



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 3 June 2014

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TUESDAY, 3 JUNE 2014



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

For the sitting week, Madam Speaker acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land upon which this parliament is assembled.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable F. Simpson MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 28 May 2014

"A Bill for an Act to provide for a Public Guardian to promote and protect the rights and interests of adults with impaired capacity for a matter, relevant children and children staying at visitable sites, and to amend this Act, the Child Protection Act 1999, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Disability Services (Restrictive Practices) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Forensic Disability Act 2011, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, the Integrity Act 2009, the Mental Health Act 2000, the Ombudsman Act 2001, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Service Act 2008, the Public Trustee Act 1978, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002, the Right to Information Act 2009 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to establish the Queensland Family and Child Commission and for related purposes, to amend the Public Service Act 2008 and to make consequential amendments to this Act and other legislation stated in schedule 1"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Child Protection Act 1999, the Childrens Court Act 1992, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, the Magistrates Act 1991, the Ombudsman Act 2001 and the Public Health Act 2005 for particular purposes and to make consequential amendments to the Acts mentioned in schedule 1"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 and the Water Act 2000 for particular purposes and to amend particular subordinate legislation under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Water Act 2000 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Electricity Act 1994, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991, the Casino Control Act 1982, the Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Act 1999, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Industrial Relations Act 1999, the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, the Keno Act 1996, the Lotteries Act 1997, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Reprints Act 1992 and the Wagering Act 1998 for particular purposes, and to provide for an Act to repeal the Travel Agents Act 1988 and to make consequential and minor amendments to the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for related purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to provide for environmental offsets to counterbalance significant residual impacts of particular activities on particular matters of national, State or local environmental significance and to establish a framework in relation to environmental offsets, and to amend the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary Act 1976, the Duties Act 2001, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Marine Parks Act 2004, the National Trust of Queensland Act 1963, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Queensland Heritage Act 1992, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Vegetation Management Act 1999 for particular purposes and to make minor and consequential amendments of the Act mentioned in schedule 1"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Electoral Act 1992 for particular purposes"

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

28 May 2014

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 May 2014, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to Bills on 28 May 2014 [\[5213\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Ethics Committee, Suspension of Inquiry



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Chair of the Ethics Committee wrote to me on 22 May 2014 in relation to an inquiry into the matter of privilege referred on 23 April 2014 about an alleged attempt to improperly influence the conduct of a member. Following correspondence with the Queensland Police Service, the chair advised me that the Ethics Committee has resolved to suspend this inquiry until the Queensland Police Service advises of the outcome of its related investigation. This suspension is to avoid any suggestion of double jeopardy adversely affecting a just outcome concerning the matter. Despite the suspension, standing order 271 remains in force and the matter must not be debated in the House until such time as the Ethics Committee has reported on the matter.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petitions, lodged and sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Irrigation Tariffs, Reduction

Mr Bennett, from 1,247 petitioners, requesting the House to implement an immediate 33% reduction to principal irrigation tariffs T62, T65 and T66 [\[5214\]](#) [\[5215\]](#).

Broadbeach, Bus Service

Ms Barton, two paper and an e-petition, from 163 petitioners, requesting the House to increase the service of bus route 711 by extending the route to Broadbeach through Surfers Paradise from Southport [\[5216\]](#) [\[5217\]](#) [\[5218\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, sponsored and lodged by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Orders 119(3) and (4)—

Cronulla Park, Greyhound Racing Track

From 4,265 petitioners, requesting the House to oppose the construction of the Greyhound Racing Track at Cronulla Park on social, economic and animal welfare grounds in favour of a more inclusive, multi-use facility for the community [\[5219\]](#) [\[5220\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

23 May 2014—

[5196](#) Q-Comp Final Report for the period 1 June to 29 October 2013

[5197](#) Letter, dated 13 May 2014, from the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties to the Speaker, regarding treaties tabled on 13 May 2014

[5198](#) Letter, dated 14 May 2014, from the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties to the Speaker, regarding a report tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament on 13 May 2014 regarding treaties tabled 11 December 2013

[5199](#) Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia—Joint Standing Committee on Treaties—Report No. 139: Treaties tabled on 11 December 2013; referred on 15 January and tabled on 11 February 2014

[5200](#) Letter, dated 23 May 2014 from the Speaker, Hon. Fiona Simpson, to the Clerk of the Parliament advising of the resignation of the Member for Stafford

[5201](#) Letter, dated 22 May 2014 from the Member for Stafford, Dr Chris Davis to the Speaker, Hon. Fiona Simpson regarding his resignation from Parliament

[5202](#) Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 30—Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 November 2013 and 11 February 2014, government response

26 May 2014—

[5203](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 66—Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

[5204](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 50—Forestry and Another Act Amendment Bill 2014

[5205](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 50—Forestry and Another Act Amendment Bill 2014—submissions received in relation to the inquiry

28 May 2014—

[5206](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 39—Inquiry into Cycling Issues: A New Direction for Cycling in Queensland—Final Government Response

29 May 2014—

[5207](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 41—Sustainable Planning (Infrastructure Charges) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

[5208](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 41—Sustainable Planning (Infrastructure Charges) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014—submissions received in relation to the inquiry

30 May 2014—

[5209](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on an overseas visit by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Seeney) and the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Hon. Cripps) to Chile and Brazil, 19 April—1 May 2014

[5210](#) Mental Health Court—Annual Report 2012-13

[5211](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney) to an ePetition (2231-14) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 1,317 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure mining companies provide equal options for all workers, employing a mix of workers from the community, fly-in fly-out and drive-in drive-out and to ensure all workers are allowed to live where they choose

[5212](#) Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 34—Review of Auditor-General's Report 2: 2013-14 Supply of specialist subject teachers in secondary schools

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[5221](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2014, No. 66

[5222](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2014, No. 66, explanatory notes

Criminal Code and Another Act (Stock) Amendment Act 2014—

[5223](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 67

[5224](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 67, explanatory notes

Industrial Relations Act 1999—

[5225](#) Industrial Relations Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2014, No. 68

[5226](#) Industrial Relations Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2014, No. 68, explanatory notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

[5227](#) Fisheries Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 69

[5228](#) Fisheries Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 69, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[5229](#) Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 70

[5230](#) Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 70, explanatory notes

Professional Standards Act 2004—

[5231](#) Professional Standards (Law Society of Western Australia Scheme) Notice 2014, No. 71

[5232](#) Professional Standards (Law Society of Western Australia Scheme) Notice 2014, No. 71, explanatory notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

[5234](#) Fisheries (Spanner Crab Fishery) Quota Declaration 2014, No. 72

[5235](#) Fisheries (Spanner Crab Fishery) Quota Declaration 2014, No. 72, explanatory notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

[5236](#) Fisheries (Coral Reef Fin Fish) Quota Declaration 2014, No. 73

[5237](#) Fisheries (Coral Reef Fin Fish) Quota Declaration 2014, No. 73, explanatory notes

Economic Development Act 2012—

[5238](#) Economic Development Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2014, No. 74

[5239](#) Economic Development Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2014, No. 74, explanatory notes

Transport Infrastructure Act 1994—

[5240](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 75

[5241](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 75, explanatory notes

Weapons Act 1990—

[5242](#) Weapons Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 76

[5243](#) Weapons Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 76, explanatory notes

Building Act 1975, Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990—

[5244](#) Fire and Rescue Service and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 77

[5245](#) Fire and Rescue Service and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 77, explanatory notes

