of submitters also had concerns about the lack of detail of the regulations and codes of practice which will underpin this legislation. Assurances were received from the departmental staff that in the writing of the regulations and codes of practice consultation would be carried out with the various stakeholders.

Failure to comply with the obligations under this legislation for those in control of biosecurity matter may result in quite severe penalties. The risks and costs associated with a biosecurity event are high and attract the corresponding penalties. A defence against these penalties is a demonstration that the person took all reasonable precautions and exercised proper diligence in accordance with the guidelines, regulations and codes of practice relevant to the risk. Departmental advice is that the department's ability to enforce penalties will depend on their ability to demonstrate that the person knew of the risk and the obligations and failed to act appropriately.


In submissions and public hearings, the complexities around the management of deer were raised. Some of the deer population is farmed and some is feral and listed as restricted matter. The concern was raised that feral deer also provide an economic benefit in terms of deer hunting, and this could be jeopardised by this bill if the hunters were no longer allowed to distribute or dispose of the restricted matter—that is, if they could not take the meat, skin or antlers from the dead animal. Advice provided by departmental staff is that once the animal is dead it is no longer restricted matter and the meat, skin and antlers can be removed unless of course the animal is diseased or contaminated. This advice will no doubt relieve the minds of the deer hunters and landholders to the south and west of my electorate who benefit from utilising the feral deer. Feral deer populations need to be managed and deer hunting is part of that management process. However, biosecurity programs may need to be developed if populations of deer establish in other areas and are having a negative impact on the environment.

During the consultation and public hearings, a number of changes were proposed which would correct a number of minor drafting errors as well as make some other minor adjustments to the bill. The committee in its report referred to some of these proposed changes including seeking a shorter review period given the complexity and wide-ranging effects of the bill and altering the definition of a 'saleyard'. The LNP government has given a commitment to listen and the minister has honoured that commitment and has flagged amendments to the bill to cover these areas.

What does this legislation mean for my community? It means that this government is putting in place strong, robust, responsive and effective legislation which will address the issues of a biosecurity event and the ongoing processes for pest, weed and feral animal management in order to ensure that they have the best opportunity to maximise their productivity and profitability in the short to long term.

However, the onus is on shared responsibility which means that my community must also take a part in that responsibility, know their regulations and codes of practice, and take active steps to ensure that they comply. Only in this manner will we be able to jointly provide that 'wall of resistance' to incoming threats.

On behalf of my community, may I extend thanks to my fellow committee members, committee staff, departmental staff and Minister McVeigh for the good work involved in ensuring that Queensland has the best possible legislation to deal with a biosecurity event and to ensure the safety and security of our primary industries and their associated interstate and international markets and the safety of our community. I am very pleased to support the Biosecurity Bill 2013.

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (11.51 am): The Newman government is committed to serving Queenslanders effectively through an efficient, high-performing public sector, streamlined processes and the reduction of red tape. With agriculture being one of the four pillars of our economy and our state's farmers compromised by severe prolonged drought, the focus of the Biosecurity Bill 2013 is on providing greater protection to primary industries.

Queensland's existing biosecurity legislation is outdated and includes obsolete and obscure provisions, and overlapping and inconsistent approaches. The current rigid legislation is also largely reactive and inflexible, and consequently unable to manage appropriate and efficient responses to our changing risk profile. Where the current biosecurity legislation comprises eight acts and 11 subordinate instruments developed independently of each other to cater for specific events, the Biosecurity Bill 2013 proposes to deliver one consistent framework with equivalent powers and flexibility to enable a timely and appropriate response to a wide range of situations.

Amendments to the bill were made with extensive input from a wide and diverse range of representatives of the agricultural industry, and they removed a significant number of redundant elements in the original legislation. Lengthy consultation with the Biosecurity Regulations Reference Group ensured that our government took into consideration the individual and sometimes complex concerns of specific industries. Biosecurity legislation had to change and adapt to cope with the ever-increasing diversity of risks, and the new legislation promotes the concept that individuals take responsibility to mitigate or eliminate biosecurity threats.

An example of red-tape reduction is the consolidation of 56 cattle tick fees into just 12 fees, with a single permit fee covering application and permit fees. A single permit renewal period will alleviate the regulatory burden for stakeholders who hold multiple types of permits. In terms of pest and disease management, the bill establishes obligations relating to the identification and movement of animals for disease tracing purposes. It provides greater scope and flexibility to manage emergency biosecurity events to prevent delays in responding, which is vital to mitigate the risk of contagion and associated threats to human health. For example, the bill does not require the identification and scheduling of specifically identified pests and diseases before action can be taken. This new legislation will allow government to respond immediately to protect industry while scientific tests are underway.

Our government has taken significant action to combat the growing problem of wild dogs to protect livestock. As a local vet in my electorate pointed out, this is also important in national parks which act as a reservoir for the breeding of animals that terrorise neighbouring farms. Additional park dog officers will be employed to foster landholder commitment, red tape will be cut to make 1080 baiting easier and funding will be provided for local government and industry projects that target wild dogs. As the vet pointed out, 1080 is nothing like as cruel as seeing a herd of sheep ripped to shreds but alive, with feral dogs just playing with them. Our pure bred dingoes are disappearing as more cross-breeding takes place.


In the Far North, the general biosecurity obligation in effect that requires landholders to manage wild dogs on their land will be welcomed by many in my electorate whose small holdings are persistently threatened, with domestic animals and fowl destroyed or maimed by small packs of cross-breed dogs which have the ability to threaten human safety. Local governments will continue to have primary responsibility for managing wild dogs in their areas, and the bill provides local governments with the tools to assist their activities in this regard.

The reduction in rigidity in record keeping has been welcomed in my electorate, as has the ability to utilise modern technological methods for information recording. Local government will enjoy more flexibility and efficiency to address local pest management issues with the application of an

improved range of regulatory tools including 'prevention and control' or 'surveillance' programs for invasive plants and animals, and the new legislation allows local councils to work in conjunction to address shared pest management issues. One person may be appointed as an authorised person by more than one council to enable them to act across each of the local government areas.

Amendments to the legislation in regard to the control of fire ants and in relation to cattle tick and the facilitation of movement of stock relating to cattle tick will also be welcomed within my own and neighbouring electorates. In summary, the various facets of this legislation give more freedom to stock owners to employ alternative actions to comply with their biosecurity responsibilities and allow individuals to give careful consideration to their management of biosecurity risks.

I thank the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. John McVeigh, and applaud the work of Robert Hansen and the members of the Agricultural Resources and Environment Committee for completing the mammoth task of effecting these significant amendments to legislation in yet another fine example of red-tape reduction by this government. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.57 am): I rise to speak in support of the Biosecurity Bill 2013. I acknowledge that this is a culmination of some seven years of work. A hell of a lot of work has gone into it and it is very comprehensive and wide ranging. I compliment those people who have contributed to that. It is my understanding that this legislation repeals five acts and amends three others. In bringing all of that together, it is obvious that there will be some benefits and that overall it will provide for the protection of the economy, environment, social amenity and human health that are impacted on by these sorts of issues.


I think the most glaring example in my region was the outbreak of TB, which was an enormous cost to the industry. For many years afterwards people were picking up the pieces trying to deal with that. Events like that can show how big the cost can be if we do not have tight measures for these sorts of issues. Monitoring TB is still a very active part of operations in the Mount Isa electorate. I know that the Normanton rangers are very effective with their biosecurity monitoring. They are constantly dealing with feral pigs, which are big carriers of TB, and doing assessment and analysis of carcasses to try to monitor these sorts of things. It is a very big part of what we do up there, so it is very relevant to our area. I commend this government for continuing the good work on these issues and addressing the shortcomings and making it easier to deal with biosecurity issues.

There was an issue raised that this legislation seemed like an extra regulatory burden, but I also accept that this bill seeks to repeal those other acts and reduce red tape surrounding these sorts of issues. But that was one concern that was raised with us.

Another issue of significance that was raised with us was the cost of implementing some of these things and whether that was going to be borne by local governments. Local governments, in my area in particular, are very stressed at the moment, with conditions being as they are, and some of these things might be difficult to properly maintain. That is something which I draw to the minister's attention as it will need close monitoring.

Another issue addressed by my colleague which I think is significant is the treatment of wild deer under this bill. There seems to be some confusion about whether or not parts of a dead animal are a biosecurity matter. There is no clear provision for parts of a category 3 dead animal to be distributed or disposed of. That is something that I believe needs clarification. There is a threat to taxidermy businesses which are reliant on present hunting activities. This issue has already been raised in this debate, and I think it needs to be addressed. It is an important part of a fairly significant culture and industry in Western Queensland. Putting a market value on wild deer in Queensland and removing it from the category of pest in the bill is the question we put to the minister.

Another issue raised by AgForce in its submission that we felt was of concern was genetically modified crops and the implication in the wording of the bill of what is a carrier and what is a contaminant. That is something that needs some work on. We raise that as a matter of concern in the bill and ask the minister to clarify that in the rolling out of this. Other than that, we are supportive of the bill. We commend the bill to the House and commend the minister for addressing what is a very important issue to industries in Queensland.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (12.01 pm): It is with pleasure that I rise to support the Biosecurity Bill 2013. I congratulate the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. John McVeigh, for not only bringing this bill before the House but also taking such a strong stance for all Queenslanders who are facing current drought conditions. Whilst there has been some rainfall in the outer areas of Queensland, the northern end of the electorate of Nanango, particularly in the south

and getting up into the north Burnett, is really struggling at the moment with one of the driest Februarys on record. I just want to pass on to the House and to anyone listening today just how tough it is out there. I thank the minister and his department for providing us with such wonderful support. I urge people from my electorate to contact my office or the local department, because there is a lot of information out there that we can spread to assist people who are facing such dire circumstances.

I thought it pertinent to thank the chairman of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee, Mr Ian Rickuss, the member for Lockyer and my colleague sitting right here beside me. I commend the hard work of everyone on that committee, which has recommended that this bill be passed. The key objective of this bill is to provide a comprehensive biosecurity framework to manage the impacts of animal and plant diseases and pests in a timely and effective manner, and ensure the safety and quality of animal feed, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs. The bill consolidates, modernises and expands existing provisions to manage and contain biosecurity risks.

Our island nation of Australia enjoys relative safety from many pests and diseases that are prevalent in other countries, partly because of remoteness and partly through expert vigilance by quarantine and import agencies. However, despite measures in place to prevent the entry of biosecurity hazards, pests and disease may still enter through a number of pathways such as wind, water, birds, illegal smuggling, accidental cargo or the sheer ignorance of people who travel to other countries that have biosecurity risks and who bring them into our country without properly declaring them. It is absolutely a pet hate of mine. When I travel internationally my husband and I always end up on an agricultural property, and we always declare that we have been outside a city centre or that our boots may have travelled onto dirt. The reason we do this is to ensure that we are protecting our agricultural industry that we have here in Australia and in Queensland, because it is the backbone of our economy.

**An honourable member:** It's the right thing to do.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is the right thing to do. I note that Biosecurity Queensland commented in its submission to the committee—

Queensland is undoubtedly the front-line state for biosecurity in Australia. We get more pests and diseases than any other state of national significance and we have dealt with many more incidents in the last seven years than any other state in Australia.

Thank goodness our LNP government has brought in a department of agriculture. What common sense, because we are the front-line state for biosecurity and agriculture in this country so there is an important need to have a dedicated Minister for Agriculture. What a common-sense government we are.

**A government member:** Labor doesn't understand that.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I wanted to spell that out because it is extremely important, to the members of the Nanango electorate in particular, that we have a minister who looks after—

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I am quite sure the constituents of Surfers Paradise would be very happy that we have a Minister for Agriculture. As a regional minister representing a large number of primary producers in my electorate who produce amazing produce such as beef, grains, vegetables, chicken, fruit, pork, wine grapes, peanuts, navy beans, fodder and much, much more, I understand that good biosecurity management is particularly important in Queensland.

We have a wonderful peanut industry in Queensland. I congratulate companies such as Crumptions and the Peanut Company of Australia, which demand rigorous standards and high quality. They are investing a lot of money into industries such as the peanut industry. We demand high-quality peanuts.

There are some key points in this bill that I would like to focus on, and one relates to rabbits. The committee recommended that the government look at a model that is fair and equitable in relation to rabbits in Queensland. I am pleased to see that the government's position and the minister's position in relation to rabbits is to review the current model. I think it is a very good idea to review the current model of rabbits to ensure that everyone is protected from rabbits.

The bill also introduces some common-sense initiatives such as just one generic health certificate to replace the current different certificates for stock, bees and plants. This common-sense streamlining reduces the regulatory burden for primary producers and industry as well as reducing the administrative burden for government.


In the time I have left I want to touch briefly on deer management. This is very important for my electorate given that I have so many deer in the wonderful Somerset region and Crows Nest. Since being elected, I have met with many representatives including RIDGE. Research into Deer Genetics and Environment is a progressive group which has provided submissions on this bill. It is very passionate about feral deer management. I applaud the work that it has done. Large deer populations can have a significant impact on the environment and farm productivity. Under this bill recreational hunting groups can contribute to the long-term management of deer in Queensland, and there is no impediment to landholders implementing property management plans in historic deer ranges.

A biosecurity program is very important. I want to make another point in relation to cattle ticks in my electorate, and this is a point that I campaigned on as well. The Minister for Agriculture knows that the cattle tick line runs right through the middle of the electorate of Nanango. There are many dedicated producers who live in the buffer zone and control zones who do an outstanding job when it comes to the maintenance of that tick line. There are groups such as the Kingaroy Wondai Proston Tick Eradication Committee and the group that has started over near Crows Nest. Ticks cost Queensland producers some \$30 million per year.

**Mr Johnson** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I thank the member for Gregory because a lot of that money is coming out of the back pockets of the growers in my electorate who simply cannot afford that at this stage given the current drought conditions. We all know that once rain hits the ticks will take off. I want to congratulate the minister on acknowledging the importance of that to my electorate and addressing that through this bill that is before the House. I also note that there has been a significant DAFF resource commitment for cattle ticks in the South Burnett, with four biosecurity officers stationed between Kingaroy and Mundubbera and extra support when required from the Gatton offices. Again, I would like to congratulate the minister on that point.

A key feature of the Biosecurity Bill is that it is not necessary for all specific biosecurity matters, such as cattle ticks, to be listed as prohibited or restricted matter in order for them to be managed. I am unfortunately running out of time; I could talk on biosecurity for at least another 10 minutes. However, I want to again congratulate the minister for a common-sense piece of legislation. A lot of hard work has gone into this from a lot of different community groups and committees. It is about time that this sort of governance took place in Queensland. I congratulate the minister because it is so evident that, with a dedicated department of agriculture and a dedicated Minister for Agriculture, Queensland really is leading the way as the best agricultural state in Australia.

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (12.11 pm): It is with a lot of pleasure that I speak to this Biosecurity Bill 2013. I am not one for giving accolades much, but there is one accolade I want to give today and that is to the Minister for Agriculture himself. This man only came into parliament a couple of years ago and he straightaway adopted the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio. What a great job he has done. He has absolutely stamped his authority on it and he has taken the operation forward. We have been subjected to probably one of the worst droughts in the history of this state, and at the same time we have seen some awful diseases crop up as a result of the lack of biosecurity officers around the state.

The most important part of the economic strategy in any part of this nation is agriculture. As was said by the great American president, the late Abraham Lincoln, it is only when you see grass growing in the streets of the cities that there will be one industry that will remove that grass and that is a successful, viable agricultural industry—an industry that is productive, progressive and fruitful which everybody generates some type of employment or outcome from. There is no doubt about that. We put a lot of emphasis on other industries like tourism and mining, but there is one thing that our people and the people of the world must do and that is eat.

We are very fortunate that this country is an island continent and that the water is our Australian border, although I do know it is difficult from time to time to do a total surveillance of that border. I have heard other speakers say here today that Queensland is probably subjected to more foreign diseases than any other state in the Commonwealth, and just last year we saw the terrible dairy disease or cold country disease or whatever you want to call it—bovine Johne's disease—take hold in Queensland. Due to the good management and the hard decisions made by the minister and his departmental officers, that situation came under control. It probably did not progress the way a lot of people thought it would due to the fact that we live in a hot state.

I know we did not have a wet season in the north last year, but if we did have that wet season maybe there would have been a total decimation of the cattle industry in the Far North because it would have been coupled with the shutdown of the live cattle export industry that absolutely decimated North Queensland cattle herds. It not only decimated those herds, but it decimated the price of cattle right across the state because the product that goes out of North Queensland is not necessarily the product that comes out of the south-east corner or the southern states. It was very rewarding to read in today's *Country Life* that we are starting to initiate those markets again with our northern trading partner Indonesia. That is a lifeblood. I believe in the near term we will see that operation regenerate again. I thank the Lord because I think we will see substantial rain again before too long and before the winter takes effect. We will then see those producers get back into the productive operation that they know well in the Far North.

There are many aspects of this legislation that we could talk about but the disease factor is one I want to canvass today. The member for Nanango touched on the tick issue. Over the last few years, we have seen the decimation of livestock management strategies under the department of primary industries across the state, especially stock inspectors. I have spoken long and loud about this in this House over a long time. Back in the days when Ed Casey was the minister for primary industries, we saw the Move Easy permit system put in place. I was never supportive of it because I believed that a lot of those people could write out a permit if they wanted to and they were then an authority in a lot of ways to steal stock. If they were not apprehended by a police officer or a stock inspector and asked to show their paperwork, then conveyance of that stock could go through unnoticed. This is a situation we have to retard in this state—that is, livestock theft. I know that our stock squad under the surveillance of inspector Mick Dowie is well and truly on top of that issue.

I also want to mention our stock inspectors. They are a very integral part of our livestock operation in this state. A lot of them are nearly vets themselves. They have such a sound knowledge of the industry that they work within, whether it is livestock or the people who work in horticulture or other farming aspects.

A few years ago we saw the wipe-out of the citrus industry in the Central Highlands and the orchards around Emerald due to citrus canker. Unfortunately, we did not have the personnel in place to be able to manage that outbreak. We did not have the expertise in the field because a lot of the experts in question had been removed from their place of employment within the bounds of the department of primary industries as it then was, now the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. We had stock inspectors going there from Longreach and further afield to try to retard the spread of that citrus canker.

**Mr Rickuss:** How did that come in?


**Mr JOHNSON:** It came in because of very poor management strategies by the federal government that did not allow the surveillance. That is a very good point and I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. We saw foreign plant come in that was not checked properly by the federal authorities. That is what eliminated millions and millions of dollars of export earnings. It not only affected the local area of Emerald but we had to fight hard to keep it out of the Mundubbera area and down to the South Burnett. That is a classic example of why we have to be tough with this biosecurity.

As the member for Lockyer knows, agriculture is critical to many people who live and work in rural and regional Queensland. Agriculture is the one base issue that provides the security for many rural communities. It provides a source of income for many people who live in rural and regional Queensland. I say to the minister and his departmental officers that they cannot be tough enough on the cowboys within this industry because they are the ones who can desecrate and destroy this industry overnight by being irresponsible, by not caring and by trying to make a profit for their own personal gain.

I plead with the minister today to put back in place stock inspectors as quickly as possible and as budget restraints allow in as many places as possible. I always use the example of there being no full-time stock inspector at Alpha. It is right on the tick line. People come through that town and road trains also drop cattle off there. Those cattle have to be dipped before going to cleaner areas. We have seen the spread of the ticks into Muttaborra and Aramac two years ago and back down between Tambo and Alpha, all because of poor security and poor protection as the proper professionals are no

longer in the field. Over the years we have had great vets, like Bob Cottam and Phil Jaques, who have high expertise and knowledge of the regions. We need to see the reinstatement of the vets and stock inspectors in those places. These people are true professionals, have an understanding of the industry, love what they do and care about the productivity of the people who run and carry out the agricultural operations, whether it is in a large conglomerate capacity or whether it is a private family enterprise. We have to get those positions reinstated in these communities so we can manage properly not only biosecurity but also the profitability due to good agricultural management. We here in Queensland and Australia are the best farmers and graziers in the world. We have the best quality livestock in the world. We do not have foot-and-mouth disease in this country. We do not have bluetongue in this country. We do not have a lot of these terrible diseases in this country. That is why we must fight to keep the surveillance right and put in place biosecurity measures. Then Brazil and places in Europe will not be able to infiltrate our markets because we have foot-and-mouth or some other exotic disease.

This is one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before this House. I say to the minister again: congratulations on the job you are doing as Minister for Agriculture in this state; keep up the good work. I also have to salute him for the great work he has been doing and for the understanding, compassion and care he has been showing the people in those areas suffering drought. That good leadership that both he and the Premier and other people have shown has not gone unnoticed and I thank him for it. This is a good piece of legislation, and we are going to see great value and great economic outcomes and returns as a result of it.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (12.21 pm): I would like to speak to the Biosecurity Bill and acknowledge for the minister that this is a good bill. Obviously, little things will always stand out that people would like to bring to the House's attention, and that is what we are here for in this parliament. As was mentioned previously, Clark McGhie from Australian Wild Country Adventures attended the public hearing. I can relate to where he was coming from. I can also relate to the pig hunting side of it. He raised concerns about the possible impact of this bill on the sustainable management of deer. The Australian Wild Country Adventures submission pointed out that when the deer was introduced it was introduced as fauna, game or stock. Its status has now been reduced to pest.

Australian Wild Country Adventures are sophisticated and well organised. They go out and work with landowners in reducing the deer numbers but at the same time have been able to create an investment and an income. They have given deer hunters an opportunity to go out and shoot those wild deer in their own time and at their own expense. The concern is that the department may say, 'Okay, there are too many numbers here or too many numbers there. We will have to go to a mass helicopter shoot.' That would cost a lot of money. It is probably in the best interests of the department to work with Australian Wild Country Adventures to ensure that a sustainable management program is put in place. In that way they would be reducing the numbers and ensuring that they are sustainable. At the same time there could be a benefit returning to the community—to shooters. I hope that the department can dialogue with Australian Wild Country Adventures in the future so that we can achieve a good outcome for all concerned.


I am led to believe that there are over six million wild pigs throughout North Queensland. There have been conflicting reports about their beginnings. One is that Captain Cook let a few of these pigs go. I have read some information about when Captain Cook landed in Cooktown. A pen of pigs escaped and that is how it is believed the pigs first spread up to the Cape York Peninsula. It has now reached the point where there are over six million pigs. I also believe that recreational hunters play a big part in managing the numbers. As I was saying previously, they go and do this in their own time and at their own expense. Everyone benefits, from the outdoor camping shops to the corner stores, tyre shops, four-wheel-drive shops and gun shops. I have always believed that the introduction of a \$150 bounty for dingo scalps by one of the shires resulted in a dramatic decrease in wild dog numbers. Likewise, when Richmond introduced a feral cat bounty, there was a great reduction in the number of feral cats in that area. Obviously, there need to be incentives to do that.