Acquisition of Land Act 1967, Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Explosives Act 1999, Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988, Fossicking Act 1994, Geothermal Energy Act 2010, Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, Land Act 1994, Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, Land Title Act 1994, Land Valuation Act 2010, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011, Surveyors Act 2003, Valuers Registration Act 1992, Vegetation Management Act 1999, Water Act 2000—

[5246](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 78

[5247](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, No. 78, explanatory notes

Water Supply Services Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

[5248](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 79

[5249](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 79, explanatory notes

Work Health and Safety Act 2011—

[5250](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2014, No. 80

[5251](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2014, No. 80, explanatory notes

EXEMPT STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instrument was tabled by the Clerk—

[5233](#) Professional Standards Act 1997 (WA): The Law Society of Western Australia Scheme (refer to Professional Standards (Law Society of Western Australia Scheme) Notice 2014: Subordinate Legislation No. 71 of 2014)

REPORT TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following Report was tabled by the Clerk—

[5252](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any Bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by Her Excellency the Governor, viz—

Electoral Reform Amendment Bill 2013

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

Electoral Reform Amendment Act 2013

Insert—

Electoral Reform Amendment Act 2014

Environmental Offsets Bill 2014

Amendment made to Bill*

Schedule 2 (Dictionary)—

Page 100, line 6, 'sections 19 and 20..'—

Omit, insert—

sections 19 and 20.

Page 100, line 16, '35(2)'—

Omit, insert—

section 35(2)

* The page and line number references relate to the Bill, after amendments made in consideration in detail unless stated otherwise.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Assistant Ministry

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.33 am): As I foreshadowed during the last sitting week, I now lay upon the table of the House the *Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette* of 28 May 2014 which outlines recent changes to the assistant ministry.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government Extraordinary Gazette No. 24 dated 28 May 2014 regarding appointment of Assistant Ministers [5253].

I congratulate the member for Pine Rivers on his appointment as assistant minister. I know that he will do a great job for Queensland. I also congratulate the members for Nanango and Pumicestone on their new appointments. Both members have performed strongly in their previous assistant minister roles, and I know they will continue to do likewise.

Community Cabinet, Cooktown

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.34 am): I am happy to inform the House of another successful community cabinet which was held in Cooktown on 25 and 26 May 2014. This was our 14th community cabinet and 119 groups took the opportunity to meet with the ministry and senior government officials to discuss a broad range of issues. Some of these issues have been extremely challenging for the local community, both emotionally and financially, due to the damage inflicted on the area by Cyclone Ita back in April. The community cabinet was a timely opportunity to see firsthand the impact on the local community and the recovery process.

During community cabinet it was also my pleasure to announce the reopening of a birthing service at Cooktown Hospital. After nearly 11 years of the doors being locked, bolted shut, under the Australian Labor Party's regime for routine births, this important local service will reopen and remain open under an LNP government that has a strong plan for a brighter future for this state. Thanks to \$3.8 million in funding from this government, mothers-to-be in Cooktown will have the choice to deliver their babies locally for the first time in more than a decade. The funding, included in this week's state budget, will see the Cooktown Cluster Midwifery Group Practice and birthing service operate from early next year.

The reintroduction of the birthing service will mean that up to 60 women a year will no longer have to travel elsewhere at 36 weeks to have their babies. I spoke to one of the young mums and she was just so appreciative of this initiative. She explained firsthand to me how traumatic it was, having other younger children already, to have to go to Mareeba or Cairns and leave her children, leave her family, while she waited to give birth. That is what the Labor Party did. That is what they inflicted on the mums of Cooktown, and we say no more to that with the reintroduction of this service.

Cooktown is the second country hospital to have birthing services returned by this government. We also returned those services to Beaudesert. I say today I look forward, with the minister, to announcing the reopening of more birthing services in country towns throughout Queensland.

Madam Speaker, as you will be well aware, last week I also announced that our 15th community cabinet will be held on the Sunshine Coast in your electorate of Maroochydore on 22 and 23 June. The Sunshine Coast is both a beautiful and iconic part of Queensland and we are keen to hear how we can continue to move the region forward through industries like tourism and construction, as we promised at the election. I encourage the people of the Sunshine Coast to take this opportunity to arrange a meeting with ministers and officials so that they can discuss with us any issues they feel are important to their region.

Budget

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.37 am): Today this Treasurer hands down this government's third budget. I wish to publicly congratulate the Treasurer and his hardworking team on the work that they have been doing over the past year, but especially over the past few months, to deliver a strong budget for our state. This budget continues to deliver on our strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland, cleaning up Labor's financial mess.

I do not want to give too much away, but I know that the 2014-15 budget will balance increased spending on education, health and community services, while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. It will outline as well the strong choices we are making so that a brighter future can be ours.

We need to reduce the state's \$80 billion Labor debt and the \$4 billion annual Labor interest bill. We need to reduce debt so we can sustainably invest in schools, school teachers and teacher aides; so we can invest in our hospitals, doctors and nurses, returning birthing services to regional hospitals so that mums and dads can have their children in their local communities and they know that if their child is ill they will be seen faster by a doctor in our emergency departments.

We want to invest more in the transport systems and the roads of the future, because we know that hardworking parents want to get home safely and in a timely fashion to their families. The bottom line is better roads and better public transport means that people can spend more time with their loved ones.

We are making significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising frontline services and getting infrastructure projects and jobs going. With more than 60,000 jobs created in Queensland in the last year, we have a strong plan to keep building on these results. But we can only do this if we have a sound—indeed, solid—financial footing. In the budget that will be delivered by the Treasurer this afternoon, he will outline the disciplined decisions to make a brighter future a reality and ease the pressure on families.

The alternative is the inexperience and chaos of Labor and, indeed, the minor parties. Labor have not learnt from their past mistakes. Those opposite very clearly have no plan for Queensland's finances or how we would grow the economy to create jobs. They will always revert to form: imposing red tape, more bureaucracy, incurring debt with ongoing deficits, higher taxes and waste. That is the Labor way. That puts Queensland's future in jeopardy. A brighter future is ours for the taking but only under a strong and disciplined LNP government with a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland.

Coordinator-General

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.40 am): When this government was elected, just over two years ago, economic growth in Queensland had stalled. Under Labor, government processes were frustrating investment, both large and small. Red tape, green tape and bureaucratic processes had strangled economic growth in this state. Now in opposition the same people talk about economic growth as the saviour of the state. They killed it when they were in government.

We promised to build the economy of Queensland. We promised to drive economic growth, to provide jobs and business opportunities for all Queenslanders. An important part of achieving that was to refocus the role of Queensland's Coordinator-General. We restored and repowered the office of the Coordinator-General towards recognising and assessing in a timely fashion projects that present real growth opportunities for Queensland. We very deliberately created the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning as the department that was to drive economic growth and build the economy of this state.

In just under 26 months the Coordinator-General has made 300 statutory decisions regarding future economic growth projects in Queensland. This rate is no mean feat and reflects what this government is about in delivering its promise to grow the Queensland economy and bring to fruition the projects that future generations of Queenslanders will need for jobs and prosperity. The Coordinator-General's statutory decision rate is 2½ times greater than under the Labor government. The independent Coordinator-General under our government is 2½ times faster at making things happen than the Coordinator-General was under Labor. This translates to a total EIS assessment time of less than two years from start to finish. Under the Labor government, EIS assessments took more than four years. Some of them took seven years.

What does this mean for the Queensland economy and Queenslanders? It means 12 projects worth almost \$60 billion have been approved which have the potential to create more than 37,000 jobs for Queenslanders. These have included mega-Galilee Basin projects like the recent approval of Adani's Carmichael project. This renewed focus by the Queensland government and the Coordinator-General is all about creating jobs and economic opportunities for tens of thousands of Queenslanders now and in the future. It is about creating new, well-paid jobs in the resources and construction industry for people right across Queensland. These megaprojects also provide more opportunities for local businesses that, in turn, will be able to employ more Queenslanders.

The Coordinator-General now also closely monitors the actual delivery of the projects by overseeing progress with subsequent approvals and time lines across 11 projects that have prescribed project status. This is a major new area of focus for the Coordinator-General to ensure that

his powers can be used to make the projects happen, not just approve them. The government is doing everything it can to ensure these projects are delivered to provide the jobs for Queenslanders and the opportunities for Queensland businesses. Three hundred statutory decisions by the Coordinator-General in just under 26 months is hard evidence that this government has delivered genuine reforms that will drive genuine economic development and deliver a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland and jobs and businesses for generations of Queenslanders to come.

Budget

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.44 am): I am looking forward to the budget being delivered this afternoon, because Queenslanders know they can trust this government to deliver on front-line services in education. But I would not want to pre-empt the Treasurer, so instead I think it is a good time ahead of the budget being announced to remind the House just what we have delivered for mums, dads and students in education in the two years since we came to government.

In doing this, we need to go back to 2012 and consider what we inherited from Labor. It is a very worthy study in contrast. Let us start with school maintenance. Across Queensland, schools were in a state of disrepair. How bad was it? Labor left a \$300 million backlog, with schools across Queensland unable to make basic repairs. That is how bad it was. The Newman government came in and has now cleared this backlog. It is something I am proud of and something I have been willing to make some tough decisions about to ensure it happened because our first priority for students is to make sure that their school is a safe and pleasant place to be.

What about improving student outcomes? 'Put it in the too-hard basket,' said Labor. We, on the other hand, declined to use their excuses and instead came up with some new ideas. These included the Great Results Guarantee. We have given all state schools a share of \$131 million with the message that they must use it to achieve the national minimum standard for literacy and numeracy or have a clear plan in place to get students there. This means that mums and dads can see for themselves what their child's school is doing to ensure they are getting the important things right.

Funding is important but so is trust and empowerment, and that is what schools have received from this government in spades. What did Labor think about trusting our parents, teachers and school leaders to make decisions about how money in their schools should be spent? They did not like it. Command and control was where it was at and where it would be under Labor. Whereas they have had no interest in rewarding excellence in teaching, we have committed \$537 million to our Great Teachers = Great Results action plan, which is centred around recognising and rewarding high-performing teachers and school leaders and making sure we place great teachers in schools where they are needed most.

Let us not forget vocational education and training. Those on the other side of the House left industry crying out for skilled workers and TAFE withering on the vine. With Great skills. Real opportunities, our five-year action plan to revitalise the Queensland vocational education and training sector, we are unashamedly focusing on investing in training that will lead to jobs. After a first-class education, a job is the best thing we can give our young people. We want to continue this good work, and with the Education Accord we are working with our partners in education to build a shared vision for education over the next 30 years.

While we have had ringing endorsements from around the state for this historic endeavour, once again the silence of those opposite stands in stark contrast to the government's leadership. I hope when the budget is delivered this afternoon we can end this study in contrast. However Labor decides to act, I know that the people of Queensland can see that this government has the runs on the board when it comes to delivering on front-line services in education.

Budget

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (9.47 am): Today's budget will outline a strong plan for a brighter future. It will outline a strong plan that strikes the right balance between increased spending on vital areas like child protection and disability services without introducing new taxes or reducing services. We have been able to do this because of the tough decisions that have been taken over the last two years.

From Labor we inherited a child protection system that was overburdened and unsustainable. We inherited a disability sector where clients were given limited choice and control and we inherited a community service sector that was smothered in red tape. The biggest losers from the incompetence

of those opposite were the people of Queensland. Before this government was elected, we made five key pledges that would help us fix the mess we inherited from Labor. One of those pledges was revitalising front-line services for families, and this budget contains a fully funded plan to help Queensland's most vulnerable families.

Within 100 days of coming into office, this government established the landmark Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry led by the Hon. Tim Carmody QC. The report from this inquiry confirmed that the child protection system was overburdened and unsustainable. The commission made 121 recommendations. This government accepted all of them including six in principle.

Commissioner Carmody suggested a 10-year road map of reform including a significant investment in the first five years. To do just that, we have been working hard with the sector to bring the government response to life. The result, as was announced on Sunday, was an additional \$406 million over five years to build a child protection system that helps Queensland families before they reach crisis point, to build a system that keeps families together through effective prevention and early intervention. This strong plan includes new community based intake referral services, with six commencing in the first 12 months; increasing secondary family support to help those families with complex needs; more support for young people as they transition from out-of-home care to independence; and funding to reform Indigenous family support services.

This is the largest ever commitment by a government in this state to provide support for Queensland's vulnerable families. This exciting and much needed reform is only possible because of the hard work that has been undertaken since coming into office. Strong choices have to be made if we are to continue to revitalise front-line services like the child protection system. Only one team has a strong plan to deliver a brighter future for Queenslanders, and that is the LNP team.

Justice Portfolio



Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.50 am): The LNP government has a strong plan to deliver on our election commitments: to grow a four-pillar economy, restore accountability in government, revitalise front-line services, reduce red tape and regulation by 20 per cent, and make Queensland the safest place to raise a family. We have a strong plan to deal with the mess left by those opposite and the \$80 billion debt left by the chaotic failed Labor team. Under Labor, Queenslanders were disillusioned and had no confidence in government to take a strong stand against crime within the community. Under the Labor government clearance rates were low leading to increased costs and delays, individual responsibility was downplayed and excuses were made for offenders through Labor's weak approach to crime, which in turn created a revolving door of crime and juvenile detention. Labor's youth detention centres became remand lounges rather than reform centres for convicted offenders, and young offenders were not being held accountable for their crimes. Under Labor's weak laws, almost half of all convicted sex offenders were avoiding any prison time. Labor ignored complaint after complaint from victims and their families but failed to act and, therefore, put Queenslanders at risk from dangerous sex offenders.

Through Labor's failures to address organised crime and gun crime in Queensland, the state became a haven for criminal gangs, and drug-trafficking crime in Queensland doubled under the Labor government. Under Labor there were duplication and inefficiencies in the provision of community legal services. In addition, the Queensland community legal services were underfunded and underresourced and faced months of ongoing uncertainty. With respect to businesses, Labor failed them time and time again, strangling business activity and destroying any incentives for job creation in its mountain of red tape and regulation, for example, Labor's useless sustainability declarations and unnecessarily complex red and green tape.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Do members remember the sustainability declarations? Labor's green and red tape made buying or selling a home harder than it needed to be. Labor's red tape, fees, levies and charges drained billions of dollars out of Queensland's business community which in turn increased the costs for consumers.

Under Labor, Queensland had no future. Contrast that to the LNP government: with a strong plan, Queenslanders have a bright future. Within Justice—one of many areas in which the government has made significant progress as part of this strong plan—we have cracked down on members of organised crime groups by introducing tough antigang laws. We introduced an offender levy to ensure that offenders contribute to the justice system in recognition of the cost of their crimes to the Queensland community. We have introduced mandatory life imprisonment for repeat sex

offenders with a minimum non-parole period of 20 years. We have passed new drug-trafficking laws. We have introduced youth boot camp trials and reformed the Youth Justice Act to specifically target repeat young offenders through naming and shaming laws, removing the principle of detention as a last resort, making juvenile criminal history admissible upon sentencing as an adult and transferring 17-year-olds to the adult prison.