We do have to acknowledge that there are Aussies, whether they are young teenagers or older generations, who love to go out and have a pig hunt using dogs. Likewise, they like to go out and have a shoot. That creates an economy in itself. The department could go out and undertake an aerial blast, which is going to cost the taxpayers money, but it needs to be acknowledged that recreational shooters can do that in their own time and at their own expense. In the case of the Staaten River National Park, which is 4,000 square miles—and I have been there—it is a breeding

ground for feral animals and noxious weeds. If the legal hunting of pigs can be appropriately managed, I believe there is an opportunity for the pig hunters to reduce those numbers without the department having to worry about those expenses. I am talking about this as it does relate to biosecurity. Obviously there needs to be a reduction. There are six million pigs across North Queensland and that is a massive number of pigs, although I think the numbers have decreased as a result of the drought. When there is a lot of rain, a lot of wet, the pigs scatter. They breed up and are located all over the countryside. This makes them very difficult to get hold of or track down. When it gets dryer, they relocate to the waterholes and they are a much easier target. If a bounty is placed on the pig, I believe it would create a wonderful economy in itself out there and would also bring about a return to this state. Everyone would also benefit.

As the member for Gregory was saying earlier, biosecurity is a big issue. The Productivity Commission undertook an investigation into the cost of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, I think, back in 1998. If there were a small outbreak that was contained, it would cost the livestock industry over \$4 billion. If there were a large outbreak, it would take 10 years to recover and would cost our meat industry up to \$12 billion.

Overall, I believe this is a good bill, and it also deals with the noxious weeds. This is especially important due to the infestation of lantana not so much in our river systems but in our national parks. If cattle eat lantana, they could die. If people rub their skin against it, they can develop irritation and infections. It is a shocking weed. What we can do with the finances available is very broad. I did want to bring that to the minister's attention considering the possibility of lantana taking over this state. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.29 pm): I rise in support of the Biosecurity Bill 2013 introduced to the parliament by the Hon. Dr John McVeigh, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and member for Toowoomba South. The long promised consolidation of state legislation into a single biodiversity act is now being realised, which is something that the former Labor government failed to do. The Biosecurity Bill 2013 is another example of the Newman government's commitment to outcome focused regulation and cutting red tape.

It is important to highlight the priority for this side of the House for our system of governance to be effective, efficient and to continually improve, review and build upon our regulation to ensure it is flexible, adaptable and responsive to community needs. We must adopt a regulatory approach based on best practice or industry needs, and this bill builds on that objective.


This bill was referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee after its tabling by the minister in November 2013. During the committee's wide-ranging hearings on this bill, one of the many opinions offered was that of Dan Galligan, Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Farmers Federation. In his opening statement to the inquiry he noted the importance of imposing biosecurity obligations right across-the-board. This bill will streamline relevant regulation into a single act; it will repeal six acts; subsequently amend three other acts; repeal 10 sets of regulations and part of one other regulation; and it will cut red tape by approximately 150 pages. We have all heard that there are 90,000 pages of red tape in this state, and red-tape reduction is something that this government has been focusing on over the two years since we have been elected. This bill will reduce the page count by more than 20 per cent compared to the corresponding provisions in current legislation.

Fees will in fact be rationalised, with the total number of fees being reduced from 87 to 37—another form of red-tape reduction. New permit schemes will reduce the number of different permits compared to the existing biosecurity legislation. A proposed generic health certificate under the bill will replace the existing certificates for health for stock, certificates for bees and insurance certificates for plants under current biosecurity legislation. This streamlining will reduce the regulatory burden for stakeholders as well as reducing the administrative burden for government. The bill will provide a more comprehensive range of response tools and associated powers that enhance the capability and flexibility for front-line resources to mitigate risk through effective preparedness, prevention, surveillance, emergency response and ongoing management programs.

It is important to maintain market access and develop new markets for the world-class, disease-free status of many of our agricultural products. It is vital to the progrowth aspirations and competitiveness of our agriculture industries. While I have a relatively small suburban electorate in terms of area with no farming areas as such, biosecurity is something that, in reality, would affect all

of us if effective biosecurity measures are not put in place. I support this bill because it will facilitate growth to one of the core pillars of our economy, agriculture, and help achieve our goal of doubling agriculture production at the farm gate by 2040. We have a great state with great opportunities; let us keep it that way.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Before I call the member for Whitsunday, I would remind members that they need to stand to get the call. I call the member for Whitsunday.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (12.33 pm): This afternoon I am delighted to speak in support of the Biosecurity Bill 2013 and from the outset, like many of my colleagues here today, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding work of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in bringing this bill before the House. The Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee raised a number of issues in relation to the bill such as communication strategies, operational procedures, compensation of course and the like, and I thank the minister for acknowledging and addressing those issues.

Put simply, this bill streamlines the LNP government's approach to biosecurity, which is something we take very seriously. It is in stark contrast, I might add, to when federal Labor was in power and, with their ridiculous and downright dangerous policy ideas, exposed Queensland and northern Australia. For those who are not familiar with the situation, it was federal Labor who came up with the concept of getting rid of our fleet of biosecurity surveillance vessels in northern waters and replacing them with one single boat. That is right: going from four boats to one single vessel! Needless to say, that was a crazy idea when one considers the huge size of the northern Australia coastline.

**Dr Robinson:** Cut, cut, cut!

**Mr COSTIGAN:** Thank you, member for Cleveland, I take your interjection. It was cut, cut, cut! Can you imagine that: one boat running back and forth from North West Cape in WA to my beloved Whitsundays on the eastern seaboard! It was an issue that I have raised in the House previously, and it is certainly an issue that attracted the ire of the coalition's former shadow minister for agriculture, John Cobb—and I acknowledge his work—before the people of Australia sent the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd governments a very strong message last year.

As I see it, biosecurity is everyone's business. It is like a fire: if it is on your property, you own it. That is true in the northern parts of our state, and I am sure the member for Cook, among others, would echo those sentiments. I note that Queensland is on the biosecurity front line, with our close proximity to our friends in Papua New Guinea and South-East Asia. We all have to remember the potential consequences of something like foot-and-mouth disease and how an outbreak would play out in Queensland—especially in regional and rural areas—economically, socially and environmentally.

A report by the Productivity Commission in 2002 certainly gave the nation some frightening scenarios in relation to foot-and-mouth disease. The report noted that an outbreak would lead to the immediate closure of many of Australia's major export markets for livestock products, and vital beef and lamb markets would not be re-opened for at least three months after the disease was eradicated. Of course it could take some time to rebuild confidence and rebuild those overseas markets. The commission estimated that the cumulative losses of export revenue would range from over \$3 billion for a short outbreak to more than \$9 billion for a 12-month outbreak. The majority of those losses, of course, would be in our beef cattle industry which is already bleeding, as we all know, thanks to this shocking drought that has gripped two-thirds of Queensland and is impacting on people far and wide.

As I have said previously in this place, my electorate is perhaps better known for sugar and tourism, but our Mackay-Whitsunday region also has a significant cattle industry. In fact, 10 per cent of the Queensland herd is within the three local government areas of Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday. I am sure people like Bill and Eileen Deicke from Collingvale station and the Cox family from Goorganga station in the heart of my electorate, who are key players in the cattle industry, will be appreciative of what this government is doing in relation to biosecurity. If there was an FMD outbreak there would be a resulting oversupply of meat on the domestic market, which equates to a substantial drop in price around the country and a further decline in industry revenue—hardly what our cattle producers need, given the current price and with the drought that is hurting people far and wide, as I said just a moment ago.

According to the Productivity Commission, the cumulative decline in revenue from domestic sales was estimated to be over \$2 billion for a short outbreak of FMD to over \$3 billion for an outbreak taking more than a year to get under control. The control and compensation costs were estimated to be around \$30 million for a short outbreak to a whopping \$450 million for a 12-month outbreak. The Productivity Commission estimated that overall the total loss to the national economy would be in the vicinity of \$2 billion to \$3 billion of GDP for a short outbreak of FMD to up to \$13 billion for a 12-month outbreak. Mr Deputy Speaker, I remind you and the honourable members in the House here today that these figures were quoted way back in 2002. The Productivity Commission confirmed what we all suspected—that Queensland would be the jurisdiction that would be impacted the most. On that note, I want to quote the minister—

We have recently invested in a foot-and-mouth disease preparedness program that is deliberately targeted to make Queensland the most FMD prepared state in Australia.

I am sure that is music to the ears of many primary producers right around our great state.


This bill is yet another example of the LNP government meeting its commitment to a customer focused, innovative and high-performance public sector and one that provides a high degree of accountability. By streamlining all relevant legislation into a single act, it will provide a modern, cohesive, flexible framework to respond to Queensland's current and future biosecurity challenges, and I am sure that will be warmly welcomed by primary producers in my electorate of Whitsunday. The bill will provide a more comprehensive range of response tools and associated powers and enhance the capability and flexibility for front-line resources to mitigate risks through effective preparedness, prevention, surveillance, emergency response and ongoing management programs. These tools, including biosecurity zones and biosecurity programs, can be tailored to meet the unique nature and tactical challenges of addressing specific biosecurity risks. It also seeks to ensure the safety and quality of animal feed, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs and manage risks of biological, chemical and physical contaminants in carriers.

I support the bill because it will facilitate growth to this core pillar of our economy. It is a pillar that was forgotten under the former government. I have said it before and I will say it again: I am delighted to see the minister putting what I call primary industries back on a pedestal, and not before time. The bill will streamline relevant legislation into a single act. It will repeal six acts, substantially amend three other acts, repeal 10 sets of regulations and part of one other regulation. It will cut red tape by approximately 150 pages, honouring our commitment at the election of 24 March 2012 to cut red tape right across-the-board. It will reduce the page count, for the record, by more than 20 per cent compared to the corresponding provisions in the current legislation.

The bill will provide a modern, cohesive framework to respond to Queensland's current and future biosecurity challenges and play its part in making sure that Queensland is the best state and the best jurisdiction in the nation to invest in agriculture. Fees will be rationalised, with the total number of fees being cut from 87 to 37. New permit schemes will reduce the number of different permits compared to the existing biosecurity legislation. A proposed generic health certificate under the bill will replace the existing certificates of health for stock, certificates for bees—and there are a few beekeepers in Whitsunday, including one over on Keswick Island that comes to mind—and assurance certificates for plants under current biosecurity legislation. This streamlining will reduce the regulatory burden for stakeholders, as well as reducing the administrative burden for government. The government has cut red tape from a similar bill introduced into the House in 2011.

The general biosecurity obligation that will require people whose activities may pose a risk to take steps to minimise that risk means that specific requirements will be able to be kept to a minimum. This will allow community members to use risk mitigation measures best suited to their circumstances and minimise their compliance costs. The community can look forward to a more appropriate balance between explicit requirements and flexibility under the Newman government. Regulation will only be applied where necessary. I acknowledge the work of the minister in deploying no less than 15 biosecurity officers on the front line, including a number of postings throughout North Queensland, and I am sure those respective communities would also acknowledge the minister in rolling out those front-line officers. From the grain fields to the canefields, the minister continues to do great work in his portfolio. I also want to acknowledge the work of his department in implementing the \$31.5 million drought assistance package—a record package in the history of the state of Queensland. I am sure that those battling, drought stricken cockies in the west appreciate those efforts and also appreciate the outcomes that will be delivered on the back of this particular bill. Those cockies need that support and I am sure they will appreciate this government taking biosecurity very seriously.

In closing, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge my colleagues on the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee under the chairmanship of the member for Lockyer. In conclusion, needless to say, I support the bill.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (12.44 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Biosecurity Bill 2013. At the outset I want to congratulate my friend the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on successfully bringing this bill to the House and having it considered—something which, I might make the observation, his predecessor the member for Mackay was unable to achieve despite his best efforts at the time. As the explanatory notes accompanying the bill outline, the objective of this bill is to provide a comprehensive biosecurity framework to manage the impacts of animal and plant diseases and pests in a timely and effective way. It is important for me to outline in detail the reasons why and the purposes of this new and contemporary framework for dealing with biosecurity matters in Queensland, because it will play an extremely important role in supporting the agricultural industries which underpin the communities in my electorate of Hinchinbrook.

As has been previously mentioned, Queensland's current biosecurity framework comprises eight acts and 11 subordinate instruments which were developed independently of one another in response to specific events and, as a result, it includes obsolete provisions as well as overlapping and inconsistent approaches. The current legislation is also largely reactive and lacks the flexibility to respond to Queensland's changing risk profile. The effectiveness of biosecurity frameworks is continually challenged in all jurisdictions by increases in the movement of people between jurisdictions, increases in the volume and diversity of trade across the globe in animal and plant products, and changing transport procedures.

Without the modernisation of our biosecurity framework that this bill delivers to Queensland, the current legislation, quite frankly, would pose an increased risk to Queensland's agricultural sector, which is a core pillar of the Queensland economy. Biosecurity measures are of course all about the protection of the economy, the natural flora and fauna and the health of human beings from the negative impacts associated with the entry, establishment or spread of animal and plant diseases and diseases into a particular jurisdiction. There needs to be a better awareness amongst the general community about the serious and sometimes irreversible impacts of pest or disease incursion on agricultural industries, on native flora and fauna or on the health of human beings and communities in that jurisdiction.

The provisions of the bill establish a cohesive framework that provides proportionate powers and flexibility to respond in a timely and effective way to outbreaks of animal and plant diseases and pests. The bill establishes obligations in relation to reporting and dealing with biosecurity matters that could potentially have an adverse impact on the economy, human health or the natural environment. It also establishes disease tracing obligations in relation to the identification and movement of animals, and this is an important point as well. I am sure the minister would agree with me that, notwithstanding the fact that there is the legislative framework and the statutory authority to make orders in response to biosecurity events, it is the responsibility of all Queenslanders to be vigilant and involved in recognising and reporting potential biosecurity events throughout the state. The proposed legislation adopts the precautionary principle such that a lack of scientific certainty should not postpone action to manage emergency biosecurity events where serious or irreversible damage is plausible, and this acknowledges that the costs of not taking action to a potential threat such as a highly infectious disease transmitted between animals and humans can be more significant than the cost of taking early and definitive action which subsequently proves to be unnecessary. I might return to that issue a bit later in my contribution.

The bill contains a range of regulatory tools, including emergency powers and orders, movement control orders, biosecurity zones, biosecurity programs and co-regulatory mechanisms that can be tailored to meet the particular nature of the biosecurity challenge at hand. This is at the core of modernising the legislative framework for responding to biosecurity issues in Queensland that the minister has outlined in terms of the inflexibility of the previous legislative arrangements.

Importantly, the bill will provide for Queensland to enter into agreements with the Commonwealth or other states in relation to biosecurity arrangements and includes a statutory basis for the minister or the chief executive of the department to enter into an agreement with industry, local governments and other bodies to establish arrangements for biosecurity responses. This is in recognition of the fact that biosecurity events do not respect state or national boundaries and it can


often involve cooperation and coordination between jurisdictions for an effective response to a biosecurity event. I am also very pleased to see that non-government organisations can enter into formal agreements to support state or jurisdictional responses to biosecurity events.

I have a particular interest in biosecurity issues given, as I mentioned before, that agriculture is a very important part of the economy of my electorate of Hinchinbrook. The sugar and banana industries are the major economic drivers supporting jobs in the electorate as well as an emerging cattle industry, tropical fruits, small cropping, commercial fishing and aquaculture. In particular, in the time remaining available to me I wanted to speak in some detail about the biosecurity position of the Australian banana industry.

The Australian banana industry is a unique industry in Queensland, such that presently it grows and supplies 90 per cent of the bananas that are consumed throughout Australia. About two-thirds of Australia's bananas are grown in my electorate of Hinchinbrook and famously—or infamously, I should say—on a couple of occasions we have suffered from weather events such as Cyclone Larry in 2006 and Cyclone Yasi in 2011 whereupon the national supply of bananas to the market in Australia has been significantly constrained. Famously, a former federal Treasurer actually said that those events impacted on the consumer price index because the supply of bananas to the national market was compromised by those weather events.

But there is another threat and that is biosecurity to the Australian banana industry. Today I want to pay tribute to the Australian banana industry and the Australian Banana Growers' Council, which I consider to be one of the most well-organised and united industry organisations representing its members in Australia from the agricultural sector. In the early 2000s that council successfully dealt with an incursion of black sigatoka in the Tully area. It is a shocking disease, massively compromising the production capability of the jurisdictions in which black sigatoka is endemic. For the first time ever anywhere a jurisdiction successfully undertook the eradication of black sigatoka in the production area in Tully. It was an achievement that the Australian banana industry can be rightly proud. It involved the coordinated surveillance and eradication of plants demonstrating or exhibiting black sigatoka. It involved the destruction of established crops. Those areas had to be sterilised and left fallow for several years. The expense that the industry went to ensure the eradication demonstrated a great deal of commitment to basic and fundamental biosecurity levels in the industry. I am very pleased with the Australian banana industry, because it has ensured the ongoing economic contribution of that industry to the area.

It is unfortunate that from time to time the Australian banana industry has had to defend itself against processes involving Biosecurity Australia considering applications for the importation of fresh fruit—bananas—from the Philippines into Australia. There are serious and legitimate biosecurity issues involved in that process. Time after time the Australian banana industry has had to raise funds by itself to defend itself through those Biosecurity Australia processes and to this point it has been successful. I want to put on the record my absolute, 100 per cent support for the Australian banana industry and its fight to make sure that its industry is protected from pests and diseases that are endemic in other jurisdictions but not in the Australian banana industry and that it continues to have the opportunity to compete, in terms of biosecurity arrangements for the industry, on a fair and level playing field.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (12.54 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Biosecurity Bill as it is important that this great state grows one of the four pillars of its economy, that being agriculture, whilst also protecting our natural fauna and flora from feral species that in the past, currently and in the future impact on regional communities, farmers and the overall Queensland economy. The amendments in this bill will strengthen both the environmental and the agricultural sectors into the future. One of the objectives of this bill is the creation of a biosecurity framework to manage the impacts of animal and flora diseases as well as pests in an effective way whilst ensuring the safety and quality of animal feed, fertilisers and other inputs that are fundamental for farmers to be able to produce high-quality produce for Queenslanders. This bill repeals numerous acts that are regarded as obsolete and lack the flexibility to strengthen the sector into the future.


Biosecurity is not just about the protection of animals and plants from disease and contaminants; it is essential to the sustained growth of the Queensland economy, the environment and the health and social amenities of all Queenslanders. Under this legislation, the adopted principle is that the lack of scientific certainty should not postpone action whilst managing emergency biosecurity events where serious damage could be plausible. This principle acknowledges that

inaction to a perceived threat—for example, disease transmission between animals and humans—can be more severe and damaging than the cost of taking action immediately, both on a health and a wider economic scale. All members of this House are very aware of the impacts of the equine virus, which devastated the racing industry a few years back both financially and in the loss of animal stock and human lives.

As I said in my maiden speech, the port of Brisbane is the gateway of the Queensland economy. The port provides a major trade route for grain and livestock for import and export, thus these legislative changes are fundamental in strengthening our biosecurity at the port for generations to come. This legislation also provides the flexibility for us to work in consultation with our federal counterparts around the management of imported pest species that could be devastating to the Queensland environment and economy as well as the agricultural sector. For example, the Port of Brisbane has strict guidelines in managing containers, especially in terms of foreign species such as the African land snail and fire ants as well as citrus canker, the introduction of which has widespread ramifications for our citrus industry, especially in Central Queensland.

Another positive of this bill is that it will provide a statutory basis for the minister to enter into a government-industry agreement similar to the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement, which is a joint agreement between the state and other jurisdictions, local government, industry bodies or natural resource management bodies to establish arrangements for rapid responses to pests and diseases and to define how costs relate to the management of a biosecurity event.

The estimated cost to the government to implement this legislative change will assist in providing front-line services, the regulatory tools and powers as well as flexibility whilst enabling more cost-effective responses. I support this bill, introduced by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, as it provides the flexibility that is needed to assist the Newman government to get on with the job of strengthening the agricultural sector as part of the Queensland government's overall initiative to build a four-pillar economy.

 **Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.59 pm): I am very happy to speak in support of the Biosecurity Bill 2013. I certainly commend the minister for bringing this bill to the House. It is a very much needed piece of legislation. As we know, this is a minister who understands the agricultural industry. He understands primary industries and I certainly congratulate him for the work that he is doing, because biosecurity is an essential part of primary industries not only in Queensland but right across Australia. The need to keep Queensland's current disease-free status from so many exotic diseases, plants and animals is essential.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Menkens, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE

### Reports

**Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.30 pm), by leave: I table Ethics Committee report No. 142 titled Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 31 October 2012 relating to an alleged intimidation of a member by a legal firm.

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee Report No. 142, Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 31 October 2012 relating to an alleged intimidation of a member by a legal firm [\[4606\]](#).


I also table report No. 143 of the Ethics Committee titled *Report on a right of reply No. 25*.

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee Report No. 143, Report on a Right of Reply No. 25 [\[4607\]](#).

I commend the reports and the committee's recommendations to the House.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Alcohol Related Violence

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.30 pm): Violence in our streets, or anywhere, is unacceptable. It is time to challenge the culture that tolerates binge drinking and losing control and to take a stand against behaviour that disrespects others and threatens their safety. Our normally peaceful Sunshine Coast community has recently been rocked by the tragic deaths of Wayne Dover in Maroochydore and Bruce Steensen in Mooloolaba. I express my condolences to their families.

Their deaths have shocked everyone and caused great grief and anger, adding to a community-wide resolve to stop the violence. Court cases are pending against alleged offenders who have been charged and so for sub judice reasons I will keep my comments focused so as not to affect those processes. We want to see justice for the victims and appropriate consequences for offenders.

The state government through the Premier has promised to respond with a comprehensive package to address the issue of alcohol fuelled violence in Queensland and that will be released this month. It will be based upon community feedback as that is the only way these serious issues can be tackled—with community support—as it is going to take tougher laws for those who offend and a culture change about the abuse of alcohol and drugs in our community. Already people are speaking up with answers and a commitment to action. More than 12,000 Queenslanders participated in the government's survey with more than 1,000 Sunshine Coast residents responding.

On Sunday afternoon this week I conducted a live online forum on my Facebook page, attracting more than 100 comments and 8,000-plus people viewing the posts on this issue. Thank you to everyone who had their say and provided their input. I am hearing from people in my electorate who want to take back control of our streets and ensure they are safe. Young people—people of all ages—want to have fun in safety. The responses to the Facebook forum were in line with the state government survey results, including a call for tougher penalties for offenders, ID scanning into licensed venues, banning entry for those with a history of violence from those venues and better policing of responsible service of alcohol in licenced venues. Half of the survey respondents said they had seen violence in or around entertainment venues and most said that a lack of respect and concern for others was to blame.

A number of groups are already out there working in schools and the community to spread this antiviolence message and it is encouraging to see a grassroots response. I am keen to work with community groups as we share the leadership on this complex problem and find comprehensive solutions. There is no one silver bullet, but there are better solutions, and thoughtful dedicated citizens can make a difference.

### Party Houses



**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.33 pm): I rise in the House today with positive news about party houses, the bane of residents in my Mermaid Beach electorate. I would like to offer my thanks to the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Local Government for their commitment to fixing the problem and proceeding to find a solution to eradicate these out-of-control party houses that have created so much heartache and a living hell for residents of the Gold Coast. This has greatly affected residents in my electorate of Mermaid Beach as well as those right up the Queensland Coast including the Sunshine Coast and the fabulous electorate of Noosa. Members of these communities have been at their wits' end with these short-term accommodation businesses in residential areas and it is the Newman government that will be fixing the problem once and for all. The introduction of clear legislative changes that will give power to local councils to enforce restrictions on short-term holiday letting in residential areas is necessary and not far away from being finalised by this government. Party houses, or short-term holiday letting, in residential areas has been an issue that has been impacting on our usually peaceful communities over years and it took the LNP Newman government to understand the impact it has been having on our communities and the absolute need to find a solution that will be in the best interests of our long-suffering communities.

Many residents have approached my office in absolute frustration seeking a solution and I am so proud to be part of a government that listens to the people and gives them a well thought out and appropriate resolution that is in the best interests of all within in our local communities. Already the local government minister has put in place legislation dealing directly with the noise components of these party houses. The behaviour associated with these party houses is deplorable, offensive and unacceptable. These unruly, intoxicated and aggressive young people who have no inhibitions and act in a way that is totally unacceptable under society's standards have impacted dramatically on people's lives.

I have also been particularly concerned with these party houses taking business away from legitimate long-term accommodation businesses that are positioned in the correct tourism areas of the Gold Coast and have obtained the correct planning approvals through the proper processes. Compensation claims against councils must also be addressed in any new legislative changes, as these lucrative cash cows of these unapproved party house operators will undoubtedly generate substantial litigation if the legislation is not clear and unequivocal.

These have been some of the minefields that have provided challenges to overcoming these party houses through the necessary legislation. New legislative changes through statutory instruments and giving control of these party houses back to each local council in the affected jurisdiction will ensure that these party houses are an issue that is rectified and solved for the betterment of our communities and lifestyle that we all hold dear to our hearts on the fabulous Gold Coast and other associated tourism areas.

### International Women's Day



**Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (2.36 pm): This week, the week that marks International Women's Day 2014, is an opportunity for members and others involved in this parliament to stop and reflect. I am certainly doing that. I reflect initially on two men I know in this world who I suspect are the luckiest men in the world. I refer to my son, Kevin, and myself. I reflect on the fact that we are so fortunate to live and enjoy our lives with my wife, his mother, Anita, and my daughters, his sisters, Meghan, Bridget, Annabelle, Marita and Tessa.

More broadly, yesterday was a tremendous opportunity to also reflect on leading women in agriculture. Yesterday the Premier and I were at the 2014 Rural Women of the Year awards process here in parliament, as we discussed yesterday in parliament. We heard about the leading role, in communities, on farms and in community organisations around the state, that women are playing in leadership through the current drought conditions across the state.

I also reflect on tomorrow's breakfast that Madam Speaker is leading in relation to Queensland's inspiring women. I am so pleased that a guest from my electorate, a friend of mine, Frances Klaassen, who coordinates Mercy Family Services in Toowoomba, will be my guest at that breakfast. Mercy Family Services—and I stress 'family services'—focuses on foster and kinship care, intensive intervention, family intervention, family contact facilitation, supported independent living, the Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program, the Settlement Grants Program and, of course, Community Action for a Multicultural Society in Toowoomba. That is the sort of leadership that inspiring women such as Frances Klaassen continue to provide.

Tomorrow in my electorate of Toowoomba South, I will be attending a Zonta function marking International Women's Day and Madam Speaker will be the guest speaker. My mother is a member of that group. A couple of weeks ago in my electorate, the member for Toowoomba North and I attended the YWCA Queensland Leading Women's Lunch to see some of the 150 leading women in the state, including Mrs Mary Wagner, who is a matriarch of Toowoomba; Mary Woods, who is on the Tie Up the Black Dog committee, which works in the mental health field across the state; and my own deputy director-general, Dr Beth Woods. It was a tremendous occasion, indeed. This Saturday provides an opportunity to reflect on those leading women in our community and the contribution they make at home, in our electorates, in our portfolios, in this parliament and in the communities and industries across the state that we all have the opportunity to work with.

### Watson, Mr B, All-Terrain Vehicle




**Hon. GW ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier) (2.39 pm): All members in this place have stories of local constituents who stand out from the crowd because of their community commitment and generosity. This afternoon I inform the House about one such Noosa constituent. His name is Bill Watson, but he is known to Noosa residents and thousands of regular visitors simply as 'Hey Bill'. 'Hey Bill' has been a Noosa institution for 44 years. While he is an obvious attraction on Noosa Main Beach, he has been quietly achieving in many other ways. 'Hey Bill's' distinctive quad bike and its numerous trailers are a regular sight up and down the beach, and the cool drinks, ice-creams and snow cones he sells are a welcome relief to beach goers. He has been at the centre of the Noosa community for decades.

A little while ago, 'Hey Bill' turned his mind to his latest project and started to put aside 50c from every drink that he sold to fund a beach vehicle to be used by local police officers. He began tallying up and putting aside the 'few bob each day', as he called it, and eventually had enough to fund a fully equipped, beach-ready Atomik ATX 400 all-terrain vehicle. The all-terrain vehicle will help police prevent, detect and solve crime, as well as providing access to hard-to-reach areas during an emergency. The vehicle will allow officers to conduct patrols along the beach and in the surrounding

national park, which previously was only able to be done to a limited capacity. I thank the Noosa Heads Surf Life Saving Club for providing a facility to store the vehicle and Kennards Hire Bli Bli for providing a suitable trailer for transportation. The all-terrain vehicle is a great addition to the equipment that supports local policing and it is unique.

This is just the latest act in a lifetime of giving back to the community that 'Hey Bill' loves. I thank him for his generosity in providing a vehicle that will benefit police officers in their day-to-day duties. The all-terrain vehicle will provide a complementary service to the trial of segways, which is currently underway in Noosa. In various locations, trials of segways have assisted officers in the investigation of robberies, break and enters, wilful damage and street offences. Officers involved in the Noosa trial have said that the use of segways has been equally beneficial in their day-to-day work. 'Hey Bill's' all-terrain vehicle and the segways have certainly made their mark and the area stretching from the national park to the river mouth is now much safer for the community in Noosa to enjoy.

### Cycling Safety

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (2.42 pm): A recent media report revealed that of the 10 worst cycling black spots in Queensland, five are in my electorate of South Brisbane. Since 2007, those black spots and the number of crashes are: Annerley Road, Woolloongabba, 34 crashes, and tragically that is the site where a young cyclist lost his life last year; Dornoch Terrace, Highgate Hill, 20 crashes; Old Cleveland Road, Coorparoo, 17 crashes; Dock Street, South Brisbane, 16 crashes; and Montague Road, West End, 13 crashes. These are very worrying statistics, but on one level they are unsurprising. The vast majority of people travelling by bicycle or car from the southside to the city must pass through my electorate. When vast numbers of bikes and cars converge, there are bound to be incidents. That is why I am calling on the government to, firstly, release the TMR report that details those bicycle hot spots and all the information related to it and, secondly, to do more to provide dedicated cycling infrastructure to separate cyclists and motorists by implementing in full the former government's Queensland Cycle Strategy 2011-2021. Dedicated cycling infrastructure is by far the safest and most effective way to avoid cycling deaths and injuries.

Unfortunately, we already know what the Minister for Transport and Main Roads thinks about dedicated cycling infrastructure. He does not like it, he thinks it is a waste of money and he calls it gold plating, unless it is in his electorate where the minister has built a \$10 million cycling overpass at the Centenary Motorway and Moggill Road interchange. I am sure that cyclists in the western suburbs will welcome that infrastructure, as I welcome any project that makes cycling safer, but we need to spend limited funding resources where they are needed most and not just where such projects may boost the minister's re-election prospects.

Recently I have assumed responsibility for the Main Roads portfolio. I look forward to taking on the challenge of this portfolio and I look forward to continuing to grill the minister on every possible occasion about his deficiencies in the area of Transport and now Main Roads. According to publicly available QTRIP figures, this government has reduced funding on roads from \$807 million in 2011-12 to \$730 million in 2013-14. Labor will continue to advocate for road maintenance funding that adequately services the size and reach of our road network in Queensland. Labor will continue to do this. We will continue to advocate for dedicated cycleways where they are needed most—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): Order!

**Ms TRAD**:—and not in the minister's backyard.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Member for Chatsworth, I ask you to take notice of the chair, please.

### Townsville Fire; Northern Fury

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (2.45 pm): That was entertaining. There is no doubt that the member for South Brisbane did not need the footpath the day she scuttled out of Patrick Condren's studio at a great rate of knots to get away from the very probing questions that the minister was putting forward.

With International Women's Day upon us, I think it is pertinent that I speak about a success story in my electorate of Mundingburra, the Townsville Fire, which is the Women's National Basketball League team.

**Mrs Menkens** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member for Burdekin has pointed out that we share them, because they are on the edge of our respective electorates. The Fire will play in their first WNBL championship this Sunday. They are a great success story for our city. If they win, it will be the first time that a Townsville based team has won the premier national competition in its respective code. As we know, the Cowboys won the Nines, and I see the member for Townsville making eyes at me. That was a great win and we are very proud of them, but it is not the premier competition. This would be a great win for the WNBL girls.


Today I acknowledge that a few years ago they were in troubled times, but in true fashion the city rallied behind them and they have found a way forward. Under coach Chris Lucas, they have really enshrined themselves in the hearts and minds of our great city. I acknowledge player Suzy Batkovic, who has been announced as the WNBL MPV—most valuable player—for the third consecutive time. That is the first time anyone has ever done that. I wish her well. I also acknowledge Rachel McCully, a local girl who we have all grown to love very much over the years.

While on the topic of national sports, I will speak briefly about the Northern Fury, which launched its season the other day. Nearly three years ago to the day, a great injustice was done to the region when the team, despite reaching the goals that were set by the A league, was cut from the competition. That rocked our core, because whether or not you support football, basketball or rugby league, we are proud of our city and we are proud that national sporting teams are based there. That really rocked our core. The Fury, now known as the Northern Fury Football Club, is going to be playing in the second-tier competition. They are looking to expand into the women's league and the national youth league and they are working hard to get back into the A league. Nothing would make me more proud than to see some of those young guys who are running around at the moment one day back in the A league. That would really cap the success for our city.

**Mr Crandon:** Are you going to play for them?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member for Coomera asks if I want to play. Unfortunately, time and ability have robbed me of that opportunity. However, I have been offered No. 1 membership. In my remaining time today, I urge everybody to please take up membership of this great club, which is on a trajectory back to the A league.

### Curumbin Electorate, Events

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Curumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.48 pm): It gives me great pleasure to share with honourable members some exciting happenings in the Curumbin electorate, an exquisitely beautiful part of the world located on the Queensland coastline adjoining the New South Wales border. As I speak, the world's best surfers are gracing our sandy shores, exhibiting their skills on the waves at the annual Quiksilver and Roxy Pro held at Snapper Rocks. This is the first location of an 11-stop world championship tour circuit. Where better to kick it off than in the backyard of our own home-grown world champions—Mick Fanning, Steph Gilmore and Joel 'Parko' Parkinson.

Boasting some of the best waves in the world, it is little wonder the southern Gold Coast beaches are home to international competitions, including the Quiksilver and Roxy Pro, as well as a number of domestic events. The significance of this cannot be underestimated. The event is broadcast via a live webcast around the globe, and is expected to draw 47,000 spectators from all over Australia and the world over the eight days of competition. The 2013 event had an economic impact of some \$7.19 million.

Surfing has long been a part of the fabric of the southern Gold Coast and our region's tourism industry. We value the economic benefit and the invaluable marketing opportunities that such an international competition brings as our stunning foreshores are beamed around the world. I understand the competition has been fierce and there have been some closely contested heats. Unfortunately, there is no surfing today, though, as a lay day has been called. Hopefully the swell picks up tomorrow and Steph can progress through the women's semifinal into the final.


'Parko' and Fanning are both set to hit the waves for round 3, and I am confident they will be as impressive as ever on their home break and progress through to the finals later in the week. I am looking forward to attending on the weekend to cheer on our champions. I place on record my appreciation to everyone involved.

Currumbin will continue to be a mecca of surf inspired activity over coming weeks with Bleach—the premier arts, music and beach culture festival on the Gold Coast—kicking off this weekend and running through until 23 March. Supported by the Tourism and Events Queensland Regional Development Program, this festival spreads right across the Gold Coast with the program encompassing a mix of contemporary live music, pop up art installations and exhibitions, outdoor film programs, street parties, theatre and ideas. Congratulations are in order for festival director, Louise Bezzina, for her creative energy and passion that sees this festival grow and develop more each year.

During May the spectacular Opera on the Beach performances of *Magic Flute* will take place right on Greenmount Beach. It is sure to be a truly magical production and one not to be missed. Honourable members, if you have any time spare in May or before then I invite you to Currumbin to enjoy some of these exciting events.

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Health, Employment Contracts

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.51 pm): The Minister for Health has taken a wrecking ball to our public hospital system. I attended the Pineapple Hotel meeting of senior public hospital doctors last night. Contrary to the minister's assertion, this is the first time I have attended such a meeting. I went to listen to the doctors and to represent their views in this parliament. That is something the minister should do.

The meeting was packed to overflowing, with more than 800 medical specialists and senior doctors in attendance. So packed was the meeting that there were doctors on the stairs. All were angry and resolved to fight grossly unfair and unreasonable work contracts being imposed by this arrogant government.

The doctors have not made the threat of mass resignations lightly. Make no mistake, if the government does not resolve this crisis our public hospitals will close and the next generation of doctors will not be trained and patient care will suffer. One senior doctor who spoke at the meeting confided in me that he was worried this was indeed the government's long-term plan, that is, to force senior doctors out to the private sector and then contract them back for medical services. He expressed his dismay at the naive, short-sighted and—in his own words—'downright stupid' comments by the minister.

It is no wonder that more than 800 of the smartest doctors in the state passed the following motion unanimously. It reads—

We, as senior doctors of Queensland Health, have no confidence in Health Minister, Lawrence Springborg.

Eight hundred of the smartest people in the state know that this minister is not up to the job. He should resign and hand the Health portfolio over to Dr Chris Davis. So say the senior medical specialists of Queensland's public hospitals. These doctors are smart. They know spin from fact. The minister's disinformation campaign is totally unconvincing and these senior doctors are angry and are getting angrier day by day.

This morning the minister spruiked Dr Ross Cartmill's public support for these work contracts. Visiting medical officers know better. Ross may be the chair of the AMAQ VMO committee, but his views are personal and political. I will table documents that prove that Dr Cartmill is a senior member of the LNP.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 25 April 2000, titled 'NQ barrier lifts to open field in Liberal's Senate contest' [\[4608\]](#).


*Tabled paper:* Article from website [www.onlineopinion.com.au](http://www.onlineopinion.com.au), published 2 April 2000, titled 'Queensland Liberals need a Peter Beattie and a Dennis Murphy' [\[4609\]](#).

There is a secret meeting being held tonight with the AMA president and Christian Rowan. I also table for the benefit of the House documents that show that Dr Rowan is a senior member of the LNP as well.

*Tabled paper:* Committee Structure and Policy Chairs for the Policy Standing Committee—2012-2013 [\[4610\]](#).

They are willing to sell out the doctors for their own personal interests and for Dr Rowan to gain preselection in Ashgrove.

### Toondah Harbour, Redevelopment

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.54 pm): The Toondah Harbour priority development is coming along well. This is the most important project to the people of Cleveland over the last 20 years. It is a project that was too difficult for previous Labor governments that had more than 20 years to build it and did nothing. Now they are supporting green radicals who are trying to sink the project—green radicals who love mud more than job opportunities for young people.

On 16 May 2013 the Deputy Premier visited the Cleveland electorate to announce the long-anticipated decision that Toondah Harbour had been approved as a priority development area. This announcement was fantastic news for the residents of Cleveland, North Stradbroke Island and Redland city. The declaration was the first step in opening up a number of mixed use proposal ideas for the Toondah Harbour site, potentially including dedicated and much improved ferry terminals, public open space and parks, better foreshore access, residential infrastructure, tourism and retail opportunities like cafes and restaurants and a marina.

The Toondah Harbour project has progressed since then through two stages of public and community consultation, beginning in August 2013 and concluding in February 2014. During this extensive consultation period I have interacted with a large number of people as I moved around the community and at formal consultation events that have been very well attended. About 2,000 people have been involved in the process in various ways. I am happy to report that besides the few radicals philosophically opposed to any project and Labor Party people, the majority of the community are getting behind this upgrade.

According to a recent Redland City Council phone survey of 300 residents, community support for the project is running high at an amazing 90 per cent level. The survey comes on the back of the latest round of public consultation that has now closed. While the results of the public submissions are still being compiled, it is clear already that local residents support a right sized marina under strict environmental conditions, keeping the GJ Walter Park, dog walking areas and good access to the foreshore, and building in such a way that leaves plenty of green space. The people of Cleveland and Redland city are tired of years of Labor inaction and they are telling us it is now time to do something.

The Toondah Harbour upgrade is also important because it provides for the long-term future of North Stradbroke residents in the transition to a non-sandmining economy. Island residents have welcomed the project. I would like to commend the work of Economic Development Queensland for identifying the project and, together with the council, doing a fine job so far.


We are delivering on Toondah, sandmining and saving the local North Stradbroke Island economy from a Labor recession because this is a government that is delivering for the people of North Stradbroke Island, Cleveland, Redland city—

**Ms Trad** interjected.

**Dr ROBINSON:** You had 20 years and you did nothing.

*(Time expired)*

### Schools, Asbestos

 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (2.57 pm): Other than the appalling condition of Moggill Road, there is no subject that I have spoken more about in this place than asbestos. Who can forget the six-month long battle with then minister Bligh and then premier Beattie before I managed to force them to make safe the asbestos roofs of schools throughout Queensland. The rates of the horrendous disease mesothelioma, a cancer caused by asbestos, is soaring in this state due to policy failures in the past, in large part because policy makers knew they would not live with the consequences of the effects of exposure. Let's not add to that policy failure.

There are 600 new cases a year in Australia of mesothelioma. There is one every three days in Queensland—10 a month. That is up from just three a month in Queensland in the 1980s—a tripling of instances, even allowing for population growth, and many of these people are young.

I was delighted to launch the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland film *Losing Breath: The Adam Sager story*. I encourage all members to go on to the DEIR website and have a look at it—the great courage shown by his mother, Julie Sager, and Helen Colbert from the asbestos support group, when young Adam at the age of two breathed in asbestos dust as his parents sanded a wall in a Chapel Hill home to paint it without knowing that it was asbestos, and he had died from the effects by the age of 21.

This is a serious issue that is rising in frequency and killing many young Queenslanders. I do want to ring one alarm bell for the future, and that is low-density board, or sometimes known under its trade name as Asbestolux. This accounts for about nine per cent of all the asbestos in buildings in Queensland. It is soft and friable and can contain up to 70 per cent pure asbestos fibres—nothing at all like fibro cement. Five states of Australia class it as friable. All the industry groups class it as friable. But it has been removed from the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website while they await some federal guidance.

This product, whenever it is worked, releases fibres into the air that could potentially do to people what happened to Adam Sager. There is a huge difference between friable asbestos and cement bonded asbestos. So I do hope that our federal standards will not weaken. It is more expensive to remove something properly that is friable, but that is an expense that we have to bear to protect the lives of Queenslanders. I am going to write to every member of my community in Moggill and warn them what can happen if they renovate their houses without checking for asbestos first, and the message is: check if it is asbestos before you do anything to your home.

*(Time expired)*

### **Burleigh Electorate, Community Cabinet**



**Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.00 pm): Queensland is a great state with great opportunity, and I am very pleased to stand in this place today and inform the House that the next community cabinet will be held in my electorate of Burleigh. Burleigh is a fantastic place to live, work and raise a family, and on Sunday, 23 March I will be welcoming the Premier, government ministers, assistant ministers and their director-generals to the electorate so that my constituents and the constituents from the greater Gold Coast region can voice their concerns directly to them.

Madam Deputy Speaker, a quick look at the Premier's website will tell you that this is in fact the 17th community cabinet that this government has run in the two years since it has been elected. We are out there constantly communicating with our electorates. We are out there constantly listening to the constituents in our electorates, unlike the former government who just rammed consultation down people's throats. They did not understand what consultation was in any fashion whatsoever—no fashion whatsoever.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): Order!

**Mr HART:** We are actually listening to the people in my electorate, and that is exactly why the Premier and his cabinet are coming to my electorate. We have a number of issues that are very dear to my heart and we will be talking to the people in the area about those particular things.

**Mrs Miller:** What about the quarry?

**Mr HART:** Listen up, member for South Brisbane. Consultation—I know you do not know much about it, but it is consultation. Forms are available for anybody who would like to come along to that consultation. They are available from my office, they are available from the Gold Coast City Council office in Bundall and they are available online from the government's website. I encourage people to fill those out and get along to the community cabinet on the 23rd.

As the member for Burleigh, I am truly committed to listening to the community and preserving our unique culture. In addition to my regular mobile offices and listening booths—yes, listening booths where I get out there and I listen to the electorate; I know those opposite do not understand that, but I listen to the electorate—this community cabinet will provide an invaluable opportunity to the people of Burleigh and the Gold Coast.

The people of Burleigh are well aware that my door is always open and, if I am not at a P&C meeting or a Rotary meeting, I am proactively engaging the community through forums and events. This government is about consultation and this community cabinet opens the door directly to the decision makers. I am sure we will have an outstanding result from the community supporting this event, and I look forward to furthering Burleigh's interests in this place.

## Education



**Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (3.03 pm): As the newly appointed shadow minister for education, I would like to affirm my commitment to the students and teachers of Queensland. I am committed to working with the government and non-government education sectors to hear directly from them what their needs are and how we can work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for our young people, because we must always remember that at the heart of this the reason why we are investing in education and why it is so important is that our young people of today are the workers of tomorrow. They are our doctors and nurses, teachers, scientists and engineers. They are our tradespeople, our hospitality and retail workers. They will be the people who care for us as we age.

For this reason we must continue to strive for excellence, to provide the schools with quality teachers, to provide the teachers with the resources and support they deserve to allow them to be the best they can be. We need to ensure our schools are properly equipped so that we can provide our children with the best opportunity to succeed. Of course at the core are our students and parents. That is why I also affirm my commitment to work with the P&Cs and P&Fs to gain the broader perspective of what our state's needs are for the future of education in Queensland.

I believe that the best path forward would have been for the LNP government to sign up to Gonski. Only then would we have seen the implementation of a sustainable new school funding model that would finally break down the divisive debate between public and private funding. However, what we have ended up with is the federal government throwing money at the states with, as the state and federal ministers put it, no strings attached.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Redcliffe.