We have introduced mandatory sentencing of one year imprisonment for a sex offender who removes the GPS monitoring bracelet. Early on we appointed a central coroner and a permanent coroner registrar and established the Queensland Courts Referral and the Indigenous Sentencing List bail based programs. We deployed an extra 27 mobile videoconferencing systems into Queensland courts, taking the number of videoconferencing systems from 153 to 180. Consistent with the government's commitment to revitalise front-line services and restore accountability in government, the government recently reformed the structure of the CCC to ensure that it remains Queensland's peak crime and corruption fighting body. The government has delivered an extra \$750,000 over three years to the Women's Legal Service, which was underfunded by the Labor government opposite. We reopened the Rural, Regional and Remote Women's Legal Advice line, gave an extra \$2 million over four years to support victims of crime groups and gave \$100 million to Queensland's community legal centres that we announced a few weeks ago. We are supporting businesses, the tourism industry and the construction industry as well as delivering savings through the reduction of red tape and regulation. We have reduced red tape and regulation for businesses by slashing directors' liabilities, removing 44 barriers for tourism businesses in the state and introducing four bills to split the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act. We are currently reviewing the property laws. We have amended the workers compensation laws to ensure we have a fair system for both employer and employee. We are delivering a strong plan and that has resulted in 60,000 jobs being created in Queensland.

Today represents a great opportunity to deliver a brighter future for Queensland families and business. Unlike those chaotic individuals opposite, who have no plan, this government has a strong plan to deliver justice, support businesses and families, grow the economy and ensure a brighter future for all Queenslanders. My wife and I have an 11-year-old daughter, an eight-year-old daughter and a four-year-old son. I know that under this government's strong plan for the future my children and all Queenslanders will have a far brighter future.

Antismoking Campaign

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.55 am): The Newman government has a strong plan to reduce the harm caused by smoking, and today's can-do budget will continue to deliver strong plans for preventive health as part of our drive for a healthier and brighter future. Through astute financial management, we have prevented a repeat of Labor's merry-go-round of health budget blowouts, a repeat of a billion dollars squandered on Labor's failed Health payroll debacle and any repeat of Health rorts epitomised by Labor's fake Tahitian prince. Through astute financial management, this can-do government is able to make proper and targeted investment in the health of Queenslanders. Two new antismoking campaigns are now in place and tough new laws will apply from January 2015.

Peer group pressure is the reason why people traditionally take up smoking. Now peer group pressure is a tool we can use to help people who wish to give up smoking. Everybody knows smoking is bad for your health. Half of all long-term smokers die prematurely because of their smoking habit, but still about 550,000 Queenslanders, and particularly adult Queenslanders, smoke each day. Every day about 10 Queenslanders die from smoking related cancers and illnesses. Of the 10 who die, on average one is a non-smoker whose cause of death will relate to inhaling other people's smoke. Each one of these deaths is preventable. So do not smoke yourself, avoid exposure to other people's tobacco smoke and protect children from exposure. These are common-sense protections gaining in currency every day right across Queensland. Our strong plan supports these objectives.

Today we are spreading the word about smoking in two mass media antismoking campaigns worth a total of more than \$3 million. In the first, young women sample the negative effect of smoking on their physical appearance. Premature ageing, stained teeth and bad breath feature in the \$1.5 million 'Your future isn't pretty' campaign. Rachael Finch received international media coverage when she modelled some of these consequences at the official launch last week, and we thank her for her involvement and mentorship. The second campaign, 'All by myself', is aimed at 25- to 44-year-olds. It highlights how smokers miss out on family and social events and how their smoking addiction affects their loved ones. A total of \$1.65 million will be invested, reminding smokers that they do not have to quit alone.

That brings me to the second part of the can-do government's strong plan against smoking. From 1 January next year, outdoor smoking bans apply on and around the sites of our health facilities and school grounds. This includes a five-metre buffer. The bans apply to schools, public hospitals, community health centres, health clinics and rehabilitation centres as well as all private and day hospitals. Our strong plans to invest in the health of Queenslanders will receive a significant boost in today's budget, a budget that invests in front-line health services for the future of all Queenslanders' health care.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.58 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads will be absent from the House for question time today as he is attending the funeral of a family member.

MOTION

Amendment to Standing Rules and Orders



Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.58 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That schedules 6 and 7 of the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly be amended in accordance with the amendment circulated in my name.

1. Schedule 6 (PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES)—

Omit, Insert—

SCHEDULE 6—PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

- (1) In accordance with s.88 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, the following table establishes the Portfolio Committees of the Legislative Assembly and identifies the primary areas of responsibility; and
- (2) A reference to a Minister is deemed to include departments, statutory authorities, government owned corporations or other administrative units reporting to the Minister and parts thereof that report to the Minister with respect to the Minister's responsibilities as set out in the Administrative Arrangements.

Portfolio Committee	Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Oversight Responsibility
Finance and Administration Committee	Premier and Cabinet Treasury and Trade	Premier Treasurer and Minister for Trade	Auditor-General Integrity Commissioner Queensland Family and Child Commission
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee	State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Energy and Water Supply Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games	Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Minister for Energy and Water Supply Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games	
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	Justice and Attorney-General Police Service Fire and Emergency Services	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services	Electoral Commissioner Information Commissioner Ombudsman

Portfolio Committee	Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Oversight Responsibility
Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee	Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Environment and Heritage Protection Natural Resources and Mines	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection Minister for Natural Resources and Mines	
Education and Innovation Committee	Education, Training and Employment Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts	Minister for Education, Training and Employment Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts	
Health and Community Services Committee	Health Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	Minister for Health Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier	Health Ombudsman Family Responsibilities Commission
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee	Transport and Main Roads Housing and Public Works Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience	Minister for Transport and Main Roads Minister for Housing and Public Works Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience	

2. Schedule 7 (CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS)—

Omit, Insert—

SCHEDULE 7—CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

In accordance with Standing Order 181(c), the following table lists entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executive at Estimates is to apply.

Entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executives at Estimates is to apply

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service
Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service
Central West Hospital and Health Service
Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service
Coordinator-General
Crime and Corruption Commission
CS Energy Limited
Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service
Electoral Commission of Queensland
ENERGEX Limited
Energy and Water Ombudsman
Ergon Energy Corporation Limited
Family Responsibilities Commission
Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited
GasFields Commission
Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited
Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service
Gold Coast Waterways Authority
Legal Aid Queensland
Mackay Hospital and Health Service
Metro North Hospital and Health Service
Metro South Hospital and Health Service
Motor Accident Insurance Commission / Nominal Defendant
North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Limited

North West Hospital and Health Service
 Office of Inspector General Emergency Management
 Office of the Governor
 Office of the Health Ombudsman
 Office of the Information Commissioner
 Office of the Integrity Commissioner
 Office of the Queensland Ombudsman
 Port of Townsville Limited
 Prostitution Licensing Authority
 Public Safety Business Agency
 Public Service Commission
 QIC Limited
 QRAA
 Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges
 Queensland Art Gallery
 Queensland Audit Office
 Queensland Building and Construction Commission
 Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority (Seqwater)
 Queensland Competition Authority
 Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
 Queensland Electricity Transmission
 Corporation Limited (Powerlink)
 Queensland Family and Child Commission
 Queensland Institute of Medical Research
 Queensland Mental Health Commission
 Queensland Museum
 Queensland Performing Arts Centre / Queensland Performing Arts Trust
 Queensland Rail Transit Authority
 Queensland Reconstruction Authority
 Queensland Theatre Company
 Queensland Training Assets Management Authority
 Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board)
 Residential Tenancies Authority
 Screen Queensland Pty Ltd
 South Bank Corporation
 South West Hospital and Health Service
 Stadiums Queensland
 Stanwell Corporation Limited
 State Library of Queensland / Library Board of Queensland
 Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service
 SunWater Limited
 TAFE Queensland
 The Public Trustee of Queensland
 Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service
 Tourism and Events Queensland
 Townsville Hospital and Health Service
 Trade and Investment Queensland
 West Moreton Hospital and Health Service
 Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (10.00 am): By leave, without notice, I move—

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended to enable:

- (a) government business to take priority for the remainder of this Thursday's sitting after question time is concluded; and
- (b) any private members' bills to be introduced at 3.30 pm on this Wednesday's sitting, with each member introducing a bill to speak for a maximum of three minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Budget, Electricity and Gas Concessions

Ms PALASZCZUK (10.00 am): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier take full responsibility for the cuts to electricity and gas concessions in today's budget that will hurt Queensland pensioners, or will he again blame someone else?

Mr NEWMAN: I would urge the Leader of the Opposition to wait until the budget is fully revealed by the Treasurer at 2.30 this afternoon. What I will say is that three weeks ago we quite openly criticised the federal government for their cuts in this area. I am quite happy to say again what my thoughts are on this matter, and that is that the federal government was faced with the huge financial mess created by Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard, who spent like drunken sailors. They had racked up a huge multi, multi-billion dollar deficit, the federal Liberal government had been left with a huge problem and they had to make strong decisions.

In this case I do not agree with their strong decision, because they are putting the responsibility for some of the financial clean-up onto state governments and territories, including this one. So I do not agree with their decision, and I would be saying to Queensland pensioners and concession cardholders who see the value of their concession being diminished—and it will not be by a great amount, but it will be diminished—

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the questions; you would think they would have the courtesy to listen.

We are increasing the amount of money that is going towards concessions and, if I recall, the figure is 9.9 per cent. We are increasing our commitment to look after seniors and pensioners. This reduction from the Commonwealth will have a small impact, but it will be an impact nonetheless. So I would say to pensioners, seniors card holders and their representative groups that there is one group of people who you should lobby right now—because we have been fighting with that group already—and that is federal LNP members from this state. We have been saying to senators and members of the federal parliament that this is an unfair cut and they should be seeking to change it.

Ms Palaszczuk: Blame Tony Abbott!

Mr NEWMAN: I do blame the Prime Minister and the Treasurer because they have done this, and that is very clearly the point we are making today. But unlike those opposite, we will always stand up for Queenslanders. We might have another rerun of the carbon tax debate in this place and we will see where they come from then.

Electricity Prices

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. Given the Premier's promise to cut average power bills by \$120 a year, and given the fact that they are now rising by \$560 on his watch, will the Premier advise how he plans to cut bills before the 2015 election, or is this just another broken election promise?

Mr NEWMAN: This government made a number of pledges, and we have particularly delivered on the issue of cost-of-living relief. If we had done what the Labor Party were proposing, public transport fares would be significantly higher today; there would be no concession for using a go card after nine trips; there would be \$7,000 extra tax on the family home; and the registration for the family motor vehicle would have gone through the roof—but we have frozen it. I could go on with all sorts of other taxes and charges that this mob of financial incompetents would have imposed on Queenslanders, because that is their way. To fund their uncontrolled spending they have to increase taxes and charges; that is always their way. Tax and spend is the Labor way. In relation to electricity prices, Minister McArdle has made it very clear that he is working on a range of initiatives in this sector to take the pressure off Queenslanders.

It is interesting to note a radio interview on 4BC on 30 May where the member for Mulgrave was given four or five goes to explain what the Labor Party's plan was. The minister had been on the radio as well and he explained our plan. Patrick Condren asked the member for Mulgrave, 'What would you do to lower the price of electricity?' The member replied, 'Well, Patrick, we will release our policies in due course.' Condren asked him again, 'Okay, so you've had a fair whack with that. What will you blokes do to bring down electricity prices?' Curtis Pitt replied, 'Patrick, we will be releasing our policy in due course.' Patrick Condren asked, 'But why can't you tell us now?' Curtis Pitt said, 'Because we will be releasing those at the time when we'll be able to tell Queenslanders with some

clear air what our policies are.' Patrick Condren replied, 'Well, now is your opportunity. We're talking electricity prices today. You've got plenty of clear air. I promise you I will not interrupt you for the next two minutes while you outline your policy, and you can have two minutes of clear air. Off you go. On your mark, get set, go!' The member for Mulgrave responded, 'Well, Patrick, what we'll do is we'll make sure that we'll be focusing on something that has a future in Queensland, and that is solar power.'

We know that if the carbon tax came off, the power price increase in the next financial year would be 5.1 per cent. Labor should support that!

Entertainment Precincts

Mr HATHAWAY: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline to the House how sound financial decisions are helping to boost our entertainment precincts?

Mr NEWMAN: Because we are about to see a budget delivered that has a strong plan for a brighter future, it means that we can do something very positive to deal with the issue of alcohol and drug fuelled violence that has been a blight on our entertainment precincts. Because of the strong choices that we have made to cut waste and bureaucracy to deal with Labor's \$80 billion worth of debt, we are able to deliver a brighter future for Queenslanders. A brighter future means being able to go out and have a great safe night out in one of our exciting tourist or entertainment precincts.

We want to change the culture. We do not want to go after everybody, like the Labor Party. The Labor Party has what it calls a policy, which is the 'shut everything down because we are going to treat you like a bunch of kids' policy. Those opposite would punish the many for the sins of the few. After ranting and raving and carrying on about laws that deal with criminal gangs, and criminal gangs alone, they want to treat—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I hear the member for South Brisbane interjecting. The member for South Brisbane wants to treat all young people aged 18 to 25 as criminals because she says they cannot be responsible.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. There are too many interjections across the chamber. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: In contrast, we are developing and are about to deliver a Safe Night Out Strategy after comprehensive consultation with Queenslanders involving over 13,000 responses, for example, to an online survey and more than 100 written submissions. This budget will allow the strategy to be implemented across our state, with 15 precincts across our regional and major centres. There is \$8 million in the budget to provide grants to local boards in precincts in Cairns, Townsville, Airlie Beach, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Brisbane, the Valley, Caxton Street, the CBD, the Gold Coast, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach to allow safe night out precincts to be run effectively under local management. In terms of the strategy, what are we trying to do? Change the culture through school based alcohol and drug education programs and communication strategies that target younger people. We are changing the law by increasing penalties and powers, by providing safe and supportive environments, by empowering the police to respond quickly and effectively and by cracking down on those who endanger the lives and wellbeing of others. By working together—patrons, licensees and police—we will create a better and safer environment so that all Queenslanders can enjoy a safe night out. Again, we are targeting troublemakers; we are not targeting all young people and saying that they are criminals, like the Labor Party.

Electricity Prices

Mr MULHERIN: My question is directed to the Premier. I refer to the latest electricity price determination that confirms an increase in the fixed service charges of 219 per cent over the first term of the Newman government, and I ask: will the Premier reverse his government's price hikes on electricity consumers, many of whom are pensioners struggling to meet the costs of living?