**Ms D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I actually believe that those strings that the ministers talk about are important. I will explain why: the first string was that the Queensland government was required to put additional funding in as well as the federal funding; the second was to guarantee that the state education budget was not reduced over the six years of federal funding; and the third was to ensure transparency and accountability as to where the funding was spent. Without these so-called strings, we have less funding going to our schools overall, we have no guarantee that the state education budget will not be gouged and we will not have the transparency to ensure that federal funding is being spent based on needs.

Instead, we have the Newman government and Education Minister John-Paul Langbroek running around Queensland announcing and re-announcing the \$131 million—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. It is evident that the member for Redcliffe is not taking interjections and it is very difficult to hear her. The member for Redcliffe has the call.

**Ms D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Instead, we have the Newman government and Education Minister John-Paul Langbroek running around Queensland announcing and re-announcing the \$131 million in education funding from the federal government, implying it is state funding. Let us not forget that this is the government that cut 281 resource teacher positions from state secondary schools; failed to spend more than \$273.8 million of the 2012-13 Education budget; and changed the formula for calculating the number of teachers required at each school, creating a shortfall of an estimated 519 full-time teacher positions. It is time that the LNP government stepped up and fulfilled its obligations to invest in education.

## Emerald Star Hotel Motel



**Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (3.06 pm): It is with a great deal of sadness that I speak this afternoon in the time for private members' statements. It has been brought to my attention that the adult entertainment permit for the Emerald Star Hotel Motel has been granted by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. I am further advised also that the decision to grant the application was not taken lightly and careful consideration was given to the concerns expressed by the community.

I plead to the Attorney-General and the Minister for Local Government to revisit this archaic statement because the situation is that this dreadful ruling and this dreadful policy have to be changed. What this means is that the Emerald Star Hotel Motel in Emerald can now conduct its adult


entertainment operation between 6.30 pm and 2 am. As far as I am concerned, this is the degradation of the female body at its worst. This is a town strong in moral values and Christian values. Not only do I have a wife and I am a father of two daughters and a grandfather of four granddaughters; but there are many members in this House who fall into the same category.

The human body is the most sacred thing on this planet, and the female body is more sacred than the male body. I have to say here today: where has respect gone in our society when a bureaucrat can make a decision that can overrule a local council's objections, business objections, church objections and even my objection as the local member? This is a sad indictment on our society today.

I note in this letter that my constituents can lodge a complaint within 28 days. I can assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that a complaint will be lodged within 28 days. This is in a built-up area of town. Fair enough those other businesses will probably be closed by 6.30, but the principle of the exercise is not good. It is immoral. It is against what we stand for as fair-minded family Queensland citizens.

I appeal to the Attorney and the local government minister. I have already voiced my total concern about this to the Premier. It makes me absolutely sick to think that this has been allowed to go ahead in Emerald. I plead with everybody on my side of the House to review this piece of legislation so we can get a genuine outcome with good moral values.

### **Burrum Heads Boat Ramp**

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (3.09 pm): For almost 20 years Burrum Heads residents have been asking the former Labor state government to assist in providing them with a new safe, all-weather boat ramp. I know the hard work they have put into lobbying that government as I have been involved in that process. It was therefore with a great degree of satisfaction that I attended a public meeting at Burrum Heads attended by an estimated 300 people to see the presentation by staff of the Department of Transport and Main Roads of the final concept plan and location for the new two-lane boat ramp and associated parking facilities. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$4.5 million, with the majority of the funding being provided by this LNP state government for the construction of the boat ramp and the balance provided by the Fraser Coast Regional Council for the provision of car-trailer and car parks.


Over the years there have been a number of different locations and concept plans proposed. One of the major restrictions for any proposal is the fact that this area is either marine fish habitat A or B, and to construct a boat ramp will require legislative excision from the marine park. Thanks are to be extended to the departmental staff who consistently worked through each proposal, analysing all the issues and costing each proposal.

The proposal which ticks most, if not all, of the boxes and comes within the budgetary constraints is the proposal to extend the northern part of Lions Park at Burrum Heads with a two-lane boat ramp, divert a drain which is currently causing erosion and contamination of the only swimming beach, fill in the drain area and construct both bitumen sealed car-trailer and car parks while leaving the actual park itself in its existing state. An added advantage of this proposal is that toilet facilities are already in the park.

I have had extensive positive feedback which supports this proposal, but as always with public infrastructure there are some who do not approve. I acknowledge their concern and I believe that most of them can be addressed adequately. There has been a consultation period in which changes to the concept design such as suggested changes to the car-parking layout, location of pedestrian crossings et cetera could be lodged with council. I can assure residents that departmental staff will take seriously all suggestions in their final planning.

Finally, on behalf of the community and the visitors who fish at Burrum Heads, I wish to extend thanks to Ministers Nicholls, Emerson, Powell and McVeigh for their support and the support and cooperation of their departments in bringing this project to this stage. I know there are many who eagerly await the turning of the first sod.

### **Schools, Flashing Lights**

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.12 pm): Heading into the 2012 election, the LNP promised to revitalise front-line services and improve the safety of Queenslanders. Starting with a priority list of 15 schools, we committed \$10 million to delivering flashing lights to 300 schools over four years. This was in stark contrast to the couple of trial sites that Labor had achieved after 14 years of all talk and no action.

I am pleased to report that this can-do government is on track to deliver our election promise. Over 200 schools have now benefited from the flashing lights program. Priority for installation of these lights has been given to school zones with a significant crash history, a high level of vehicle and pedestrian traffic, higher speed limits or visibility problems. In addition to that, we understand that local members, schools and parents know where the problems are, and as such we are listening to communities and taking their advice on board. Many of my colleagues around the chamber have had meetings with principals and parents to express concern about the safety of roads around their schools, and we have listened. I commend all members who made representations to me and my department for their commitment to road safety.

In Indooroopilly, I have had the pleasure of seeing six local schools benefit from flashing lights at schools. North of the Brisbane River, St Peter's Lutheran College and Indooroopilly State High School as well as Indooroopilly State School and Ironside State School now have these enhanced signs to let motorists know when they are entering a school zone. Similarly, in the south of my electorate, Graceville and Sherwood state schools are now safer as a result of our program. Parents have remarked to me how important this program is and how important it is to focus on reminding drivers that they are approaching a school zone and that they need to slow down immediately. People in my electorate often complain they are not aware where the school zones are. In Queensland more than 24,000 people were caught speeding in a school zone last year.

These flashing lights not only provide an added safety benefit for our youngest Queenslanders but also make it clear for motorists they are entering a school zone. I am proud that this program is delivering safer school zones in Indooroopilly and across Queensland. I know from the feedback of many members across all sections of this House how important they have been for their local areas.

### **Murrumba Electorate, Events**



**Mr GULLEY** (Murrumba—LNP) (3.15 pm): I take this opportunity to speak about a couple of events and great people in the good place that is Murrumba. Earlier this year I met with Jennifer Oflus, the Director of the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre, to announce that the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre had received more than \$10,000 to assist the organisation to help alleviate an immediate financial crisis for the region's vulnerable families and individuals. I would also like to congratulate the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre for receiving a funding allocation of over \$279,000 to deliver the Secure Help Initiating Future Transition community learning project. This project will deliver Certificate III level qualifications in disability, home and community care, aged care and retail.

I met with program director Diane Northey and Deception Bay case workers Marilyn Bolton and Lance Kelly to discuss how the programs were being delivered and interacted with students during their tutorial session. Thank you to Jennifer and her wonderful team who do a great job for the people of Deception Bay, Murrumba and Moreton Bay.

I would like to thank Blake Marshall and Randal Link, who organised the Deception Bay Reconciliation Rugby League 9s carnival, which was hosted during the Australia Day Long weekend. There were 20 teams from across Brisbane, Queensland and northern New South Wales who participated including current and former NRL players. I look forward to seeing this event prosper in future years.


I recently hosted the joint Redcliffe-Murrumba Justices of the Peace Forum held at Mueller College. At the ceremony we recognised long service awards. I would like to formally recognise the recipient of a 60-year service award to Mr Geoffrey Maule, and recipients of 50-year service awards, Mr Frederick Arthurs, Mr William Whitecross, Mr John Mitchell and Mr Geoffrey Miller.

I would also like to thank the organisations and schools in the Murrumba electorate who contributed to the recent Clean Up Australia Day. Thank you for your efforts in removing over 15,700 tonnes of rubbish from across the country. I worked at several sites last weekend. In particular, I would like to note Dave Norman from Mango Hill and the North Lakes Environment Group, who organised the event at Halpine Lakes at Mango Hill which I attended.

Tomorrow the Speaker will be hosting the Inspiring Women's Breakfast at Parliament House. I would like to recognise my electorate's award recipient, Ms Jennie Drever. Jennie is a quiet achiever who goes about her work tirelessly within the Deception Bay youth program's team delivering Deception Bay Child and Family Alliance initiatives. I thank Jennie for her support and the events she organises for Deception Bay and Murrumba.

On Saturday, 8 March we recognise International Women's Day. I would like to personally acknowledge my wife, Jodi Gulley. Jodi will be hosting an International Women's Day event on Saturday in Murrumbidgee. Jodi always encourages our three daughters, Tabitha, Cassia and Esther. Thank you for empowering our daughters to accomplish great things and inspiring them to never let the pressure of social norms or expectations determine their future. I never tire of speaking about the great place that is Murrumbidgee.


### Newman Government

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—PUP) (3.18pm): The Treasurer today made an assertion about the leader of the Palmer United Party and federal member for Fairfax having different positions for different jurisdictions regarding the GST. I have communicated with the leader of the Palmer United Party on this issue and he has confirmed that the Treasurer's statement is frankly rubbish. The federal leader of the Palmer United Party holds the broader view that more money needs to flow into Tasmania regardless of GST distribution. Furthermore, our federal leader holds the view that more moneys generated in Western Australia needs to be invested there as well. The member for Fairfax is also a strong advocate for his electorate in Queensland and he has personally invested heavily in our great state of Queensland. He has advocated strongly for our state in the federal parliament. Extra funding for Tasmania, however, is needed because it is in a disastrous state after years of a Labor-Green government and before that the Liberal government.

Queensland is currently suffering that experience under the Campbell Newman government. In the wake of the Redcliffe by-election, I think it is timely to reflect on the legacy of the Newman government. The Premier told Queensland public servants before he was elected that they had nothing to fear. How many jobs has the Premier destroyed in Queensland? Thousands of jobs. The Premier is also planning to destroy democracy in Queensland by proposing laws that preclude minor parties and Independents from participating in elections. We will fight together against that. We will be united against the undemocratic laws being brought into this House by the Newman government. The Premier scrapped Skilling Queenslanders for Work. He has overseen the youth unemployment level hitting nearly 15 per cent. In fact in the electorate of Cairns—and I do not know where the member for Cairns is—the level of unemployment is nearly 20.5 per cent. That is disgraceful. What is he doing up there?

At this time I would like to pass on a message on behalf of my political party's leader. He is a proud Queenslander, a person who has dedicated his life to building businesses and employing people in Queensland, and he is now representing his community of Fairfax in the Commonwealth parliament. I also pass on a message on behalf of SMOs and on behalf of thousands of Queenslanders. The message I want to pass on is this: goodbye, Campbell Newman, goodbye.

### Capalaba Electorate, Schools

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.21 pm): I take great pleasure in rising today to talk about the wonderful work that is happening in many of my schools in Capalaba. We have 10 schools in the Capalaba electorate—eight of those are state schools and two of those are independent Catholic schools, and they are both primary schools. When I first came here in March 2012, three of the eight state schools had acting principals and that was a real blight on those school communities. There was a lot of uncertainty amongst the school communities, particularly from week to week, as to whether their old principal would be coming back. Within the whole school community, it was a real tragedy to have those principals working in those acting roles.

What has happened now in my electorate is that there is not one acting principal. All of the schools in the Capalaba electorate now have full-time principals and they are doing a fantastic job. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the great work of the education minister, JP Langbroek, for actually bringing stability into the school communities in my electorate. We have also seen some fantastic initiatives, such as the school maintenance budget, where all of the schools in my electorate have had their maintenance brought right up to date. Many of them were in absolute disrepair, and it is an absolute credit to the minister.

On the issue of full-time principals in schools, one of the schools in my electorate, Alexandra Hills State School, had four principals in a little over three years. Last year, they were given a fantastic principal, a man by the name of Wayne Fletcher. I had the privilege of attending the P&C in

November last year and sitting there and hearing all of Wayne's great initiatives. One of the great things they talked about was Lizard Lounge, which was an initiative of one of the chaplains. They were setting up a safe space for young people with lizards and turtles, which were particularly for the young boys who came in. I had the privilege last week of going to the opening of the Lizard Lounge. They have a beautiful garden that will feed them which was donated by Bunnings. I had the privilege of donating a lizard, a bearded dragon, and his name is Stevie—Stevie the Bearded Dragon. That is what they have called it.

**Mr Costigan** interjected.

**Mr DAVIES:** Mate, it looked exactly like me. It was a very attractive bearded dragon. I donated that lizard. This is a great thing. It is a great initiative of Terry Keen, who is the chaplain of this school. Terry and his wife, Lyn, who is a chaplain in one of the other schools in my electorate, are doing a fantastic job and I commend their work to the House.

*(Time expired)*

### Kawana Electorate, Achievements



**Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.24 pm): I want to talk today about the great electorate of Kawana and some of the things happening there. In terms of the government's four pillars of the economy, and especially construction, I was particularly pleased to drive past the Sunshine Coast University public hospital recently, and it is great to see seven cranes.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** No, there are about seven little mobile ones but there are seven big cranes. That shows that progress is happening. That site lay dormant for years under the Labor Party. It was a kangaroo paddock. All that it was useful for was growing a bit of grass for the kangaroos.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the environment minister—there is nothing wrong with kangaroos as long as they are cooked on the barbecue medium rare. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital is proceeding as planned, on time, on budget and with seven cranes, which means construction is happening in this great state.

I want to talk about the Lions Youth of the Year, which I had the pleasure of being the coordinator of the other day. I congratulate Bridie Edwards from Meridan State College on her win on the night. Sixteen-year-old Bridie excelled in the interview round of the judging and went on to deliver entertaining and interesting speeches. Bridie is school captain at Meridan State College, a keen athlete and a brilliant young leader, and I am delighted that she and her peers took up the challenge and participated in the competition.

Five students from Kawana schools took part and they all did well, making the job of our judges—Captain Stuart Glover of the Salvation Army, Lisa Kozlowski of National Australia Bank and Kerry Ricketts of the Kawana Chamber of Commerce—very hard indeed. The judges took their time to announce the winner, which spoke volumes about their commitment to the task but also about how close the competition was. So, again, I congratulate all of the students on their efforts and I wish Bridie the best of luck for the next round of the competition. I have no doubt she will do Kawana proud.

Also doing the Kawana electorate proud are the many locals who rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into cleaning up the region on Clean Up Australia Day. My family and I had a great time helping the Currimundi Catchment Care Group members rid the banks of Lake Kawana of rubbish. It was a new clean-up site this year and the effort was well worth it. I say a big thank you to everyone who got involved, not only at Lake Kawana but all over the electorate. The efforts of these volunteers make a huge difference to our parks and gardens, roadsides, waterways and sports grounds.

Speaking of sports grounds, I congratulate the Kawana Soccer Club on its recent \$99,000 state government Get Playing grant, which the club has put to use upgrading two of its fields with drainage works. Grant funds such as this make a huge difference to local sporting clubs and community groups. I am very pleased the local soccer club won that. Lastly, while touching on local sports clubs, thank you to all of the clubs that made me feel welcome at their sign-on days in recent weeks. I have met so many families all excited to be getting involved in sport.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** No, they did not want to sign me up. I can assure you of that. Thank you to all of those who participate in sport on the Sunshine Coast.

*(Time expired)*

### **Greenslopes Electorate, Achievements**



**Mr KAYE** (Greenslopes—LNP) (3.27 pm): Last year was an extremely busy and productive year in the electorate of Greenslopes. Here are just a few things that happened. The biggest infrastructure project in the inner south is beginning in Coorparoo this year, with the demolition of the old Myer building and Coorparoo Mall and construction of a new development to include retail, business and community space as well as three residential towers. As I have mentioned before, the previous government delayed this development for many years during which time the community shopped elsewhere, businesses were destroyed and families were broken.

Before being elected in 2012, I vowed to kick-start this project to help breathe new life into my community. By the end of this year my promise to my community will become a reality. This development will be a fantastic gathering place for the local community as well as a much needed revitalisation of the shopping precinct at Coorparoo and the addition of more housing.

In the area of education, a pick-up and drop-off zone has been completed at the Mount Gravatt State School. That is good for not only the school community but also the local residents using surrounding streets who have long had to endure long lines of traffic on school days.

I was involved in the negotiations regarding the Coorparoo Secondary College over a period of several months last year and this year I am working closely with the school to improve enrolments and outcomes. I worked with the government regarding the Whites Hill State College oval in 2013. The oval has been preserved and is being handed over to the Brisbane City Council to manage. In addition, I have been involved in discussions with a number of local sporting clubs with a view to utilising the oval more comprehensively. Working with the Minister for Education, I was able to achieve an outcome for the surrounding community, school and the state government which benefited all.

**Mr Minnikin:** And Chatsworth.

**Mr KAYE:** And Chatsworth; I take that interjection.

Schools in the electorate of Greenslopes have had flashing school zone lights installed since my election, including Cavendish Road State High School and Holland Park State School. I am working with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to improve school safety for all children in the electorate. Working with the assistance of Councillor Ian McKenzie, a new 40 kilometre per hour school zone is being installed on Cavendish Road outside the Coorparoo State School.


The Great Results Guarantee has seen just over \$1.5 million going to schools in my electorate, which has been extremely well received by the school communities. Of course, there is also the Advancing Our Schools Maintenance program, clearing the backlog left by the previous government. Just one school alone has received in excess of \$500,000 in the last two years to address their backlog. Again, that has been very well received.

I was pleased to be present with the Minister for Health at the opening of new oncology and day care units at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which will perform an additional 300 procedures per month. Ambulance ramping has been eliminated from Queensland hospitals. We achieved in one year what had not been achieved in many years under Labor.

In housing, two new housing projects have been built in the Greenslopes electorate, one in Mount Gravatt East and another at Holland Park. The waiting list for housing has been reduced from 30,000 prior to the last election to less than 20,000 in just two years under this government. I commend the Minister for Housing and Public Works, the Hon. Tim Mander.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to announce that more than \$18 million in grant funding has been allocated to the electorate of Greenslopes since the 2012 election. Queensland is a great state with great opportunity and Greenslopes is also a fantastic place in which to live.

### International Women's Day

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (3:30 pm): As I am sure you are very well aware, Madam Deputy Speaker, Saturday is International Women's Day. Many of us have been invited to join Madam Speaker herself tomorrow morning at a breakfast where we will recognise inspiring women across the state. We did it slightly differently this year in the electorate for Glass House. We called for nominations from across the electorate to see who would be nominated as an inspiring woman. We were inundated.

There was Tammy Milligan from the Palmwoods soccer club. Tammy does so much that we are actually thinking of renaming one of the ovals at the club the 'Milligan Oval' after all the work she does. There was Mrs Florence Woods from Busy Needles, Pioneer Cottage and also the Maleny Show charity. Florence is also my de facto grandmother in Maleny. She is a wonderful lady.


Jenny Walters was nominated for her outstanding work at the Wamuran Sporting Association. She has been secretary of the club for the past 14 years. Lea Parkes, who runs the *Glasshouse Country News*, does a fantastic job in that community of Glass House, Beerwah and down to Beerburum as well, sharing the news of the day for that part of the world. Also in that part of the world was Sue Fullerton, who has been a volunteer at the Glass House Mountains Sports Club for longer than I have been alive—more than four decades. It is kind of scary.

There was also Pam Innes, who was on the chaplaincy committee and also Anglican Ladies Church in Beerwah. Similarly, Georgina Thompson, who runs Flaxton Gardens, which is a great wedding venue for all those looking for a wonderful wedding venue in the Blackall Range. Also nominated were Fran Tickle and Karen Heading from Genconnex and Maleny State High School Chaplaincy Committee. They do a fantastic job. Fran runs the Interact Club and Karen is the guru behind the annual charity golf day for Chappy Chris Davis.

There was also Sharon Webb from Elimbah junior Aussie rules and, until recently, a P&C president, state school uniform convenor and treasurer at the Caboolture Lions. Also nominated was Helen Page from the Peachester history group, Friends of Bankfoot House, Beerwah Charity Sports and Beerwah Anglican Church. Suzanne Lanham, who is 'Mother Goose' at the Wamuran Rural Fire Brigade, has worked as a teacher's aide at the Wamuran State School for over 20 years. She recently received a National Medal and a Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Diligent and Ethical Services Medal. There was also Jill Foale, who unfortunately could not attend because, as she normally does, she was in the Solomon Islands setting up a new clinic. That is representative of the work she does with youth groups in the Glass House Mountains and Mount Mee.

The winner this year was Jackie Draper, and she will be joining me for breakfast with Madam Speaker tomorrow morning. Jackie runs the *Stanley River Herald* in Woodford. She sponsors the Woodford State School awards. She participates in the Woodford agricultural show ball. As I said, she has also established that local newspaper which provides wonderful coverage for the entire southern section of the electorate of Glass House. She was nominated by so many members of her community. She literally stood out as this year's Glass House Inspiring Woman of the Year award. I look forward to sharing breakfast with her tomorrow morning.

### Gas Industry

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (3:33 pm): I read with much interest about the closure of the Swanbank Power Station, which was announced in the media a few weeks ago. It piqued my curiosity because we all know that there is a threat of an imminent increase in gas prices. If we needed more confirmation of that, we can find it in the fact that we are returning to 20-year-old coal fired technology when we have that clean, green gas fired power station available to us. It is confirmation that there will be an imminent rise in the price of gas. That makes me very concerned because 100 per cent of the baseload power in my electorate of Mount Isa is gas fired. Due to the short-sightedness of government over many years and a lack of commitment from the local mining companies, we in Mount Isa do not have a transmission line that connects us to the national electricity grid. The North West Minerals Province produces \$8 billion worth of wealth for this state every year and Mount Isa Mines was voted the most significant business in Queensland's history of 150 years. It has been a big contributor to the state, but we are 100 per cent reliant on gas baseload power. If we are going to talk about northern development in Australia—and I believe that is an agenda of the new federal government—and the only baseload power out there is gas and the price of gas is about to triple, we

have a problem. I am not sure how that is going to be reconciled, but I have a few ideas. There is a proposal sitting there for a transmission line that can connect the North West Minerals Province and every town in between Mount Isa and Townsville with the national electricity grid to protect residents from the pricing and provide that unlimited supply that they need. That will provide a platform for development for the next, say, 50 years. If we start irrigation on the midwest plains, if we have cotton gins and an abattoir and if we build more mines in those areas, we have to have that power supply and competitiveness that comes with being connected to the national grid.