Mr NEWMAN: Firstly, I need to deal with one assertion in the question: they are not our price hikes; they are the prices hikes as a result of the flawed and incompetent policies of those opposite. We know why power prices have gone up. We know, for example, that former Treasurer Andrew Fraser was the one who wrote to the federal authorities seeking a higher rate of return. We know that

the flawed policy to provide the 44c feed-in tariff is a cost that is now being paid for by everybody. We know that the carbon tax and the renewable energy target policies, which have yet to be repealed in the Commonwealth parliament, are adding to people's power prices. We know that those opposite were given the opportunity to vote against the carbon tax in this very chamber last year and squibbed. We know that the member for Redcliffe was one of the people who inflicted this hideous tax that is hurting people in her own electorate. We know that and we will not let her off the hook. We know these things and we will continue to stand up for Queenslanders.

The carbon tax must go. The renewable energy target must go. If these things were to be achieved by the support of Labor in the federal parliament, in the Senate particularly, what would happen? I can tell members now: if the RET and the carbon tax go, power prices will go down. Why do we not have a debate in the next parliamentary sitting week? We will test the Labor Party on its sincerity to bring power prices down. I challenge its members today: go out there and say you have seen the error of your ways. Go out there today and tell the media that you will back the repeal of the carbon tax and the end of the renewable energy target. Stop with the nonsense! In 2007 they were the ones who told Australians that we needed to make electricity more expensive. They are the ones who said federally that we had to have a carbon tax. They are the ones who said we need to send a price signal so people use less of something. And what a surprise—electricity is more expensive! That is what they did. This is the fraudulence of the Australian Labor Party today. Its members are the ones who wanted electricity to be more expensive. They are the ones who put in place the carbon tax. They are the ones who put in place a fraudulent, silly solar panel scheme and the result is power prices that have nationally gone through the roof. We will put the challenge down: come into this place and vote to get rid of the carbon tax and power prices will go down.

Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr KRAUSE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. Is the minister aware of any new independent reports that confirm that the can-do LNP government's strong plans for front-line health services are delivering patients some of the best hospital waiting list figures in the entire nation?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Beaudesert for his question and his very strong advocacy and, of course, that advocacy recently led to the reopening of the birthing service at Beaudesert of which many women and their families are now taking advantage. For all of the reasons that the Premier announced and outlined earlier today with regard to our recent announcement in Cooktown, it really does break down the tyranny of distance and also the disruption for families. Being able to have your infant in your community close to your support structure is a very important thing for families in his area.

However, it is very important that we take a bit of a trip down memory lane and we overcome the collective amnesia that besets the opposition. If we go back a couple of years in Queensland, about every week if you opened the newspaper or turned on the television you saw the terrible stories of ambulance bypass and ambulance ramping which was so endemic at that time. Ambulance bypass has been banned, so we do not have pensioners in the back of ambulances bouncing around for up to 10 hours and what we have seen in the past with people dying in the back of ambulances. We also do not see ambulances pouring down the car park and out into the street with ambulance ramping as we saw two years ago right across this state. We are also seeing far better results in Queensland.

Last week, it was great to hear from the national health performance authority, which came out and gave independent verification to what we knew was the case in Queensland—that is, we have the most improved emergency departments in all of Australia. I would invite honourable members to go online and compare the performance improvements in Queensland with the performance improvements in the other states around Australia. Whilst the other states are stuck, or going backwards, or not making the dramatic gains we are making, Queensland is surging ahead. Indeed, of the 20 hospitals in Queensland which were reported on, 19 of those have dramatically improved their performance over the last couple of years. Indeed, we are now second to West Australia and we have the most dramatically improved hospital emergency departments. If we look at the Mater Adult Hospital and Ipswich, they are the best performers in the nation. That is absolutely outstanding. If we go across other parts of the state such as Mackay, Mount Isa and Toowoomba, there are great performances there as well. We are seeing that they are the leaders in their categories and also six of

our hospitals are now in the top 10 in their categories in the country. That is a great credit to those clinicians who are the same clinicians, but are able to do things differently to deliver better patient outcomes under this government. Gone are the days of the dead hand of central bureaucracy which was being used to the detriment of patients.

(Time expired)

Newman Government, Deficits

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer to the government's deficit increase this year and next year, with larger deficits projected than under Labor, and ask: if the LNP's deficits have blown out compared with the previous government's but peak debt has lowered, has this government not simply broken its promise and sold assets without a mandate?

Mr NICHOLLS: The situation in Queensland, as we know, is this: that for over half a decade Labor ran accumulated fiscal deficits. The reason the state's debt has gone from about \$45 billion that under Labor was going to go to beyond \$85 billion is that Labor year in, year out spent more than it was earning. Anyone who runs a small business, any—

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: That is true. It has actually simply destroyed a big business—that is, the state of Queensland! But anyone who has run a small business and any child who earns money or gets pocket money knows that you cannot spend more than you earn and you cannot do it—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn members on my left.

Mr NICHOLLS:—and you cannot do it year in, year out without a consequence, and the consequence in Queensland, of course, has been a path to \$80 billion worth of debt.

So what is the problem that we have to deal with? First of all, the independent Commission of Audit identified that we had to do two things. Firstly, we had to stabilise the debt. What has this government spent the past 2½ half years doing? We have stabilised the debt. One would think that those opposite, having been told to hand over the problem to the LNP, would be appreciative of the fact that we have started solving their problem. Unlike the Labor Party, with a debt heading towards \$85 billion, debt in Queensland will now top out at just over \$80 billion—still too much, but \$5 billion better than it was under Labor.

During that period we have also acted to reduce expenditure. Last year, government expenses increased by 0.9 per cent—the lowest level since accrual accounting was introduced—whilst at the same time our revenues took a hit of just over \$5 billion. So we have \$5 billion less, we have kept our expenses down and we have managed to reduce debt. We remain well on the path to reduce that debt.

What, by chance, was the Labor Party's solution to increasing debt and losses? One needs look no further than 'Mythbusters'. This is what Labor said.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: No, no, here are the facts. This is from the member's own mouth—

FACT: In the last three Budgets, the government has taken significant steps across the board to fund new services.

Already we have:

- raised land tax and stamp duty at the top end
- increased taxes on casinos and introduced new liquor licensing fees—to help meet the costs of alcohol abuse
- increased coal royalties
- increased motor vehicle stamp duty and we have recently introduced a rise to car registration.

What is their answer? More tax, more debt; no solution.

Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Mrs SMITH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister please outline how the government's strong plan for front-line services is delivering for the residents in my electorate and will continue to deliver for all Queenslanders?

Mr DEMPSEY: The Newman government has a strong plan for a brighter future—unlike those opposite, who have no plans and who left Queensland a legacy of debt, deficit and, may I say, deceit. The budget to be handed down today will continue this government's commitment to revitalising front-line services after years of Labor neglect.

When we were elected in 2012, we inherited a system where police were trapped behind desks and fires had crumbling fire stations. For the past two years we have been working hard to fix Labor's mess and get Queensland back on track. The Newman government has invested record amounts in Police and Emergency Services. We were the first government to allocate over half a billion dollars to fire services in this state and a record \$2 billion to our hardworking police officers. This record investment is delivering more police, more fire stations, more emergency services as well as cutting-edge technology for our hardworking front-line services.

Over the past two years alone, as part of our commitment for an additional 1,100 officers, we have delivered over 750 additional police officers. Also, we have delivered new and upgraded police and fire stations from Coolangatta to the cape; we are rolling out over 1,700 iPads and iPhones by November this year, saving officers up to 30 minutes per shift; we have fully funded trucks, equipment, communications and training for our hardworking rural firefighting volunteers; we have begun the development of the \$500 million government wireless network, meaning better emergency communications—something that the former Labor government completely ignored; as part of our election commitment we have delivered Australia's toughest anti-hooping legislation, with over 6,700 hoon cars off our streets to date; and we have doubled the penalty for seriously assaulting a police officer to 14 years—a law that was opposed by those opposite.