The other initiative that is staring us in the face is the expansion of the gas network into the Northern Territory. It is something that is being looked at. There are discussions underway, but it is not being pushed enough at the moment. It certainly needs that impetus from government that drives these sorts of things to happen. That will also assist. We have a very big problem on our hands. Not only is it confronting industry in the north-west but it is also going to have an impact on the rest of the state. I speak of the impact of gas prices and escalating LNG prices. They are currently on contracts of \$3 to \$4 a gigajoule and they are looking down the barrel of being charged \$12 a gigajoule, and that is if they can even get a long-term contract out there. It is a very big problem and a very scary problem for the North West Minerals Province, which is a great contributor—\$8 billion a year—to the state. This government needs to think very carefully about policies that are going to address that situation.

### **Bulimba Electorate, Projects**




**Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (3.36 pm): The Bulimba electorate has a strong and rich sense of history. I would like to congratulate the many members of the Bulimba District Historical Society and Friends of Balmoral Cemetery, who are two particular community groups that preserve this antiquity as a fundamental part of the identity of Bulimba. In the wake of the announcement by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier of the Anzac centenary grants that would allow our communities an opportunity for legacy projects, on Friday, 31 January I hosted a community discussion of ideas of projects the Bulimba community could undertake to recognise the Anzac centenary across the period 2014 to 2018. It was a delight to have over 30 representatives and contributions from the local community that included the good folk from the local RSL, some nashos and existing armed forces representatives, local secondary school student leaders and teachers, the Bulimba District Historical Society, the Friends of Balmoral Cemetery and sporting groups, all eager to work together to honour this milestone for our community.

I am of a strong belief that a collaborative community consultation approach would deliver optimal results. This allowed an enhancement of individual ideas through the process I undertook on the day. The process undertaken was to brainstorm ideas by coupling like-minded representatives together and then splitting those representatives into mixed tables to further enhance the ideas that were initially brainstormed. Some of the enhanced ideas generated on the day included a memorial honour board located at the entrance of Balmoral Cemetery where over 250 World War I diggers are either memorialised or have been laid to rest post war.

The generation of a book or CD that details the Bulimba district's involvement with stories of our World War I diggers would be highlighted, and a district walking trail would be available to invite school groups or history buffs to follow and see how the Bulimba area has contributed and remembered our Anzac contributions. This book could also ensure that all the local memorials are documented and remembered on special occasions like Anzac Day or Remembrance Day for the next 100 years. Further to that, another great idea was to link local schools with our local memorials and for the school to be the site's custodian, ensuring that existing memorials are well-kept for future generations. One final idea for the day was to provide a keepsake souvenir for all school students across Bulimba like a badge or a medallion that the students could wear at every memorial service, and as they too grow old they could pass it down to their children to keep the legacy of our Anzacs alive. It is a great opportunity for our local community to come together and recognise the history of Bulimba and create a legacy for future generations. I look forward to further working with the community on these endeavours to highlight stories of local diggers, uncover hidden knowledge, educate the community and commemorate our service men and women.

I congratulate our government on this grant program and trust that projects across the state will instil a great sense of pride in Queenslanders as we commemorate the 100th year since the landing at Gallipoli—an important moment in the history of Bulimba, our state and our nation.

### Cairns, Safer Streets Task Force


 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (3.39 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak about a fantastic initiative happening in Cairns which is the first of its kind, and that is the Cairns Safer Streets Task Force. I think soon after being elected nearly two years ago it became very clear that we had a whole plethora of organisations and state agencies that were trying to do their best to tackle issues like youth crime and homelessness, but it became obvious that they were all pulling in 100 different directions. We had state agencies working in silos; we had NGOs funded to provide services; and yet there was incredible duplication across the sector and everyone was running around doing their own thing.

Largely in partnership with the local police we started work on the Safer Streets Task Force. That kicked off on 1 July last year, and I am very pleased to report to the House that it is having significant impacts and achieving significant results, particularly in the area of youth crime and homelessness. The idea of the task force is to start with the state agencies and state government departments who are working on this problem, pull them all together and get them at the same table to work in a collective, cohesive and coordinated way. For the very first time in Queensland we have seven or eight public servants from various departments co-located in the same room that share information and conduct joint operations. This includes everyone from education and health through to police, the justice department, communities; there are a whole range of departments. It is just incredible to see the spirit of cooperation now and the intensive case management that is happening, and the task force is pulling together a lot of research in order to gauge its success or otherwise.

Just a few days ago I saw some preliminary crime results, and I am pleased to report that we are achieving some significant reductions in crime, particularly in the area of West Cairns, which has traditionally been a very difficult area and is a bit of a hotbed of crime and social housing problems. After just eight months or so of the commencement of that task force we are already seeing some inroads. Of course there is a lot more work to be done, and we are currently working on another Queensland-first software platform called Support Link that allows agencies to collect data and intensively case manage and share that information.

I would just like to say a quick word of thanks. It is particularly good to see the police minister here. The police have really led the way in Cairns, and I congratulate and commend every member of the Safer Streets Task Force.

### Irrigation Tariffs

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.42 pm): I would like to continue to highlight the issues facing irrigators in my electorate of Burnett and the ongoing issue of electricity costs. While a lot of work continues—and I acknowledge that the background as to why electricity prices have risen so much and how tariffs are determined is very complex—we have to acknowledge that farming is critical for Queensland and a rural seat like Burnett, and of course agriculture is an essential part of our regional economy.

The value of irrigation in the region was realised in the 1960s, when industry lobbied both the state and federal governments for an irrigation scheme to drought proof the region. The Bundaberg surface water irrigation scheme had an immediate effect on progressing an increase in the area of land under production. This has supported the economy of the region and allowed it to prosper for many decades. I welcome the many reforms that will drive downward pressure on pricing; however, currently local irrigators have experienced a 96 per cent increase in electricity pricing since 2009.

As the drought deepens across the state, we in the Burnett have not been immune. This has meant that our farmers have had to maintain extensive irrigation activities to meet crop water requirements. Most power bills are at least double what they were last year. My engagement with the sector stakeholders consistently raises issues for consideration, and the sector has requested the introduction of a suite of volume based food and fibre tariffs. Like baseload irrigation tariffs, this may include a network component that excludes costs associated with rising cost structures that are not associated with delivery of electricity to irrigators. Off-peak irrigation tariffs would provide a worthwhile incentive for off-peak use by further reducing the network component to encourage use in low network usage periods and weekend irrigation tariffs which would be set at an equivalent to off-peak irrigation tariffs to encourage weekend use. The food and fibre producers in the region are export

dominated, and it is impossible to pass significant price increases to the end consumer. In highlighting this issue in terms of gross value added employment and business numbers, the Burnett region has high reliance on agriculture; some 13 per cent as compared to 3 per cent for Queensland as a whole. This reliance on agribusiness means that any negative impact on our farmers' ability to generate and market the crops and products they produce has a much greater impact on a community like Burnett. Electricity is a significant cost to irrigators. This cost can be amplified depending on the actual farm locations and the source of the irrigation water.

I take this opportunity with the time remaining to highlight the great news from today that this government is tackling this issue, and I mention the reforms to the Solar Bonus Scheme and the many other reforms that are currently before the House. Locally we are buoyed by the fact that local water management continues to be on the agenda, and we do look forward to more sustainable farming practices in the future.

### Radio 4CRM, 20th Anniversary



**Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (3.45 pm): We have all heard of the Grammys; today I am going to talk about the Crammys. Around Mackay and the Whitsundays it is one big event, and it is the annual award ceremony for Mackay's community radio station 4CRM. I had the great pleasure late last year of attending the 20th anniversary awards night of 4CRM, the station whose motto happens to be 'Something for Everyone', as we were reminded on the night by the man who kicked it off back in 1993, Mr John Pickup of ABC Radio fame before he retired from the national broadcaster.

The night was hosted by Sharnae 'Shazza' Birkett who, I might add, has since left 4CRM and community radio in general to embark on a career in commercial radio in the South Burnett, if memory serves me correctly, following in the footsteps of an old friend of mine Shaun Kelly who started his career behind the microphone at 4CRM before moving into commercial radio, ultimately to WIN TV, where he was the Queensland news director. Sadly, Shaun was killed in a car accident two years ago, but I can assure you and honourable members that his spirit lives on at 4CRM, and so it should—that is where he started.

As for 2013 Crammys, there were many award winners and smiling faces on the night: Best Newcomer on Air, Ben Hutchinson, *Hip-Hop*; Most Improved Presenter, Michelle Thomas, *The 3M's*; Best on Air Team, Alex Simoes and Sharnae Birkett, *The Night Crew*; Best Weekday Show tied between *the John Donnelly Request Line* and *Stereo Sunset*, Jan Eggleton and Mike Warren; Best Mixed Music Show, *Wolfman*, aka Geoff Randall; Best Specialty Music Show, *Rhythm & Rhyme*, Brian O'Neill. Brian is from Calen, where he happens to be the local school principal and he does a great job there as well. Best Country Music Show: my mum is a big fan of Cathy Turner, and she was beaming in the night because *Cathy in Country* won that gong. The Dorrie Symons Award for the Best Community Minded Program went to *Chit Chat*, Susie Topham; Cath Ford Award for the Best Genre Based Show, *Jazz Man*, Peter Clout; Best Newcomer Off Air, Emilie Pershouse; Longest Serving Presenter, Brian O'Neill; Outstanding Contribution Award, Sandy Harvey; Abba Award, Jacky Glover—she's no *Dancing Queen*, but she still won. I am not sure of the history of some of these awards, but there is a Thomas Edison Award in North Queensland at 4CRM, and it went to local medico Dr Bill Boyd. The Golden Microphone award for most popular presenter—

**Mr Dempsey** interjected.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** It was hotly contested; I take the interjection from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. As I was saying, the Golden Microphone award for most popular presenter went to Cathy Turner. Congratulations to all award recipients. I want to acknowledge Dr Boyd and his team for saving the station from going under 12 months ago. We rallied behind them; we have kept it going. That is a great outcome for the people of Mackay and district.

### Newman Government



**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (3.48 pm): The anger and outrage expressed by many people who campaigned against this Newman government at the recent Redcliffe by-election was a natural reaction to the vindictive and arrogant style of the leadership team of this government led by Premier Newman. I am not surprised at how some campaigners expressed their anger and frustration during the campaign and on election day. While I do not condone some of their behaviour, I simply say that

you do not have to be a psychiatrist to understand when you push someone far enough they will eventually spring back and bite, and bite Queenslanders will! No matter where they are in Queensland, they will not forget. Doctors, solicitors, firemen, ambulance officers, labourers, plumbers, mums and dads around Queensland will remember Premier Newman and his leadership team.

Yesterday I travelled to Nambour Hospital to meet with specialist doctors to listen to their concerns about the proposed new employment contracts, and I say to Queenslanders: their concerns are sound and valid. Immediately after the Redcliffe by-election result was revealed, Premier Newman, hand on heart, said, 'I pledge this evening to listen to your message. We hear it, we will observe it and we will do things differently as we go forward.' Queenslanders, this week we have seen how these are just hollow words as the Premier jets off to America and his leadership team refuses to discuss ongoing problems with regard to specialist doctor contracts in Queensland.

The Liberal-National government's provocative and confrontational style of government of dividing our community and playing favourites with people of influence and the big end of town will not save it at the next election. While the Newman government now has its puppets in all of the key positions of influence in our Public Service and private enterprise, social media and the internet is a forum that this government cannot control. I repeat: social media and the internet is a forum that this government cannot control. I see the internet traffic that this government refuses to listen to and I say to all Queenslanders who have been attacked, who have been vilified and feel isolated by this government: you are not alone, no matter where you live in Queensland. Together we will defeat this vindictive and this arrogant government. While Premier Newman and his leadership team spend taxpayers' money on promoting themselves, it will not save them. I say this to Premier Newman: when you come back to Queensland, talk with your leadership team. Bring on the election and let us have the contest!

### **Sunnybank Electorate, Apollo Fertiliser Queensland**



**Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (3.51 pm): As the state member for Sunnybank, it is always a pleasure to be able to show support for local businesses that contribute so much to the local economy. Recently I had the opportunity to attend Apollo Fertiliser Queensland's media open day in Acacia Ridge. As the largest compound fertiliser manufacturing line in Australia, Apollo Fertiliser is certainly doing its part to stimulate the economy, to generate employment and to contribute to the state government's mission of making Queensland the best place in Australia for business investment, business growth and business employment.


It is tremendous to be able to announce that the commercial production of this compound fertiliser hit full pace this week at the new \$20 million plant in Acacia Ridge. This state-of-the-art facility's annual production rate has been estimated at up to 200,000 tonnes every year. Apollo Fertiliser plans to develop new and sustainable fertilisers that will improve efficiencies as well as reduce its environmental footprint. Apollo Fertiliser has given its commitment to work with farmers to continually develop their products to ensure they help improve efficient and effective farming processes. It has spoken of its plans to set up warehouses and distribution hubs across Queensland to ensure fast and efficient delivery to the regions.

The Sunnybank electorate, which I am proud to represent, is already a strong business hub. With the emergence of Apollo Fertiliser and other strong business names in the area, I am sure that Sunnybank will occupy an even more strategic position in determining Queensland's economic future in the coming years. Apollo Fertiliser has commenced production in Queensland at just the right time, with Queensland having the fastest projected economic growth rate in the nation. With this government's four-pillar approach in our great state with a focus on agriculture, this focus will see many companies take advantage of the government's leadership to grow Queensland's economy, increase jobs and further establish Queensland as one of the leaders in agriculture around the world.

Only a few weeks ago the Premier said that Queensland was open for business—big business. This followed the announcement from Bunnings Group Ltd of an \$810 million investment over the next five years. Clearly business confidence is high in Queensland, and this is thanks in large measure to the boom in the manufacturing and construction industries. It is companies such as Apollo Fertiliser which are a driving force behind Queensland's renewed business confidence. For a number of reasons, 2014 shapes as a year of considerable economic promise for Queensland. It is an optimistic time for business investment and it is great to see large companies such as Apollo Fertiliser

take advantage of the current economic climate. I thank Apollo Fertiliser Queensland, especially director James Li and marketing consultant Kevin Wood, for inviting me to attend its important event. This government is committed to reaching a four per cent unemployment target. With the continued growth of large companies like Apollo, that is certainly achievable. I wish Apollo Fertiliser and all Sunnybank businesses all the best in 2014. I encourage Queensland farmers to give Apollo Fertiliser a go and support jobs in Queensland.

### Beaudesert Electorate, Events


 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (3.54 pm): Yesterday it gave me great pleasure to be at the official reopening of maternity services at Beaudesert Hospital—a great win for the whole region after over 10 years of Labor neglect. Babies are being born in Beaudesert Hospital again as a direct result of the LNP government being elected in 2012, and I am proud to have delivered this service back into the community. I pay tribute to everybody in the community who never gave up the fight to have this service restored. Your perseverance reflects the spirit of the Beaudesert electorate, which I am proud to represent. I thank the Minister for Health, Lawrence Springborg, who drew a line in the sand in June 2012 and said that maternity services would reopen by July 2014. I sincerely thank everybody in the Metro South HHS and other parties involved in restoring services four months ahead of schedule. With procedural services already in place and dental, emergency and elective surgery performance improving dramatically in other hospitals in the Metro South and West Moreton HHSs, this government is delivering better health services as we work to have the best public health system in the nation.

The government's careful management of the health system means that we are doing this despite having the black cloud of Labor's debt hanging over us. Labor's debt of \$80 billion costs Queenslanders \$453,310 per hour. That is the cost of a large new home every hour, hour by hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year. I know that the people of the Beaudesert electorate could use that type of money to be invested in roads, schools or in lowering electricity prices, especially our farmers, who rely so much on power for irrigation. Speaking of electricity, the shadow Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, seems to think that the debt of Energex, Ergon and Powerlink—debt which ballooned while Labor was overseeing these entities—somehow does not count or should not be a worry to the people of Queensland because Energex can pay down that debt through its operational income. Labor just does not get it. The member for Mulgrave does not get it. Where does Energex get its income from? Electricity consumers, that is where—all Queenslanders—and because Labor lost Queensland's AAA credit rating Energex pays more interest and electricity costs more. Labor's debt affects us all through \$453,310 per hour in interest costs on Labor's debt and through higher electricity prices to pay for Energex's debt.

Last week I presented the Canungra Ambulance Station with the keys to a new ambulance worth \$215,000. Canungra is a growing town and this new unit will ensure that reliable ambulance services are delivered to the town into the future. It was a pleasure to catch up with the local ambulance personnel after earlier that day having visited Canungra State School's regular assembly to present the boys' rugby league and rugby teams with a new football. The Beaudesert electorate is a great electorate with great opportunity. As part of the LNP government, I am working to remove the black cloud of Labor's debt so that we can invest in new infrastructure and services and seize these opportunities. Before I finish, it is my pleasure to be able to have nominated one of my constituents, Gwen Roderick, for a Queensland Inspiring Women's Award tomorrow. Gwen has devoted her lifetime to the service of her community and in particular in recent years to the fostering of 25 children, the most recent being three years old to be adopted until he becomes an adult.

*(Time expired)*

### International Women's Day

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (3.57 pm): International Women's Day is just about upon us and I want to mention some of the special women in my life, especially my wife, Jenny Sorensen, who has backed me for the last 20 years in public life, with many duties to be done.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr SORENSEN:** Certainly did. When she was the mayoress she had many official public duties. I also want to mention members of my staff—Paula Harberger, Toni McRae and Debbie Baker—who have done a fantastic job for me. I also want to mention two special helpers and community workers in Hervey Bay, Norma Hannant and Dale Fehlhaber.

I would also like to mention the Wide Bay Women's Health Centre, which empowers women to reach their potential. This organisation helps out a huge number of women who have been victims of domestic violence.

As we come up to the ANZAC centenary, we should remember the contribution that was made by a lot of women during the First World War. An article titled 'Great war nurses' on the Australian War Memorial website states—

More than 3,000 Australian civilian nurses volunteered for active service during the First World War. While enabling direct participation in the war effort, nursing also provided opportunities for independence and travel, sometimes with the hope of being closer to loved ones serving overseas.

The Australian Army Nursing Service ... had been formed in July 1903 as part of the Australian Army Medical Corps. During the war more than 2,000 of its members served overseas alongside Australian nurses working with other organisations, such as the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service ... the Red Cross, or privately sponsored facilities.

The women worked in hospitals, on hospital ships and trains, or in casualty clearing stations closer to the front line.

...

Right from the landings on 25 April 1915, nurses cared for hundreds of casualties in the hospital and transport ships anchored off-shore.

Sister Ella Tucker noted on 25 April 1915—

The wounded think the old ship is heaven after the peninsula. There are 557 patients on board and only 7 nurses.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): Order! The time for private members' statements has concluded.

## MOTION

### Citizen's Right of Reply

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

- (1) That this House notes report No. 143 of the Ethics Committee and the recommendations of the committee that a right of reply be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*; and
- (2) That the House adopt the committee's recommendation and incorporate the right of reply into the *Record of Proceedings*.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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RESPONSE BY MS CAROLINE BENNETT TO STATEMENTS MADE BY THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY (HON DR JOHN MCVEIGH MP) ON 8 AUGUST 2013

On 8 August 2013, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP, Member for Toowoomba South, made the following statement in the Queensland Parliament:

... throughout the month of May I have met with the Toowoomba South State School. I note that, unfortunately, the president of the P&C of Toowoomba South State School was unwilling to allow me to meet with the P&C. Nonetheless I respect her right to do that. Therefore, I have met with various agencies around the city in that regard.

As the President of the P&C of Toowoomba South State School I refute that I was unwilling to allow the Minister to meet with the P&C.

The Minister's comments are untrue and have adversely affected my standing and reputation.

## BIOSECURITY BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 513, on motion of Dr McVeigh—

That the bill be now read a second time.



**Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (4.02 pm), continuing: The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture gives the following definition of 'biosecurity' on its website—

'Biosecurity' is protecting the economy, environment and people's health from pests and diseases. It includes trying to prevent new pests and diseases from arriving, and helping to control outbreaks when they do occur. While robust response arrangements are in place to combat outbreaks, preventing pest, disease and weed incursions in the first place, remains a national priority.

We are very fortunate in that Australia is acknowledged as having a disease-free status for a lot of our primary products. From the perspective of overseas markets, this is something that this government is committed to keeping.

The Biosecurity Bill 2013 is another example of the Newman government meeting its commitment to a customer focused, innovative and high-performance public sector that is accountable for its actions. This bill streamlines the current legislation. There is a raft of legislation in place and this bill streamlines that into a single act that will provide a modern, cohesive and flexible framework to respond to Queensland's current and future biosecurity challenges.

The bill provides a certain number of tools to do that, which include putting in place biosecurity zones and biosecurity programs that can be tailored to meet the unique nature and the tactical challenges of addressing specific biosecurity risks. These outbreaks occur overnight. They are immediate. The department has to have the ability to be able to jump directly into action, which we saw happen with the outbreak of bovine Johne's disease. We saw the department move really fast when that happened. The minister has also put in a large amount of work. This bill also seeks to ensure the safety and quality of animal feed, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs and to manage risks of biological, chemical and physical contaminants in carriers.

It is important to note that the government has a responsibility to maintain our market access and develop new markets. The biosecurity process works right across that. But it is not just the government's responsibility; we all have a responsibility. I know of a lot of people—they are generally people from rural areas—who take a pair of shoes with them to wear when they travel overseas and then they throw them away before they come back. If they have been on farms in certain areas overseas, who knows what diseases they could be bringing back. They are often the questions that are asked as people go through customs. We must take those issues on board. We all have a responsibility and there are certainly a lot of proactive things that one can do. The impact of a significant outbreak of disease in any of Queensland's animal export industries could result in the immediate discontinuation of market access for that industry and associated industries. The biggest problem is that, even after that disease has been cleared up, the confidence, the resilience and the brand image has to be rebuilt to bring the industry back to pre-outbreak levels. It could be a very costly and sometimes very difficult process. Sometimes it is an almost impossible thing to do. This Biosecurity Bill will certainly provide a lot more confidence and a lot more ease in that it streamlines processes and many industries will benefit from that. The beef industry in particular will gain much benefit from this bill, as will other industries.

I certainly support the work that the department is doing in this area. I think it is vitally important. Certainly, my background has been in primary industries. It would be fair to say that both my husband's family and my family have been involved in primary industries for four generations. So it is certainly an area that is very close to my heart. I have very great confidence in the direction that the Newman government is taking. I support this bill and commend the minister for bringing it into the parliament.



**Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (4.07 pm): This legislation is very important. Many might have overlooked just how important it is as most just take for granted that there is food to eat and water to drink and that we can be oblivious to the basic needs of life because we all assume that someone else is looking after that. I wish it were all just so easy. Undoubtedly, many assume that most embellish the demands of this area when they talk about it.

This legislation has lofty ideals. It is repealing six biosecurity acts and amending three others to ensure that the laws are clearer, efficient and work to protect primary industries. The legislation was ready to go forward in late 2011. It has taken until now to come forward. This legislation, in common with others, is claiming an aspirational goal of red-tape reduction and greater flexibility of legislation. It is said to be a broad emergency response to diseases and emergencies, yet to also be more protective of those industries and the public. That is a little inconsistent with the knowledge that,

essentially, it is the same legislation that was ready to be presented in 2011 and stakeholder consultation had already occurred at that stage and had been going on for four years before that. Interestingly, the legislation is said to be adaptive with industry now carried into the organisation reflected in the regulation and codes of practice with a biosecurity regulation reference group to be formed. This is a step forward.

In many ways, we should congratulate the minister and also the now opposition deputy leader, who had careful stewardship of this legislation in his time. So it is sort of a joint presentation in some ways.

In spite of everything, I do endorse the positives stated about the legislation. There is also the dreaded smell test—excuse the pun, this being an Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry bill. I say that because the current version was put out for consultation before Christmas in 2013. That closed early in January 2014. It is a very large, comprehensive bill which has gone on for a long time. It will be interesting to see how it goes.

Essentially at the base level we are to see permit fees, including application and permit, but renewals are extra. There will be general health certificates covering stock, bees, plants and some rationalisation of existing fees. In line with this single agency, a single line of responsibility is the common thread. This is a worthy outcome. If the legislation only achieves some of its aims that will be a good thing. I heard the member for Mackay, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, state how the bill had evolved from that strategy. That makes for good policy and good legislation. I congratulate him on doing that.

We all have our pet complaints, and in contrast to what the member for Lockyer believes—I note that he is not here—I am a former farmer and orchardist with my father and, strangely enough, ran quite a few dairy cattle at one stage. I heard the member for Beaudesert state that his father was at Marburg. There are probably quite a lot of families here that have done a fair bit of dairying in their time. And like everyone else, I do have something to say. It does all seem for nought though at present with the drought so severe, probably the worst we have had in 100 years. Most of us were saying it was like the 1965 drought. I have spoken to the member for Gregory about that. It has gone well beyond that. The prolonged dry spell in many parts of the state is hitting the 100-year mark. The member for Warrego has said that out his way it has hit the 100-year mark. That said, droughts and floods do not necessarily have the same impact on animal diseases as they do on human illnesses. I say this because the world in which we live is not a constant, but is subject to all sorts of random chance events that in biological terms sometimes lead to the epidemic spread of disease unchecked. It is worse in the animal environment because it is not always as easy to control. Unfortunately, we have this era of crossover disease, particularly since bird flu and SARS came along. This does apply to humans because of those crossover diseases, but also because of other illnesses such as anthrax, biological weapons and them remaining in the environment for long periods of time.

The major concern with the biosecurity legislation is not the act itself, but the fact that the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has been reduced in size by 20 per cent. Undoubtedly, with a reduced staff complement to fulfil the demands the bill imposes, the task that it is setting itself may be near impossible. Are we setting the department up to fail, not by providing good legislation, but by not providing the department with the human and economic infrastructure that will enable it to deliver on its lofty promises? It will be a watching brief. It is no reflection on the minister. He is a new politician, he is a new minister and his staff complement has been severely cut. Despite all the motherhood promises by other members of the executive, unfortunately agriculture is often the poor cousin in these areas. That is to be regretted. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is currently having difficulty—if I can use this example—managing the current Biosecurity Queensland property grading system known as the APS—Agricultural Property System. These are sentinel clues and the minister should address those in his second reading speech. He can probably use that as an example.

This new bill will put the legal onus on all producers to register their livestock with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and also legal responsibility to report any nominated disease on their properties to the department. Yet most do not have nor are to receive relevant training from the department to recognise such a disease. The downsizing in 2013-14 has exacerbated this problem. What is even more fascinating about the legislation is how various members approached it in the debate yet in this chamber in the first sitting of 2014 these same

members derided me, as did the health minister, when in tandem with the member for Bundamba I tried to get a simple piece of legislation through on ensuring vaccination schedules could either be completed or stragglers identified opportunistically via children attending publicly funded child-care centres. Yet here today we approve legislation that effectively mandates such simple steps for animals, with the rigid imposition of quarantine on animals or plants and new methods to both isolate and remove diseases such as bovine Johne's disease and fire ants. Two weeks ago the health minister, the member for Southern Downs, in opposing the vaccination of children in child-care centres—just less than five million Queenslanders—could not see a way to ensure the same safety for humans from illnesses such as measles, pertussis, polio and even tetanus. We are implementing controls with animals and plants to eliminate illnesses like hendra virus and BSE—Creutzfeldt-Jakob is the human equivalent that is obtained from eating animals with BSE. I find that there is conflicting perspectives there. One would have to say that these acts should mirror the human act. I do not think that they do.

Humans are biological entities too. It is both our greatest asset and worst liability. Dickens was spot on in *A Tale of Two Cities* when he opened the story by contrasting the extremes and how easy it is to go from hero to zero in the real world. That is the problem with biological security. One has to spend a vast amount of time and money on prevention when a problem may never come to be confronted. In contrast, if there are no systems or prevention strategies in place when a problem occurs, addressing the resultant epidemic can consume all the resources, both financially and in human fervour. That is the hero to zero conundrum.

In this state we have seen what hendra virus can do in an uncontrolled environment, albeit in very small numbers. We have seen what the cost is to vets. We have seen the results of hand, foot and mouth, although primarily it is a disease in Europe. We have had anthrax in Australia and it is always going to be problem on and off in the long term. These are but small reminders of what is behind us and in front of us. I use this last example of anthrax because it is the best example of the disease outbreak which can occur in Queensland herds in extensive areas, particularly in droughts. Certainly when cattle are put down we can sometimes say we are putting them down because of the drought, but in reality it can be due to anthrax and we do not identify that classically at the time. People do not want to talk about it. It is difficult. We need to have systems in place for dealing with it. These types of things need to be actively considered when considering these sorts of bills.

The bill might save the government a lot of money in the future but it certainly has big implications for producers. It could cause them financial disaster. The department could say to producers, 'You did not report those deaths of cattle to DAFF when you became aware of them. You had the Biosecurity Bill 2014 responsibility to do so.' Effectively in those situations the state will not pay you any financial compensation and will not insure your businesses and pay you any money for it.

I am supporting the legislation on behalf of the Palmer United Party. I have highlighted some areas of concern and I would appreciate the minister making some comments on them in his second reading speech.



**Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (4.17 pm), in reply: I thank the honourable members of this House who have contributed to debate on this bill. As I outlined in the second reading speech, confidence in Queensland's biosecurity systems is one of our most significant advantages in accessing global markets and developing the unprecedented new opportunities we see for our world-class disease-free products. This new legislation will provide comprehensive regulatory powers and tools that can be tailored to allow us to address the unique nature and tactical challenges presented by individual biosecurity threats in Queensland.

I would now like to address various matters raised by members and provide some further clarification on various points that have been raised. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition provided a good overview of the history of the development of this bill and some of the work that has gone into it. I note that it was suggested that in bringing this bill to the House we are sneaking in under the wire and only making minor contributions.

It is important to add to the commentary of history that has been provided in the development of the work behind this bill over the past roughly seven and a half years, including the not quite two years under my stewardship as Minister for Agriculture. Consolidation of the state's biosecurity legislation into a single biosecurity act was an election commitment of the then government in

September 2006. Recommendation 8 of the Service Delivery and Performance Commission February 2007 report into the roles and responsibilities of the then department of natural resources, mines and water, the environmental protection agency and the department of primary industries and fisheries states—

... that the Chief Executive of the Queensland Biosecurity Agency make arrangements for a review and update of all legislation dealing with pest management/biosecurity, building on the work already undertaken for the Biosecurity (Animal Health) Bill, with Drafting Instructions being prepared for Cabinet consideration by 31 October 2007.

The Auditor-General has commented twice on progress of the legislation. The Auditor-General's 2008 report on biosecurity found that Biosecurity Queensland had not fully implemented the commission's recommendation with respect to legislation. He noted that Biosecurity Queensland had reviewed the legislation in June 2008, but that drafting instructions had been delayed. In a follow-up audit report in 2011, the Auditor-General noted that cabinet had issued an authority to prepare the proposed biosecurity bill by late 2008. He commented on the delay to the finalisation of the proposed biosecurity legislation and said that the progress of the bill had twice exceeded the time frames normally expected for drafting complex legislation as set down by the Queensland cabinet and legislative handbooks.

In November 2011, the Queensland Ombudsman's hendra virus report identified a concerning array of inconsistent powers and processes between biosecurity legislation and problems with their application. For example, the Ombudsman's report was critical of the quarantine policy for its failure to accurately describe powers under both the Stock Act and the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act and explain the reason for the department's preference to use one over the other. Nevertheless, the Biosecurity Bill was finally introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 25 October 2011. To learn from this history, both for purposes of further review of this current bill and further consultation with industry for regulatory development purposes, it is important to note that, as a final mark of the troubled progress at that time, the bill was referred to committee, but the committee did not complete its report, obviously, before parliament was dissolved for the 2012 election.

After such a long gestation, the bill still had numerous structural deficiencies and significant opportunities for red-tape reduction had been missed. The lapsed bill was unfortunately disjointed and, of course, this bill now has been restructured based on significant industry consultation to make it easier for stakeholders to comprehend. Chapters on local government responsibilities have been brought together, as have the chapters on private sector accreditation, certification, auditing and compliance agreements. A simplified outline of the bill has been included in chapter 1 and many of the transitional provisions have been compiled into a new schedule 3. Much more has had to be done to deliver outcome focused regulation and to cut red tape from local government and industry. The main biosecurity functions of local governments have been clarified and red tape relating to the development of local governments' biosecurity plans has been reduced. I draw that to the attention of various members in this House who have commented on their perception of further impost on local government, particularly the member for Condamine. I suggest he study those points very clearly.

Red tape for the approval of beekeeper registration, which did not apply to any other animal, has been removed. Provision has been made for auditing and activities under a compliance agreement and auditing of accredited entities less frequently than every six months, subject to suitable risk-management measures. A large number of invasive plants and animals were listed in the 2011 bill as both category 3 and category 7 restricted matter. The two categories have been consolidated into one with no substantive change to the obligations. These are but a few examples of how the government has reshaped the legislation to provide a sharper focus on the customer.

The deputy opposition leader encouraged the maintenance of consultation with industry through the development of regulation. That is something that I do agree with and certainly it remains a focus as we move through that process and as we have done since we commenced the redrafting of this new bill.

Reference was made to resourcing and management within the department. I can confirm for members of the House that upon my appointment to this role almost two years ago and after some significant analysis of our services, of our resourcing and of the history of the lapsed bill, we commenced major changes within biosecurity management in Queensland. I am particularly pleased to have worked with our chief biosecurity officer, Dr Jim Thompson, and his staff throughout the department, not only on the preparation and completion of this bill but also through the various major

biosecurity challenges that we as a government have faced on behalf of industry over the past couple of years. For example, I refer to bovine Johne's disease, which some members have reported on. The outbreak that we were alerted to in December 2012 was and is the largest of its kind not only in Queensland's history but also in Australia's history. The significant improvement that we needed to put in place in terms of the department's responsiveness, the department's work with industry right across the state and the willingness of the department staff to join with me in going to meet industry, if you like, rather than expecting them to meet us in Brisbane has yielded for us significant learnings in terms of biosecurity threat response and management. They were significant learnings that have placed us in a far better position to continue that particular BJD response.

Numerous members commented on the response to red witchweed, or *Striga asiatica*, in the Mackay area last year. At a gathering of sugar industry leaders I was pleased to learn from Canegrowers, including Paul Schembri, the Chairman of Canegrowers, that the industry still works through that challenge but is most appreciative and continues to be appreciative of my department's response. I look forward to learning more about how we can do it better with the sugar industry in that case, as well as with other industries. My good friend and colleague the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines and member for Hinchinbrook referred to biosecurity in the banana industry as another example. Together with the Northern Territory authorities, our response to the threat of banana freckle disease was well done and we continue to monitor such risks.

In this regard, I note the compliments of the member for Gladstone to Biosecurity Queensland for its response to the most recent and new outbreak of fire ants in her electorate. Like the member, I am very proud of the efforts of Biosecurity Queensland within my department and the improvements in and learnings from our responsiveness, which we have picked up through our work with BJD and red witchweed, and will apply to any other threat that we will need to deal with in future. In particular, the member for Gladstone referred to the need to maintain an awareness above all else of the trauma that farmers, graziers and other agricultural producers can face as they work through biosecurity threats with Biosecurity Queensland. The government is making strategic target investments in biosecurity capacity to ensure Queensland can effectively respond to all threats, including, for example, the current wild dog and weed management threats, and certainly can be prepared for any major future threat, most particularly foot-and-mouth disease.

I would like to refer to comments and contributions made by other members in this debate, particularly those on the committee. First of all, I would like to sincerely acknowledge the contribution of the chair of the committee, the member for Lockyer. He spoke very clearly about the need for critical tools in the management of biosecurity threats. He talked about the fact that such threats can affect all in a particular industry and that it therefore represents a partnership between government, industry and, invariably, the local communities in which such industries exist. The chair of the committee also mentioned very clearly the reduction in red tape—the some 20 per cent reduction in the number of pages in this particular legislation. This maintains the government's commitment to reduce red tape.

The chair of the committee, the member for Lockyer, went on to ask some specific questions in relation to FMD—foot-and-mouth disease—preparedness. I would like to share the following comments in response. Each year Queensland exports more than 600,000 tonnes of beef to more than 80 countries. The export value of that beef is more than \$3 billion each year. An outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease would stop that trade. It is estimated that 10 years after eradicating the disease Australia would only recover about 80 per cent of its current international market share. An incidence of foot-and-mouth disease has been estimated to have an economic impact of between \$6 billion for a small outbreak—for example, in North Queensland—and over \$52 billion for a large, multistate outbreak. That is just the economic impact.

Foot-and-mouth disease would be nothing short of devastating for individuals, families, communities and industries around this great state. That is why I have made the commitment to make Queensland the most foot-and-mouth disease prepared state in Australia as a specific component of our Queensland agriculture strategy. The program will work in collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders from senior industry and government representatives to on-the-ground response personnel, vets and producers. The program will ensure Queensland has enhanced early warning systems and response arrangements to prevent foot-and-mouth disease establishment and spread within Queensland.

We will be working across Queensland government agencies and industry to ensure we have the best possible arrangements in place. We will also ensure our internal systems are robust. We will review our planning, policies and procedures, deliver more efficient financial, IT and document management systems and improve engagement and communication.

Queensland is also participating in Exercise Odysseus, a series of activities throughout 2014 to test preparedness for a livestock standstill in the event of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. A livestock standstill would require stopping the movement of all foot-and-mouth disease susceptible livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats and pigs, for a period of at least 72 hours. This is a significant task in itself, but an essential tool in stopping the spread of foot-and-mouth disease. Two workshops have already been completed this year addressing financial aspects and requirements to declare and revoke a livestock standstill. Further workshops through to July will focus on managing livestock in transit, legal issues and all aspects of communication during a standstill.

I would like to move on and offer some commentary, response and clarification in relation to points raised by the member for Condamine in this debate. The member for Condamine referred to organic industry interests. In the interests of time, I refer the member to my second reading speech because I did specifically address that.

The member for Condamine raised GM crop issues. He also went on to raise issues in relation to deer hunting and other activities. Let me address some of those comments very briefly. The member for Condamine—and, in fact, the member for Dalrymple as well—referred to issues raised in submissions from Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment, and Australian Wild Country Adventures concerning farming, hunting and breeding deer and requested clarification about whether it would be legal for a hunter to take the meat, skin, antlers or tusks of animals that were category 3 restricted matter from the property on which it might be killed.

I can inform the House that I have written to Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment just recently and advised them—and in turn I advise the member for Condamine—that the feral deer management strategy 2013-18 is not subordinate legislation but an integrated set of strategic directions, agreed to by the majority of stakeholders, for the future management of feral deer in Queensland. I am advised in response to comments from the hunting groups, including their organisation, that substantial changes may be made to the original draft of the strategy, including recognition of the historic ranges of established feral deer species and the role of recreational hunting groups in their long-term management.

Feral deer, goats and pigs are category 3 restricted matter in the Biosecurity Bill and cannot be disposed of or distributed. This means that these animals cannot be released into the environment. Any dead animal is not, by definition, biosecurity matter. Therefore, a hunter who kills such an animal can take the animal's meat, in accordance with the food safety legislation, or other parts from the property provided it is not diseased or contaminated.

The member for Condamine also queried how the bill deals with pollen from genetically modified crops spreading into non-GM cropping areas. The Biosecurity Bill would oblige a person to minimise the spread of any living thing, both unmodified and genetically modified versions of a crop, if its spread could impact on the economy, human health, the environment or social amenity.

I point out to the member that there is already specific legislation—the Gene Technology Act 2001—that regulates dealings with GMOs within Queensland. It implements a nationally consistent scheme to protect the public health and safety of people and to protect the environment from risks associated with gene technology. The spread of pollen or other reproductive matter from genetically modified crops would, if necessary, be dealt with under the Gene Technology Act 2001. The matters raised by Mr Hopper concerning intellectual property for GMOs are certainly outside the scope of this bill.

In relation to the member's question about definitions of a carrier, which issues take precedence, control measures for a biosecurity obligation versus requirements for preserving national plants and animals, I can advise that these matters were considered during the committee's inquiry should the member wish to study that. If activities are authorised under an emergency order or movement control order or undertaken or authorised by an inspector exercising their emergency powers, the person is taken not to have committed an offence under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 or the Vegetation Management Act 1999.

The member for Thuringowa, in his very comprehensive contribution to the debate, said that the most comprehensive biosecurity management system is now being set up in Australia through this particular bill. He referred to the need for education regarding changes in relation to obligations referred to in the bill and those that we will develop through regulation jointly with industry. Of course, he maintained that it is most important to secure long-term market access. That was a point also referred to by the member for Burleigh. That is exactly what this bill is intended to do.

In terms of specific issues raised in the debate, I note that the member for Barron River mentioned concerns about the management of wild dogs. This is considered in the bill. The member for Mount Isa quite rightly referred to experience, particularly in the northern parts of the state, with TB and feral pigs. The member for Nanango shared her understandable concern about the need for protection against the rabbit.

The member for Gregory mentioned the concern about ticks across the state. He referred to the role of inspectors across this state as well. That is something we focused on in cleaning up the previous approach to management. We are working with local government and slowly but surely putting more biosecurity people back in the bush. He referred to the fact that Queensland has—and I agree with him—the best graziers and stock in the world, and we must strive to keep it that way.

The member for Dalrymple referred to feral pig control. I stress that Minister Dickson has recently announced in this parliament \$7 million over four years for feral pig control, jointly managed with the federal government, and hence is the focus of this government on such issues both within this bill and in other initiatives.

The member for Hinchinbrook noted that flexibility in agreements between industry and government afforded under this legislation is most necessary for future management. Again, I refer to his correct reference to banana industry biosecurity risks. Something that I support very strongly was his reference beyond this bill to the continuing fight to maintain inappropriate import arrangements such as we have seen in previous years.

I appreciate the contribution of the member for Lytton and his reference to the Port of Brisbane and the exposure that must be managed there. The member for Whitsunday referred to the economic impacts of foot-and-mouth disease, and I have touched on those earlier. And of course the member for Burdekin, who initially made a brief contribution but then continued to make a very substantive contribution, again referred to the shared responsibility between community, industry and government which is so important for Queensland agriculture, as reflected through this bill, as it is, I know, for her family and her electorate.

I then finish by noting some of the comments from the member for Gaven. He suggested that consultation in this bill in the end was too short. As I have mentioned, under our government we have worked to bring it to fruition in two years. The total discussion has been well over 7½ years, so I am not quite sure how long he needs.

**Mr Bleijie:** Who is this—Gaven?

**Dr McVEIGH:** Gaven.

**Mr Cripps:** Be patient, Minister.

**Dr McVEIGH:** I have heard and note the advice from the member for Hinchinbrook that there is a tendency to be patient in this House. I heard nothing from the member for Gaven though, unfortunately, in terms of contribution to the debate around this bill in the almost two years that I have been minister. Similarly, I have heard nothing from him at all in relation to the dairy industry that he purported to so passionately support in earlier debate in this House.

It seems to me that he was not impressed with the apparent reduction in regional services, as he suggested, within my Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. I can confirm, as I have said a number of times, that we have increased the number of regional biosecurity officers across the state, and as budget permits I will continue to do so. Yes, I made some reductions, as did other ministers in this House, in my case to meet budgetary requirements, given the job of addressing Labor's \$80 billion worth of debt. In our case a substantive proportion of reductions in my department were at head office in the areas of policy, communications and PR.

The member for Gaven suggested that as a new politician, in his words, I may not be familiar with some of the background. Well I am happy to share with him whenever he wishes my over 30 years of experience in agribusiness and I am happy to share with him that I am the minister appointed

by the Premier, Campbell Newman, of this great state to reinstate a Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The member for Gaven summed up by saying that he had some conflicts in his own mind in relation to this. I will leave him to deal with those conflicts in his own time.

Finally, I once again wish to thank the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee for its analysis of this bill and all of those members who have contributed to the debate here in the House whilst this bill has been on the table. I congratulate in particular Dr Jim Thompson and his team in Biosecurity Queensland and others across the department of agriculture from one end of the state to the other with whom I have worked very closely to address biosecurity management shortcomings that we have had to come to terms with over the almost last two years, the various significant biosecurity threats that we have dealt with over that period, and continue to deal with, and the disjointed nature and the gaps in fact of the previous lapsed bill. I commend this bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 578—



**Dr McVEIGH** (4.45 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

**Dr McVEIGH:** I move the following amendments—

**1 Clause 115 (Effect and duration of biosecurity emergency order)**

Page 103, lines 22 to 26—

*omit, insert—*

- (2) Unless it is sooner revoked, a biosecurity emergency order expires on—
  - (a) the day that is 21 days after the order begins to have effect; or
  - (b) an earlier day stated in the order for that purpose.

**2 Clause 239 (Consultation about proposed biosecurity program)**

Page 198, lines 21 and 24 and page 199, line 7, 'as far as practicable'—

*omit.*

**3 Clause 413 (Purpose and operation of acceptable biosecurity certificates)**

Page 315, line 3, 'an interstate officer'—

*omit, insert—*

an interstate accredited certifier or interstate officer

**4 Clause 413 (Purpose and operation of acceptable biosecurity certificates)**

Page 315, after line 25—

*insert—*

**interstate accredited certifier** means a person who holds accreditation, however called, in another State under a corresponding law to this Act and the accreditation is recognised, under an intergovernmental agreement, as being equivalent to accreditation held by an accredited certifier.

**5 Clause 501 (Review of Act)**

Page 367, line 27, '5 years'—

*omit, insert—*

3 years

I table explanatory notes to all of my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Biosecurity Bill 2013, explanatory notes for to Hon. John McVeigh's amendments [\[4611\]](#).