This means that we have more police on our front line, our streets are safer and our fire and emergency services have trucks and stations to keep Queensland families safer. The budget to be handed down today will continue our commitment for investment into better planning, infrastructure and resources for our state's police, fire and emergency service workers.

We will continue to deliver on our commitment for additional police and we will continue to upgrade fire and emergency services right across this great state. Everything that this government has delivered—and will continue to deliver—is all part of making sure that we have a strong plan and a brighter future for all Queenslanders.

Water Infrastructure

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the Premier's so-called strong plan for Queensland and I ask: will the Premier reveal the full cost and funding sources for the proposed eight new dams in South-East Queensland—or is it the case that these plans simply do not exist?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for her question. Firstly, there was a bit of innuendo in the question—that would always be the member for South Brisbane, would it not?—a 'so-called' strong plan. It is a strong plan when you make decisions in the long-term best interests of Queensland so that you can have a brighter future. That is what we have been doing, because we on this side of the House look to the long term. That is what the conversation that we have started about the future flood immunity, or flood resilience, of South-East Queensland cities and towns is all about. We are looking to the long term.

The member for South Brisbane is a bit of a Johnny-come-lately to front-line political leadership, but I was down there in the honourable member's own electorate back in 2011 personally supervising the clean-up. I saw the misery, I saw the debris, the destruction—

Government members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: How offensive. I am talking about the destruction of people's lives in the member for South Brisbane's electorate and they interject and ridicule it. How like Labor. This is not a joke. I am outraged that the Labor Party would seek to belittle an issue that is so important. This is about—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Premier, I just ask you to pause. There are too many interjections across the chamber. I ask for the interjections to cease. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: I was down on the streets of South Brisbane and West End personally supervising, in my role as Lord Mayor, the clean-up of those streets—of helping people get back into their homes, of supervising the mud army along with council workers, the SES and the like. I know that I never want to see that sort of misery again. I want to do what the Labor Party had 20 years to do, which is to come up with solutions that would protect this city and, indeed, the city of Ipswich.

I remember what happened when I was the Lord Mayor in late 2010, as I recall, when I dared to suggest that we could see flooding again in Brisbane. What was the response of the Labor Party? A massive campaign of backgrounding and ridicule in the media saying that Wivenhoe Dam protected Brisbane and that it could never happen again. That is what they did, because the Labor Party way is to only ever look to the next election and the next media cycle. As Lord Mayor, I had the integrity—

Ms Trad: No plan, no money. You've got nothing.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I will now warn the member for South Brisbane under standing order 253A. There are too many interjections. They are not informing the debate and they are out of order. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: The Labor Party never looked to the long term. They always looked to the media cycle or the next election. As Lord Mayor and now as Premier, I am looking to the long term. We need to do the planning. That is what this is about. We need to look at the options and then we need to find ways to provide the funding so that we can protect Brisbane, Ipswich and other communities. That is what we are about: a brighter future.

(Time expired)

Agriculture

Mr HOBBS: I direct a question to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister please outline what the LNP government has achieved for agriculture and what improvements has the minister made for this sector?

Dr McVEIGH: I thank the honourable member for a very important question. It is important in response to go back to where we started. The fact is that when I became the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in Queensland just over two years ago I inherited a mess—a Labor mess: a mess that was best summed up on the eve of the last election, the 2012 election, in that last week of the campaign, by the front page of the *Queensland Country Life*, and I quote, 'After two decades of being belted and demonised by Labor a new dawn is finally rising for Queensland.'

Labor did not even have a dedicated department of agriculture. It had ripped the heart out of regional Queensland, out of the bush, taking away front-line jobs and services. They were experts at demonising the bush, destroying hardworking rural communities and painting farmers as environmental vandals simply so that they could win green votes in the city.

Under the Newman government agriculture is once again one of the four pillars of our economy. Unlike those opposite, our plan is to support regional communities and farmers. That is why it was my first job to reinstate and re-establish a dedicated stand-alone department of agriculture and set a clear path, a clear plan, a strong plan, for revitalising agriculture.

Yes, we have an ambitious plan to double agricultural production by 2040 and to ensure that our agriculture sector is efficient, innovative, resilient and, most of all, profitable. Twelve months ago I commenced our comprehensive agriculture strategy because it sets a strong plan for a bright future for Queensland. This month I will release our state of Queensland agriculture report at the inaugural State Agricultural Conference. We are supporting farmers at the farm gate. We are making good on our progress and our promise to revitalise front-line staff: 15 new front-line staff in the first year to tackle wild dogs, ticks, crop protection, horticulture; 10 recently announced agronomist and horticulturist graduates right across the state; we are cutting Labor's red tape; we are undertaking a once-and-for-all wide-ranging review of fisheries management. Those opposite never had such a plan—no plan. They have no team, no position; they have no intestinal fortitude. They have no plan for economic growth, no background and no backbone and certainly no plan for our farmers. They have shown they have not learned a thing; putting the old team back together again, aided and abetted by the Katter and PUP parties. It is only the Newman government that has a strong plan for a bright future for agriculture in Queensland.

Bus and Train Tunnel

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Former Treasury secretary Dr Ken Henry recently stated that too much emphasis on tunnelling underground has created extraordinary costs in Australia. In light of this, does the Treasurer believe the proposed \$5 billion Brisbane tunnel will provide stronger economic benefit than similar amounts spent on road, rail and energy assets in resource rich regional areas?

Madam SPEAKER: The last part of your question, where you ask for someone's belief, appears to be asking for an opinion. I will give you an opportunity to reword it. I remind members that with careful wording these questions can be in order, but that one is out of order unless the member is able to rephrase it. We have given latitude before to new members but that latitude is coming to an end very shortly. If the member could rephrase the last part of the question.

Mr KATTER: Just the last part or repeat the whole question?

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable member, if you can rephrase the question in respect to the fact that the question itself is out of order technically because it is asking for an opinion.

Mr KATTER: I ask the Treasurer: is the proposed \$5 billion tunnel a stronger priority than amounts spent on roads, rail and energy assets in resource-rich regional areas?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Mount Isa for his question. All of Queensland is the priority of the LNP government. Unlike those opposite, unlike those up in the far corner, we are focused on delivering a strong plan for a brighter future for all of Queensland. It does not matter whether it is a mum trying to take her kids to school, whether it is a person working in the suburbs of Brisbane, the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast trying to get to their job on time and deliver outcomes, it does not matter whether it is a farmer, someone working on the land, trying to get their product to port to export it, it does not matter whether it is a miner or a business in the North West Mineral Province trying to get their products to Townsville or wherever it might be, this government remains focused on delivering for all of Queensland. Our priorities and our spending show that. We have done that over a very, very long period of time.

All of our projects go through a thorough assessment. We assess the value of those projects both in what they are able to deliver, not just in terms of value for money but also in what they deliver to the community because it is just as important, as I said before, for someone to be able to drop their child off at day care before going to work and to get back and pick that child up and to get home to be part of a family life or a social life in their community as it is for a trucking company to be able to get their freight from A to B in the quickest time possible. We will continue to invest the funds that we have judiciously and wisely across the regions and across the state.