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 578, as amended, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 5—

**Dr McVEIGH** (4.45 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

**Dr McVEIGH:** I move the following amendments—

**6 Schedule 2 (Restricted matter and categories)**

Page 432, entry for rusa deer (*Rusa timorensis*, syn. *Cervus timorensis*), 'rusa deer'—  
omit, insert—

feral rusa deer

**7 Schedule 5 (Dictionary)**

Page 527, lines 6 to 11—

omit, insert—

**saleyard** means any yard, premises or place where designated animals are—

- (a) sold or offered or exhibited for sale by public auction or tender; or
- (b) held or kept for the purpose of being sold or offered or exhibited for sale by public auction or tender; or
- (c) held or kept on being sold by public auction or tender.

Amendments agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 5, as amended, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (4.46 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. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (4.47 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

## FAIR TRADING INSPECTORS BILL

Resumed from 20 November 2013 (see p. 4064).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.47 pm): 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 Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013. I note the committee tabled its report on 24 February 2014 and I now table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 55—Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013, government response [4612].

I also thank stakeholders who made written submissions to assist the committee in its consideration of the bill. The committee has made four recommendations about the bill which I will discuss shortly.

By way of background, the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013 is designed to create a stand-alone act which harmonises and consolidates inspectorate, investigation, monitoring and enforcement provisions for 14 acts dealing with fair trading matters which are referred to in the bill as primary acts.

As I mentioned in my explanatory speech, the bill is similar to the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2011, which was introduced by the former government but lapsed upon dissolution of the previous parliament. This government has decided to progress the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill because it is consistent with our commitment to remove unnecessary regulation and red tape, wherever it appears in the Queensland statute book.

As many members are aware, there are a number of Queensland acts that deal with fair trading matters. In most cases, these acts contain their own inspectorate provisions to facilitate effective compliance and enforcement activities. Over time, however, inconsistencies have emerged in terms of how inspectors' powers are provided for in the various acts about fair trading.

There is often no substantive reason for the inconsistencies, which can, for example, simply be as a result of differing drafting styles. While often minor, these inconsistencies result in unnecessary costs, uncertainty and complication for inspectors, businesses and consumers with no benefit to the community. This bill modernises those processes. It will enact a suite of common provisions that apply to inspectors. The structure of the bill enables other acts dealing with fair trading matters to be added as primary acts at a later time. The bill contains a number of different powers. This is important because fair trading inspectors deal with a wide range of issues ranging from relatively minor, straightforward disputes to highly serious matters involving serious financial loss for consumers and risks to public safety.

Members may be aware that a new power for inspectors to require a person to stop or move a vehicle has captured some attention in the media. It is important to note that under the bill this power may only be exercised where an inspector reasonably suspects or is aware that a thing in or on a vehicle may provide evidence of the commission of an offence against the bill or a primary act. For example, it is conceivable that an inspector conducting an investigation of an alleged unlicensed motor vehicle may reasonably suspect that evidence of an offence is contained in a vehicle. The power is not a sweeping police-like power. It is much more limited. For instance, inspectors do not have the authority to conduct pursuits or establish roadblocks in order to exercise this power. That power rests with the police. Although the power is new to Queensland fair trading legislation, the power itself is not a brand new provision.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General will develop the appropriate policies, procedures and training to ensure the power can be exercised safely and lawfully by all inspectors. I note and appreciate the committee's recommendation that the bill be passed. The committee sought my clarification on some aspects of the bill, which I have provided in the government response. I commend the bill to the House.



**Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (4.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013. At the outset, I advise that the opposition will not be opposing the bill before the House today. However, I will be raising some of the issues that have been identified through the consultation process that was undertaken by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

The bill before us today was introduced into this House by the current Attorney-General and Minister for Justice on 20 November last year and was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for consultation and review, but this is not the first time that this legislation has come before the House, as the Attorney has remarked on. As the Attorney-General pointed out during his introductory speech and just now, this bill is similar to the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2011 which was introduced by the former Labor government but lapsed when the 53rd Parliament was dissolved. The current bill, which effectively mirrors Labor's 2011 bill, has stemmed from extensive consultation—in particular two separate reviews undertaken in 2002 and 2007. The first review was conducted by the department, which undertook an internal review of the Fair Trading Act 1989. This review was complemented by an external review undertaken in 2007 by the then Service Delivery and Performance Commission. Both reviews found that there are inconsistencies in the existing laws relating to fair trading matters. In particular, the explanatory notes of this bill state—

Both reviews identified that inconsistencies arose largely as a result of legislation being enacted and amended at different times, noting that drafting styles can change over time. In many instances, no substantive reasons were identified for the inconsistencies in inspectorate and enforcement provisions between fair trading Acts.

In addition, the explanatory notes state—

Variations in inspectorate and enforcement provisions result in inefficiency and difficulty enforcing legislation, as well as inconsistent enforcement practices. Moreover, businesses and consumers may have difficulty understanding the different enforcement powers that may be exercised by inspectors under various Acts dealing with fair trading matters.

This bill, like its predecessor, will go some way to address this situation. It will address inconsistencies and harmonise and consolidate the various inspectorate provisions which are currently contained in multiple acts, including the four proposed acts which will replace the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act and which are currently on the *Notice Paper* for debate at a future sitting.

As mentioned earlier, this bill has been developed as a result of two significant reviews in the past decade or so. Further, these proposed laws have now been reviewed through the parliament's portfolio committee system, allowing stakeholders to have input. I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its deliberations and pay special thanks to the secretariat staff who supported the committee members. The committee called for submissions, which closed on 17 January this year, and received two submissions—from the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland. Both submissions raised valid points of concern which are detailed in the committee report No. 55. I will put on the record in this House some of the concerns raised by these submissions, although I reiterate that the opposition does not oppose this bill.

Firstly, we note that the Council for Civil Liberties has concerns with the new provisions that allow fair trading inspectors to stop or move a vehicle if they have reasonable suspicion that it is involved in an offence against one of the acts which they administer. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland has raised concerns that innocent operators will be caught up with the new laws, with inspectors being empowered to search vehicles. I note that the department and the committee are confident that there are adequate safeguards in place to ensure that abuse of these provisions does not occur. I ask the Attorney-General to expand on the nature of these safeguards to ensure that these elements of the laws are not misused. The committee notes that the threshold required to allow a search to occur is quite low. It has to fall within one of the 14 pieces of legislation that apply to fair trading inspectors, and only in certain circumstances. Can the Attorney-General provide further information about these circumstances?

In addition, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties has raised concerns about the new provision that means that a warrant is not invalidated unless there is a major defect which affects the substance of the warrant in a material manner. The department's view is that this new provision is acceptable as it is already contained in other acts, including the Legal Profession Act 2007, without issue. I seek the Attorney-General's feedback as to why these provisions have been preferred to the common law.

The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties also raised an issue with how long a seized item can be held by an inspector before they have to return it to the individual. The bill allows for an item to be held as evidence for a period of one year, or longer if there is court action. However, it is unclear on how long an item can be held if it has been seized for the primary purpose of producing a document from it—for example, taking a digital image from a computer to later be used as evidence. I ask the Attorney-General today to further clarify his intentions on how long an item can be seized to ensure that businesses have some certainty and are not deprived of computer devices that may be vital to their business operation. In many cases, it will be very easy to capture digital information from the computer or another electronic device then return the device to the business. I think the business sector would appreciate some clarity regarding these time frames, rather than relying on a vague term such as 'as soon as practicable' and within a 'reasonable' time frame.

In addition, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties raised an issue with clause 43 of the bill regarding the seizure of property subject to security. This clause allows for a lien or other security to remain on the property when it is taken by an inspector. This means that if a third party owns the computer which is being used by the business then their interest is still maintained in the property. However, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties has concerns regarding the sale of those assets. In particular, the council believes that innocent third parties should have a right to obtain the release of seized items and to seek a court order if an inspector will not agree to an item's release. I am sure everyone in this chamber would not want to see innocent businesses and people inconvenienced or worse because their equipment or property is inadvertently involved in a fair trading investigation. I ask the Attorney-General to clarify this today and give an undertaking that those third parties who own assets and who are genuinely innocent and not involved in any alleged activity will not be worse off as a result of these laws.

I would now like to address one further issue—that of review rights. The bill currently allows for a review to be undertaken by the chief executive if the applicant does not agree with a finding of an inspector. The chief executive is then required to provide a decision within 30 days. However, if the chief executive fails to make a decision within 30 days, then the lack of a response is interpreted as endorsement of the original decision. I share the committee's concern that this clause may provide incentive for the chief executive to not comply with the statutory time frame for reaching a review decision or, in the most extreme cases, to not undertake a review at all. This is because inaction by the chief executive would result in the inspector's original decision being confirmed and the applicant's appeal being rejected.

Further, the committee has noted—

It is also unclear from the current drafting of the Bill whether the chief executive would still be required to provide a review decision notice if he or she failed to comply with the 30 day statutory timeframe, or whether the original decision would be confirmed and the applicant not given a review decision notice.

This clarity is crucial for any potential appeal to the Magistrates Court as there are strict time frames around appeals. I note that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice has listened to these concerns and has already foreshadowed amendments to this section. In particular the amendments which will be moved by the Attorney-General will stipulate that (a) if an applicant receives a review notice then they have 28 days from that review notice to file an appeal in the Magistrates Court or (b) if there is no review notice and after the 30 days have lapsed, meaning the original decision stands, then the 28 days to file for an appeal will commence at the expiry of the 30 business days that the chief executive had to make the decision.

While this clarity is welcomed, I question whether this remedy goes far enough. For natural justice to succeed, it is imperative that individuals know the time frames and cut-off periods to lodge certain applications. For example, what if a public holiday fell during the 30 business day period? That day would not be calculated and, therefore, the applicant would have to add an extra day to the end. While most applicants would be able to work out the time frames, we believe that adequate information should be provided, for example, in an acknowledgement letter of the application which states the exact expiry date of each application and associated information for appeals. I ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice to outline how this information will be disseminated to each applicant to ensure that natural justice is allowed.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of inspectors located within the Office of Fair Trading. I trust that they will apply this new legislation in a fair and just manner as their roles are very important for providing protection for the consumer in a number of areas. I thank the government for reintroducing a Labor initiated bill. I do take on board the Attorney-General's earlier remarks about it taking 20 years for the Labor government to introduce it. I do note that the former Labor government actually did all the heavy lifting in terms of carrying out two reviews and bringing this bill to the House. It does raise questions about why it took this Attorney-General two years to reintroduce a Labor bill. With those closing remarks, I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (5.02 pm): I am not entirely sure how to take that. I think I am going to take that as a silver bullet. There was a review in 2002 and then the former bill lapsed because of an election in 2012 and the member for South Brisbane complains about it taking us two years. Heavens, I am aghast with errant thoughts. The reality of it is that this bill is actually being finalised by an LNP government, the Newman government, which again has been able to do what Labor was not able to do for a decade or so.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BERRY:** I think Queensland has been extremely patient, quite frankly.


This legislation does put paid to a number of provisions and this is the first one. I do thank the secretariat and the members of the committee because, quite frankly, if one reads the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill Report No. 55 they will see that it was quite a thorough review of the bill and one in which there was input. I do thank the Deputy Speaker for his contribution as well in the drafting of this report.

There were a couple of controversial matters and I probably need to touch upon those. It is otherwise a fairly stable bill, bringing about change in Queensland. Firstly let us look at why we need to harmonise the inspectors under these various acts that permeate Queensland's legislation. It seemed to me that these acts potentially deal with vulnerable citizens. I need only to go to a very short list and it makes it very clear that we are talking about homes and so forth, in the Property

Occupations Bill, which is now before this House. It seemed to me appropriate that we adopt a system whereby inspectorates over a number of acts are consolidated into one act. This harmonisation does make it easier for government to be more flexible in ensuring that inspectors have appropriate and measured power in dealing with those other acts.

I wish to make note of a couple of points. Something was made of searching motor vehicles. I think the member for Rockhampton was suggesting that there would be car chases. I could not reach the same conclusion that to stop and search a motor vehicle would involve a car chase. It has been a while since I have seen *Starsky and Hutch*, but I do not know whether it was really appropriate to sensationalise it. The reality of life is that commerce today does depend on a fair and reasonable amount of regulation. It is not inappropriate in this day and age to have a motor vehicle stopped and searched. It really is appropriate. It is not unreasonable in the days of computers that they be seized and information obtained from them. Of course, we expect that there must be a reasonable suspicion because there is a system of checks and balances in place. I do not see, and never have seen, any difficulty in that course being taken. It is fairly standard. The words 'reasonable suspicion' have been well and truly defined in Queensland's judicial horizon.

I believe that there are adequate safeguards in the report. For that matter, the report has set out very clearly matters which have been brought to the Attorney's attention. It is my duty now to commend the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to the House in a timely manner. I wish to thank my secretariat and my committee members, whom I see in the House today. They are well represented for which I thank each and every one of them. Their contribution to the committee process was a team effort and one which I think produced a very good and worthwhile report for this House and for the Attorney to consider. I commend the Attorney-General for bringing the bill to the House.


 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.07 pm): I rise to speak today on the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill. I thank the chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for his effusive praise of our committee colleagues. I would like to acknowledge the work that the committee has done and all the hard work that committee members put into the preparation of these reports. I would like to thank the secretariat for the great work that they do. On this particular bill I also wish to thank the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland for their contributions to our inquiry. My contribution to this debate will be brief.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Miss BARTON:** It is apparently a rare thing. It is almost a Kodak moment. Fair trading and consumer protection are incredibly important to not only this government but also previous governments. Ultimately, the fact that this bill will harmonise and consolidate fair trading legislation and also improve its compliance and enforcement is, indeed, a great thing. Certainly this piece of legislation has endeavoured to strike the right balance in order to provide a flexible framework for fair trading legislation in this state. I thank the Attorney-General for the way in which he has done this. I do note that the previous government had introduced similar legislation, but it lapsed due to the dissolution of the parliament. As I said, consumer protection is certainly a key objective, and this bill certainly goes towards ensuring that we meet that.

I would like to quickly note that there were a couple of concerns raised in the submissions with regard to the increased powers being given to inspectors. The committee certainly did consider the issues that were raised in the submissions, but we ultimately resolved that the increased powers that were given to inspectors were justified and that there were also very few circumstances in which they could be used. If you have a look at the report, we have also noted that we believe there are appropriate safeguards.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this legislation to the House, and I look forward to supporting it in its second reading.

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (5.09 pm): I also rise to contribute to the debate on the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013. As a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, I have been able to consider the elements of this bill in detail. That has also assisted me to gain a good understanding of the application of the legislation and its role as part of the government's broader reform agenda. The main objectives of the implementation of this bill are: to provide mechanisms to address inconsistencies; to harmonise and consolidate inspectorate provisions contained in a number


of acts which relate to fair trading; improve enforcement and compliance activities concerning fair trading legislation through harmonised and consolidated inspectorate provisions; provide a flexible legislative framework which enables additional acts pertaining to fair trading to be added to the scope of the bill in future; repeal the inspectorate provisions contained in particular acts around fair trading; and make significant amendments.

Various acts relating to fair trading are administered and enforced by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General through the Office of Fair Trading. These acts contain inspectorate provisions which deal with the appointment powers and responsibilities of inspectors and establish a range of offences relating to the exercise of inspectors' powers. Provisions of this nature are necessary to monitor compliance with the relevant legislation. They are used for the investigation of alleged breaches and the prosecution of offenders in order to protect consumers and uphold a fair and competitive marketplace.

A number of reviews over the years have determined that a requirement to address inconsistencies in the inspectorate provisions contained in fair trading legislation is well and truly needed. The first of these reviews was back in 2002 and recommended some of the initiatives this bill will deliver. There have been other reviews since which in turn have made similar recommendations. The Fair Trading Inspectors Bill was originally introduced into the 53rd Parliament in 2011 and, as we have heard from other speakers, it lapsed when that parliament was dissolved in February 2012. The bill was re-introduced to this parliament in November 2013 and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for examination. This bill now addresses and improves on the initiatives of the previous bill.

On 28 November 2013 the committee wrote to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General seeking advice on the bill. We also invited stakeholders and subscribers to lodge written submissions and issued a media release announcing an inquiry. Subsequently the committee received written advice from the department and received two submissions: one from the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and one from the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry. A public briefing was held on Thursday, 12 December 2013, where the committee received evidence from representatives of the department. On 6 February 2014 a public hearing was held at which the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties appeared. The committee did consider the evidence available and after considerable deliberations has made four recommendations and, importantly, has recommended that the bill be passed.

These reforms are simple, common sense and overdue. They will ensure Queensland's systems of fair trading are consistent and fair as well as keeping pace with community expectations, and I also commend the Attorney-General for his work.

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (5.13 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate on the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013. I congratulate the Attorney-General on the introduction of this bill, and I acknowledge the work of my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in the examination of this bill and thank all those who are part of the committee process.

This bill establishes a stand-alone act that provides for the powers of fair trade inspectors that are currently contained across 14 acts relating to fair trade. Consolidating these powers under a single act will deliver numerous benefits to government administration, businesses and ultimately Queensland consumers. This bill is also one of five bills that have been generated from the split of the PAMDA bill that our committee also reported on, and that will be debated in the future.

As the Attorney-General stated in his introductory speech, the bill will harmonise and consolidate inspectorate, investigation, monitoring and enforcement provisions for these 14 acts that deal with fair trade matters. Currently, fair trading provisions and powers of inspectors stretch across these different pieces of legislation. This has led to differences and inconsistencies in compliance and enforcement of fair trade legislation. For example, people currently may face a lesser penalty for failing to show an inspector their ID under one act than what they would under another. There is a need for a better understanding of fair trade provisions relating to enforcement and compliance in the interests of both the business community and fair trade inspectors. Consolidation of these provisions will reduce duplication, reduce confusion and increase confidence in the Queensland fair work system. It is important that our fair trading inspectors have appropriate powers to be able to prosecute dodgy operators and protect Queensland consumers. Queensland is the state open for business, and we as a government are taking these steps to create and maintain an optimal trade and business environment by ensuring its fairness.

The powers of inspectors provided in the bill are based on powers that are currently provided by the primary acts. Consolidating these powers from the 14 acts into one will make it easier for people to understand the roles and responsibilities of our fair trading inspectors. The bill will increase confidence in the enforcement of fair trade legislation, allow for a better understanding of enforcement powers, increase transparency for Queensland businesses and result in significant red-tape reduction for government administration.

During the committee process the most significant concern raised was with regard to the introduction of the new power to stop and search vehicles; however, I wish to highlight that it is anticipated that this power would be used infrequently, sparingly and will not impinge on the rights of business and trade operators. The requirement for this power is in response to the fact that evidence of contravention of fair trading legislation may well be located in vehicles, particularly in relation to itinerant traders. Inspectors will only be able to exercise this power when they have sufficient reason to believe there may be a breach of the fair trade law. After further discussion of this provision with the department, the committee was satisfied that the Office of Fair Trading will adopt adequate internal policies and training to ensure the power is exercised safely and appropriately.

Significant community consultation has occurred with this bill. All Queensland government agencies were consulted during the development of the legislation, with a draft published in February last year for public consultation. The bill implements the key recommendations to establish a single act to standardise enforcement powers that were made by the Service Delivery and Performance Commission in their review of the previous department of tourism and fair trade in 2007. I also note that the bill has received broad support from both the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland. In their submission to the committee, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties acknowledged that the bill adequately balances the rights of privacy with public interest and law enforcement. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland commended the Newman government for focusing its attention on ensuring that exploitive and criminal activity is reduced in Queensland's businesses communities.

I congratulate the Attorney-General once again for the introduction of the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013, which will deliver significant benefit to consumers, trade and business in Queensland by streamlining the powers of fair trading inspectors. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.17 pm): I rise to support the minister's bill. This is a bill which is well and truly overdue. Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for chairing the committee and I certainly thank the committee for all the work that has been done. There was some mention as to why this might have taken two years to come forward. We have been getting on with the job. I think that our committee now has passed 56 reports up to this House, so we have been busy cutting red tape and getting decent legislation into this place.

But before I go too far into that, let us just look at what the Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013 is all about. The main objectives of the bill are: to address some inconsistencies; harmonise and consolidate the provisions contained in the 14 acts about fair trading and how the inspectors can use those acts; to improve the enforcement and compliance activities relating to fair trading legislation; to provide a flexible legislative framework which enables additional acts dealing with fair trading to be added to the scope of the bill in the future; and to repeal the inspectorate provisions contained in particular acts about fair trading and make consequential amendments.

This bill amends 14 acts—the Agents and Financial Administration Act 2013, the Debt Collectors (Field Agents and Collection Agents) Act 2013, the Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982, the Introduction Agents Act 2001, the Land Sales Act 1984, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, the Motor Dealers and Chattel Auctioneers Act 2013, the Property Occupations Act 2013, the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002, the Retirement Villages Act 1999, the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003, the Security Providers Act 1993, the Tourism Services Act 2003 and the Travel Agents Act 1988. We have had over 10 years of Labor having reviews and looking into the issue and expressing some patience and putting the bill down to come forward and then letting it lapse. It took 10 or maybe even 12 years to get to that point yet we get criticised for not only this being the 55th report from the committee but for bringing this bill forward and cutting red tape. Can members imagine how hard it has been for a poor Fair Trading inspector to do their job under Labor's crazy regime? Talk about patience! How much patience would an inspector have to have had to deal with different amounts, different punishments, different capabilities and different articles in all of these different acts?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** How long has it taken? The first review was done in 2002 and then 2007 and then those opposite had to think about it. I think they may well have—

**Mr Bleijie:** They were being patient with it.

**Mr WATTS:** There definitely was some patience. I think there may have been some chamomile tea being drunk while they were being patient. Finally in 2011 their bill was introduced, and what happened? They ran out of time, and that is so typical Labor—chaotic administration under 14 acts while poor inspectors are trying to do their job drowning in red tape and running around with paperwork everywhere. Labor had a review followed by a review followed by lapsed legislation. That is what Labor brings to this place—review after review, lapsed legislation, plenty of patience.

**Ms Trad:** Are you going to talk about the bill?

**Mr WATTS:** I am talking about the bill. It is a shame that I am here talking about the bill when Labor could have been talking about it 10 years before I got here if it had got on with it, but it did not get on with it, did it?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Berry): Thank you, member for Toowoomba North. Please continue.

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you; I shall. I need to get it done so I can go and have a cup of tea before I go home. Ultimately, the bill itself is a pretty simple piece of legislation. It cuts down red tape, it makes Fair Trading inspectors' jobs simpler, it means that we have less people shuffling less paper trying to ensure that people who are breaching legislation are caught and charged and the rest of us can get on with our lives without strangling our officers and our inspectors in red tape. I certainly thank the minister for bringing the bill forward. I hope that there are not more of these reviews and other pieces of legislation that might have taken 10 years to come to this place while we were expressing some patience when meanwhile we are watching the debt accumulate and get out of control—that is, up to \$80 billion of Labor's debt. How many hours have passed between 2002's first review and now, all the while our interest bill is ticking away at \$450,000—thanks very much—for Labor's maladministration? This is just another example of why we are here to try to cut this red tape and get on with governing the state, and we will be doing that. I commend the minister for bringing this bill forward.

**Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (5.23 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate. I thoroughly enjoyed the debate.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 77, as read, agreed to.

Clause 78—



**Mr BLEIJIE** (5.25 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 Clause 78 (Procedure for an appeal to the court)

Page 54, lines 24 and 25—

*omit, insert—*

- (3) The notice of appeal must be filed—
  - (a) if the chief executive gave a review notice of the review decision to the applicant within the 30 business days mentioned in section 76(1)—within 28 days after the review notice day; or
  - (b) otherwise—within 28 days after the end of the 30 business days mentioned in section 76(1).

I table the explanatory notes for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013, explanatory notes to Hon. Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [\[4613\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 78, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 79 to 189, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (5.26 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) (5.26 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (5.27 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 18 March 2014.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (5.27 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Gaven Electorate, Bus Services

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (5.27 pm): Yesterday I tabled a petition signed by almost 300 people in Nerang who are upset about the cutbacks in public bus services to five days a week, and just to midafternoon in some areas—a service that is nothing more than second rate—with nothing on the weekends. Clearly the residents are angry and want the former bus services—in particular routes 21, 20 and 20A—reinstated with weekend services and services into the evening so they can get themselves and their children home after work and school. The government says that it cannot do anything more in Nerang because of Labor's debt. What fiction this is and it is just another example of the LNP looking after Brisbane first and the regions last. Spending priorities are focused on roads and what money is available for public transport is spread inside the Brisbane City Council area first and foremost, leaving crumbs for those just immediately outside and nothing for the rest. Surfside's total operating cost is between \$70 million and \$80 million per annum, and that is before taking into account fare box recovery. Even at the system average of around 25 per cent to 27 per cent, that means \$50 million to \$60 million. In the context of the total TransLink budget of over \$1.4 billion and the even greater spend on the Transport portfolio generally, it is a colossal lie to suggest that there is no money. There is not any will to spend money correctly and where it is required.

As we look to International Women's Day, I pay tribute to Carol Randall of Nerang, who I have nominated to represent the Gaven electorate for the Queensland Inspiring Women—Speaker's Award. Carol is the epitome of the old adage, 'If you want something done, ask a busy person.' She is an unassuming person and her work is all done with common-sense and grace and a wonderful sense of generosity. Carol is an experienced senior teacher and gives her time generously in leadership roles to many organisations. Her community work follows on the wonderful work done by her parents, the late Peter Panitz, a former Albert shire councillor—who served with the Leader of the House, who is present in the House, in his former role—and his wife, Anne Panitz, who is still actively involved in our community.

Last week, I hosted a fundraising morning tea at Nerang to create community awareness about ovarian cancer as February was Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. I am wearing their ribbon on my lapel. Each year, around 1,400 Australian women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer, with the disease having the lowest survival rate of any women's cancer and with little improvement in survival rates over the past 20 years. The guest speaker was Carolyn Thomas of the Gold Coast, who spoke about her experience with the disease and the support organisation, the Gold Coast Sunshine Sisters, which she helped to form.

Lastly, the cost of parking at the Gold Coast University Hospital is continuing to distress many pensioners, those with disabilities and on low incomes. We need to do something about that.

### **International Women's Day; National Volunteer Week**



**Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.30 pm): I would like to encourage all members of the House to join in the celebrations for International Women's Day on 8 March 2014. This year, the Queensland theme for International Women's Day is 'opportunity is knocking'. This iconic day highlights and recognises the achievements of women and their contributions to our communities. I would certainly like to say that my wife and two daughters make great contributions to their community in many ways, as I am sure do everybody's daughters, mums and wives.

As part of the celebration of International Women's Day, nominations were called from each electorate for the Queensland Inspiring Women—Speaker's Award. This award publicly recognises and honours women who give of themselves in service to their community and to others. The theme of this year's event is 'Women of generosity'. I had the great honour in nominating Mrs Lorraine Lovell from Newtown to represent the electorate of Toowoomba North. Let me tell members that Lorraine is a truly inspirational woman. Lorraine has recently retired after 30 years of volunteering at Lifeline Darling Downs and south-west Queensland. Lorraine started out as a rag cutter, progressed to clothing sorter and then became a shop manager. Her qualities are many, but she is dearly loved by her fellow staff members, other volunteers and customers.

While speaking about volunteers, I ask members to think about the contribution that they make to our communities. Every year across Queensland up to 1.2 million volunteers make a difference and enrich the lives of thousands of people they meet and help. This year, National Volunteer Week will be from 12 May to 18 May. It is the largest celebration of volunteers in Australia and it is a great opportunity for everybody to say thank you to volunteers. Volunteers add billions to our economy each year and contribute to strengthening the resilience of our communities. But even more importantly, they make Queensland a better place to live.

The Toowoomba North electorate is fortunate to have many volunteers who are secretly working quietly behind the scenes in many areas making our society healthier and better. Recently, the LNP state council meeting was held at the Empire Theatre in Toowoomba, which is a beautiful old theatre. The theatre was heavily manned by the Friends of the Empire, which is group of up to 250 volunteers who contribute to the catering, ushering and floral arrangements at the theatre, generally making it a great place to visit. Some of these volunteers—but there are many—were Mary Dunn, Irene Russell, Leonie Cusack and Margaret McKenzie. They all worked tirelessly across the weekend to ensure the conference went well. They do that on many weekends and many evenings.

**Mr Shorten:** They did a great job.

**Mr WATTS:** They did a great job. I thank the member for the interjection. I say well done to all of those ladies who volunteered and certainly well done to everybody who volunteers in my electorate.

### **International Women's Day; Neighbour Day**



**Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (5.33 pm): It is my pleasure to talk about some of the things that are happening in the electorate of Everton. Like the member for Toowoomba North, I would like to acknowledge International Women's Day, which occurs this Saturday. I am looking forward to the breakfast tomorrow that the Speaker is putting on to celebrate this great occasion.

Like the member for Toowoomba North, I have gone through a process to see who would be the inspiring woman in my electorate who we would nominate. I am pleased to announce today that the inspiring woman for the electorate of Everton is Ms Sue Wallace, who is the school principal at Everton Park State High School. Members might remember that last year Everton Park State High

Sue was one of those schools about which there was a discussion about the potential closure. So there was a fair bit of angst and instability throughout the year as we went through that process of trying to ensure that Everton Park State High School's future was assured. I am very happy to say today, as we here all know, that that was achieved. That was in no short measure due to the efforts of Sue Wallace and the team that she put together.

Sue was really instrumental in making sure that there was a calmness, if you like, to the process. She made sure that the students were settled and she provided outstanding leadership skills. She enabled the wider school community to be engaged in the process. Sue was also instrumental in putting together the P&C submission. As I said, in the end there was a fantastic result with the school remaining open. So Sue will be joining us tomorrow with many other women with the Speaker. I appreciate very much the Speaker putting on an event such as this. I will be looking forward to celebrating International Women's Day tomorrow with Sue Wallace from my electorate.

I would also like to make mention of an event coming up in my electorate very shortly. Through the Queensland Plan process, we looked at that question of how we change society's focus from me to we. One of the ideas that our working group came up with was developing neighbourhood hubs—groups that would look after each other, would volunteer, would act as mentors in a neighbourhood type of arrangement. I am not sure if the members are aware that 30 March is national Neighbour Day. To commemorate that day we are running an event at Fenwick Park. That park is actually located in the electorate of the Premier—it is on the border but I am sure he will not mind. On that day we will invite families down to the park to have an old-fashioned picnic day with egg races and sack races. There will be free food and fun. We will try to build up some community spirit and hopefully that will flow on to these neighbourhood hubs into the future.

### **Algester Electorate, Neighbourhood Watch**



**Mr SHORTEN** (Algester—LNP) (5.36 pm): I would like to talk about the Neighbourhood Watches in my wonderful electorate of Algester. I think all members would agree with me when I say that Neighbourhood Watches are important within their own communities. What is the aim of Neighbourhood Watch? It is important to remind ourselves of the core aim, which is to encourage communities to join together in informal groups for the purpose of improving the safety of families and those who live, visit or do business in that local area. It is about creating a mechanism for communities to meet and interact and, in so doing, create an environment to encourage neighbours and communities to share in preventing and reducing crime. What higher goal could there be?

I am very supportive of the existing Neighbourhood Watches in the wonderful electorate of Algester and I am always—always—encouraging residents to band together to form new watches as I know Neighbourhood Watch works. I am very fortunate to have four active Neighbourhood Watches within the Algester electorate: three were existing on my election and I have been able to form one other since my election. The Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch is probably the oldest and will be celebrating, I think at the very least, 21 years of operation this year. The meetings are still well attended and that Neighbourhood Watch is very effective in that people watch out for each other within that community.

The Lakewood Estate Neighbourhood Watch is another very active and successful Neighbourhood Watch. I commend the coordinator, Rod Rush, for his involvement in that Neighbour Watch. The Heathwood Neighbourhood Watch has recently been re-formed after a small period of hibernation at the end of last year. I am very happy to see this community-driven group re-formed with a new executive. I look forward to supporting the new committee, as I have over the past two years.

I am extremely proud of the Hillcrest Neighbourhood Watch as it is the one that has been formed since my election. It is the newest Neighbour Watch in my electorate and I am very happy to see that it has been formed by dedicated residents. Since its formation we have seen a reduction in crime in the area that it covers.

Neighbourhood Watches work. Local Neighbourhood Watches deal with more than just crime and security issues. They have moved towards dealing with local community issues, particularly local government issues such as advocating for improvements to local parks and raising issues such as where footpaths would be best situated to improve connectivity through the suburbs. They have become, in a sense, a community association and that is a good thing. Many of my Neighbourhood Watches run events throughout the year, events that bring their communities together. Doing this makes those communities stronger. I cannot speak more highly of my Neighbourhood Watches and I stand ready to help and support them in any way I can.

### International Women's Day



**Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (5.39 pm): Saturday is International Women's Day. Today I attended the International Women's Day celebrations of the Women's Federation for World Peace. I have three more tomorrow and one on Saturday. Women all over the world come together to talk about their successes and their desire to help other women reach their dreams. About a year ago I met an outstanding young woman called Emma Jolly. With a big heart full of compassion, she volunteers for Hands of Compassion World Aid Inc which is a fully tax deductible but public benevolent organisation. Love, Hope, JUMP is their annual fundraising campaign where they partner with a charity project in a third-world community to help establish hope amidst desperation.

Even though I was abandoned by my father when I was nine and had quite a turbulent childhood, I was fortunate to be raised to believe I could do anything I set my mind to do. For the most part I have achieved much, even exceeding my life goals through enthusiasm, determination and a very strong work ethic. However, many women in the world dare not even dream. This project supports an organisation in Cape Town, South Africa, that is dedicated to getting people substance free, self-sustainable, skilled, educated and reconciled with families. Through personal development and awareness they mobilise their young leaders to create lasting change in their homes, schools and communities and to safeguard them from the scourge of drugs. Their new project will help women enslaved in the sex trade find a new life through a new can-change attitude.

I would like to announce that on 3 May I will be joining about 70 people jump from an aeroplane to raise the \$50,000 needed. To say I am scared is an understatement, but scared is what these women must feel every minute of their lives. For many their nightmare life begins as a child. Anyone who knows me understands that my passion is mentoring to encourage change, change that in particular helps women and children. This year to celebrate International Women's Day I am stepping way out of my comfort zone to help make real change in other women's lives. This home will be a place where woman who want to better their lives can come. The program will run in two-month intervals where women who were once prostituted or trafficked can be educated, loved, rehabilitated and supported to pursue their life's purpose. I hope you will help me help Hands of Compassion outreach to the outcast, downtrodden, broken and impoverished within their community. If you would like to know about this cause or are interested in sponsoring please go to their website: [www.lovehopejump.com](http://www.lovehopejump.com).

### Woodridge Electorate, Schools




**Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (5.42 pm): Every member in this House would testify to the diversity of programs and the great turnaround we are now seeing in our schools. They are very much a barometer of where we may see our communities into the future. There we see year 7 leaders stepping up to the mark and running many school parades and events, serving on their student council and developing their leadership skills. Every school develops their own culture and traditions and in our Woodridge schools we have seen some very innovative programs. In the past year, Berrinba East State School has introduced a young spaniel puppy into the school. In the library, where Reggie often joins the children, reading levels have markedly increased. Reggie has had a great influence in a very positive way. Should a young student have a meltdown or some emotional upset, Reggie can calm the situation in a matter of minutes. Principal Tony Maksoud has been a great innovator and I know will make a real difference in his new school in the Logan electorate.

It is now some years since Marsden State School introduced their innovative Horsing Around program where troubled students are taken out to stables where they learn to meet a horse, place a bridle around their neck and then lead them through a trail. As I stood by the principal, Kevin Leathwaite, watching a young girl who had been very troubled and quite difficult to deal with approach the horse quietly and calmly lead him through his paces I marvelled at just what a horse can do. Her behaviour has turned around and she is now on a stable path with her education. It is wonderful how animals can influence the behaviour of children.

Last week I attended the first honours awards at Woodridge State High School. Held twice each year, these awards are for effort and attendance and are designed to recognise the improvements being made by their diverse student body. Woodridge State High School now has in excess of 1,100 students with several hundred in their intensive learning support and ESL classes. With hundreds of former refugee students, this school is an inspiration. These students, from lands as diverse as Iraq, Burma, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and so many others, have a great thirst for learning. The teaching staff are remarkable and it is fantastic to see so many students at school who

may not have had any opportunity to attend school. Similarly, at Woodridge State School the program supports our former refugee students in a very real way with involvement with their families. It is a very rich and rewarding experience to see these families drink up their educational opportunities.

### Nudgee Electorate, Education


 **Mr WOODFORTH** (Nudgee—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise tonight to firstly speak about one of the many schools within my electorate, Northgate State School. Last week I had the pleasure of handing out the leader badges and on Tuesday this week meeting them here at Parliament House during their Parliament House tour. May I make special mention of their junior school captain, Mitchell Bell. Mitchell is a descendent of Sir Joshua Peter Bell, who, together with his son, Joshua Thomas Bell, were Queensland parliamentarians. Sir Joshua Peter Bell held several ministerial positions, including the role of Treasurer, in the 1860s. Madam Speaker kindly invited Mitchell and his father Peter to the Speaker's office for a personal meet and greet. I thank Madam Speaker very much for that. Mitchell and Peter cannot thank you enough. It meant a lot to them. To Mitchell, Marcus, Ezequiel, Jet, Bella, Tahnee, Mieke, Cameron, Ja-Rule, Fern, Bonnie, Samantha, Amy, Ethan, Mia, Lily, Dashmeet, Thomas O'Toole, Nic, Lila, Hoja, Venujuan, An, Thomas Tatchell and Liam, I look forward to catching up with you all again very soon at your great school where you make me feel so welcomed.

On to my health report, it was great to see the first of my Additive Alert Seminars being held in two of my day cares and kindys last week. A big thanks to Louise D'allura who is the queen of these talks. The parents and staff really appreciate the education of this missing information that truly makes a difference to their child's life. It is timely that I run these seminars as on the news this morning it was noted that the number of kids on drugs such as Ritalin for ADHD has risen from 10,000 in 2005 to over 54,000 in 2012. A doctor came on and said there is no such thing as ADHD and children are being misdiagnosed. I like his thinking. It is Louise's Additive Alert nights that show how this could be the case. Louise goes through a host of preservatives, additives and chemicals that affect our children's behaviour, thinking, learning capabilities and actions. Take the offending additive, preservative or chemical out and you have a different child. No drugs required. Just look at the natural additive 160b. This additive causes head banging and oppositional defiance in some children. If you do not check the diet but simply treat the symptom the child ends up on drugs. Additive 160b is just one example. I give you this testimonial—

The pharmacist refused to fill my son's script for Ritalin. He said for oppositional defiance you need to read *Fed Up* and look at food. It changed our lives.

I look forward to the next 13 Additive Alert nights where we alert parents to making the most simple of changes to benefit the children they love. For mine it is all about education, education, education about the missing information.

### Fly-In Fly-Out


 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (5.48 pm): I bring to the attention of the House a very serious issue in relation to the impact that 100 per cent fly-in fly-out is having on mining communities, particularly Moranbah in my electorate. On Tuesday, the Minister for Natural Resources bragged about the jobs that they were creating in the Bowen Basin, how they are working with mining companies, how many jobs the Newman government has created and the investment that is going into the mining communities. However, the Newman government has backed the Caval Ridge BMA-led mine for 100 per cent fly-in fly-out. It promised the constituency—the people of those mining communities—that it would not support 100 per cent fly-in fly-out. It said that it believed in supporting the social and economic fabric of those communities; that it wanted to ensure that families are able to bring their children up in the communities, that mums and dads can watch their children play sports and, at the same time, work in the mines in the area and go home that night. That is what they had committed to.

I say that the Newman government has misled the people. After it came to power, it supported 100 per cent fly-in fly-out at Caval Ridge. The Red Hill mining operation run by the Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance is now also pushing to have a 3,000-bed accommodation unit built and 100 per cent fly-in fly-out. That is devastating news for the local community.

There are skilled young people living in Moranbah who have to go to live in Brisbane to get a job in Moranbah. Right now, people are leaving Moranbah and moving to Brisbane so that they can get a job in Moranbah. Husbands are living in camps while their wives live at home in Moranbah. The men cannot stay with their wives, because they have to live in the camps. How stupid is that? There

are 350 homes vacant in Moranbah. How stupid is it to have a camp to accommodate 3,000 people when the husbands want to live with their wives? It has been proven that no-one is stimulated by staying in a camp for 10 days straight. They have the opportunity to live with their wives, but they have to fly back to Brisbane after the 10 days. The government must override the decision to back the Red Hill Mine proposal for a 3,000-bed camp and 100 per cent fly-in fly-out.

### Chloe's Dream Appeal


 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (5.51 pm): I rise to speak of something truly beautiful that has occurred on the back of truly tragic circumstances. Some months ago, I was approached by one of the mums from Bethania Lutheran School, which my daughter attends. She asked me to help a friend who was facing very tragic circumstances. Her friend's daughter, young Chloe Sells, had been diagnosed with a particularly aggressive form of cancer, that is, an ALK positive anaplastic large-cell lymphoma that had spread to her neck, shoulders, chest, spleen, brain and spinal cord. The event that was being organised and that I was being asked to jump on board and assist with was Chloe's Dream Appeal.

I can tell the House that young Chloe Sells is a true inspiration. Some weeks ago, the Chloe's Dream Appeal fundraising event occurred at the Beenleigh PCYC. There is nothing more beautiful than a community coming together for such a selfless cause. Indeed, on that occasion it did come together. This did not just happen. Today, I take this time to acknowledge a few key people in that space.

Louise Corran and her friend Sarah Watkins were at the forefront of organising the event. I should say that there were very many people involved. To all of the volunteers I express gratitude, but I am not going to be able to mention all of them today. However, I will mention Sergeant Mark Haestier from the Beenleigh PCYC, who made the facility available for our use that day, which was a huge and wonderful contribution to the event. I acknowledge and thank my colleague at a local government level, Councillor Jennie Breene, who assisted me in acting as MC for the event. At the event I had the pleasure of meeting for the first time the youth group, the Overflow Justice and Mission. I acknowledge JD Morrison, Kirsten Roberts, and the many others who went above and beyond to help promote the event. They took a part in managing the sound, entertainment and so on. To all of those people and the many more who were there, I give a big heartfelt shout out and thank you for acting so very selflessly on the day.

To young Chloe Sells and her family—her mum Tracy, dad Cory, step mum Anne, step sister and two younger brothers—it was a real pleasure for me to meet you, to be a part of that day and to assist you through this very difficult time in your lives. I wish you all the very best for the future.

### Pringle, Mrs EM

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.54 pm): My beautiful mother, Edith May Pringle, passed away on 11 December 2013. She was a loving wife to my dad, George, for 64 years. She was a loving, caring and dedicated mum to my brother, David, and to myself and my sister, Karen. She always said that education was the key to getting out of poverty. It was an opportunity that she never had, because she was sent to work at 12 and a half years of age when her father died.

My mother was a tailoress and she loved sewing. She particularly loved sewing jackets, pants, lingerie and nighties. Certainly she loved crocheting. She used to crochet squares and rugs. She also knitted. She was very giving in our community. Often she was at fundraisers for the Blue Nurses and the Wolston Park fetes years ago and, certainly, for all the churches in our community. When we went on holidays as a family, basically everyone went. Anyone could come to Burleigh Heads.

My dad was her carer for many years before she passed away and before they moved into Riverview Gardens Salvation nursing home. As I said, mum and dad were married for 64 years and it was an absolute love story right till the very end.

My mother was a member of the Labor Party. She certainly loved the coalminers' union. She loved Gough Whitlam, Paul Keating and Peter Beattie. She always said to look after the worker, to look after the poor and the sick, and to always do what is right and have a tonne of guts.

She was very strong and forthright and she told it in a way that always was true to her and our family. She was the family matriarch in a coalmining-family sense. In other words, dad was always down the mine, 'down the pit' as we would say, and she was in charge. If it was not right in any way, shape or form, she would say, 'Change it'.

My mother hated the Vietnam War. She absolutely hated it. She never liked Tories. She loved Gough. I remember when I was growing up and as a teenager, she would iron with parliament on the radio. She always had *Hansard* on the kitchen table. She loved art. She always said that Gough did the right thing by buying *Blue Poles* and she installed in us a love of the arts.

My mum had only two grandkids, my daughters Stephanie and Brianna. She absolutely adored them. In fact, every Friday was Mumma and Grandad's day. She was on the phone to them daily.

Even though my mum had limited education, she was a ferocious reader. She would read daily the *Queensland Times*, the *Courier-Mail*, the *Australian*, the *Telegraph* and the *Daily Sun*. Weekly she would read the *Nation Review*, the *National Times* and the *Bulletin*, the *Women's Weekly*, the *New Idea*, craft and cooking books and magazines galore.

We will miss her, but she lives on in us. She loved fashion, tailored suits and colourful dresses. She was a perfectionist at ironing with lemon Fabulon—I can still smell it, even here today. She loved girly frills and flounces. She had beautiful curtains. She cooked jelly tarts and she roasted rabbits. She had fridges full of fruit and vegetables.

Mum lives on in her family, in our eye colour, in our sayings, in our blood groups and also in our values, our care, our duty and commitment to our community, our love of Labor, the trade unions and our church, and our love of humanity generally. So mum is in me and I am in her. Wherever I go and whatever I do, I know that she is my personal family light on the hill. Mum, up there in heaven, shine on, shine on.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.58 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, D'Ath, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, 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, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszcuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young