To the member I say: at 2.30 this afternoon and shortly thereafter he will be able to see the very judicious and wise use made of the funds that the taxpayers of Queensland grant us as we deliver to this state. We have already shown how we have done that over a period of time. We have spent more than 50 per cent of the capital budget outside of Brisbane to show our commitment. The Deputy Premier instigated a Royalties for the Regions program to make sure that people had the facilities they need and to make sure that local councils were able to invest in the infrastructure they need to grow strong communities the length and breadth of the state. We will continue to provide the funding that is necessary to grow the state whilst at the same time taking steps, strong choices, the smartest choice, to pay down the \$80 billion worth of Labor debt that was bequeathed to the taxpayers of Queensland by those opposite. If we do not pay down that \$80 billion worth of debt then we will not be able to put the funds that we know that a growing state like Queensland needs into the roads, the hospitals, the schools and the services that will be necessary to support a population that will number seven million in 20 years time, that will see an extra 650,000 people over the age of 65 and that will need to educate another 400,000 students. So to the member I simply say this: we have already been making those assessments, we will continue to do so and regional Queensland will continue to benefit.

(Time expired)

Environment

Dr ROBINSON: My question is to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. Can the minister outline how the Newman government is delivering a bright future for Queensland's environment?

Mr POWELL: I thank the member for Cleveland for his question. It gives me great delight to remind the House just how far this government has come and how much we have delivered for Queensland in just two short years. Let me take members back to 2012, back to when my colleague the Minister for Education was discovering horrific maintenance backlogs in our schools, back when the honourable Minister for Health was dealing with ambulance ramping and secret waiting lists and back when, as the Minister for Agriculture just mentioned, both he and I inherited what could only be described as a complete and utter mess. People in Gladstone were outraged at the secrecy and the lack of transparency surrounding their harbour, people in North Queensland were fed up with

crocodiles in their creeks and on their beaches and people in Charters Towers, Bargara and Gayndah were being driven nearly mad by the massive roosts of flying foxes that had set up camp near their homes and in their towns. Even UNESCO had sent an international delegation to inspect the proposed mega ports the Bligh government had approved near the Great Barrier Reef. But mostly, business, community and industry were frustrated by their inability to work with DERM. DERM is dead. DERM is buried. In its place we have an agile environmental regulator that no longer has as its main focus 'How can we stop you?', but instead, 'How can we help you?'

Under the previous government, the environment department, like so many others, lurched from one crisis to the next. Each time a problem arose, the last government simply created more regulations and more onerous green tape and every Queenslander paid for it. Whether they were being slogged to run costly green schemes or being slogged by a ridiculous waste tax, every Queenslander paid the price of Labor's poor governance.

The good news is that this LNP government has turned that around. We now have one of the best-performing agencies when it comes to cutting red tape. Today and into the future, quite simply, it is easier for business to do business without compromising our high environmental standards. We have built on success. We have a strong focus on caring for our wildlife, improving our environmental management and conserving our built heritage. Members in this House will have long heard me talk about what we are doing to protect the Great Barrier Reef, one of the world's best managed World Heritage areas. This year alone we have delivered \$35 million for reef protection initiatives. We have scaled back crazy plans at Abbot Point. We have committed significant funding to the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership. We are working with farmers, not against them. Ahead of the last election we outlined our plan to manage crocodiles in North Queensland and I am proud to say that we are delivering. Also since the election, we have captured and removed over 70 animals across the state, 28 in this calendar year alone. Of course, we have delivered \$6.9 million in our Everyone's Environment grants program. We are delivering what we promised and we will continue to go from strength to strength as we implement our strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland and its environment.

(Time expired)

Gold Coast, Proposed Casino

Dr DOUGLAS: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. With regards to the proposed ASF integrated casino development on Wavebreak Island on the Gold Coast, can the minister please explain why he is now planning to grant freehold land status to development when he previously considered leasehold at best?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Gaven for the question, even though it did not make a lot of sense. I am not sure of the basis of the question of the member for Gaven, but I welcome the opportunity to talk about the decision that was made last week by the government at our cabinet meeting in Cooktown. We took a decision to move forward with the proposal to facilitate the building of two integrated resort developments, one in North Queensland and one at the Gold Coast. This was the result of an expressions of interest process that had seen six consortiums express interest for those projects in regional Queensland, as well as the six that had expressed interest to build the Queen's Wharf development here in Brisbane. The government had made it clear that we would make two gaming licences available to complement those resort developments to ensure that those resort developments could be competitive in the international tourism market and that they could complement the tourism attractions that Queensland has been known for internationally for quite some time. Tourism, which is one of the four great pillars of our economy, certainly needed refreshment. It needed some new product. The emerging product on the world tourism market is integrated resort developments. We have been told by tourism operators from all over the world that, to make those sorts of resort developments competitive on the world market, they need to be complemented with a gaming licence.

In deciding that we would have a short list of two for the two gaming licences available for the regional integrated resort developments, we have allowed the proponents to proceed with the other work that needs to be done. In the case of the Gold Coast, there is considerable work that needs to be done. The project on the Gold Coast faces some very real challenges and there is a range of issues that I wrote to the mayor of the Gold Coast and the proponents about some time ago. I pointed out that there is a range of issues that needs to be addressed before this project can proceed, but I have not received any significant response to those issues from either the Gold Coast City Council or the proponents involved in the proposal. Last week, we put it squarely in the court of the proponents

and the Gold Coast City Council to come up with some plans as to how they are going to address those issues in a reasonable time frame, rather than relying on the doubt surrounding the availability of a gaming licence to avoid addressing those significant issues. Those significant issues have to be dealt with and the challenge is now with the proponent and the mayor of the Gold Coast.

Tourism and Small Business

Mrs MADDERN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister advise the House of the state of Queensland's tourism and small business sectors prior to the Newman government and outline what actions it has put in place to ensure that these once neglected sectors are restored to prosperity?

Mrs STUCKEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. She is a strong advocate for the people of Maryborough. She is correct: tourism and small business suffered at the hands of Labor. They suffered either neglect or strangulation, as was the case with small businesses. Tourism, the goose that laid those golden eggs for so many years, was laying bricks. They went from silver to bronze to brick, and nobody in the Labor Party noticed and nobody cared at all as this once proud No. 1 industry for us and for Australia suffered so much. Across Queensland, 410,000 small businesses were strangled with some 92,000 pages of red tape.

In March 2012, nearly two years ago, the Newman government was elected on the platform of a four-pillar economy. As we on this side of the House all know, those pillars are tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. Unlike Labor, we have a very strong plan for a brighter future here in Queensland. We created a department for tourism. We also created a tourism cabinet committee, because this is a whole-of-government approach. We understand the need to be able to reach right across our departments, to maximise and leverage our opportunities. We also set up an Aviation Investment Fund so that the skies are now buzzing with new services and new planes, bringing in international and domestic visitors. We set up a Tourism Investment Attraction Unit so that, as the Deputy Premier said, we can lure all of those exciting new projects that for so long were lacking under a Labor government. We set up our DestinationQ forums that have led into Destination Success, our 20-year plan for a brighter future for tourism and small business in Queensland. Our inclusive approach to destination management has seen an investment of \$17 million into regional marketing activity so far this year. We are working hand-in-hand with operators across the state and have set a target to double overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion.

Tourism and small business are intrinsically linked. As a government, we understand that. That is why we are really proud to say that, to date, this government has abolished 429 pages of legislation and over 9,000 regulatory requirements as part of our election commitment. I am really proud of what my department has done as part of the Newman government to reinvigorate our beloved tourism industry and get out of the way of small businesses. We know that those industries will create jobs right across Queensland and generate the wealth that allows us to build more schools and create more jobs for police, teachers and other front-line staff.

(Time expired)

Nambour Men's Shed

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. I again ask: will the Deputy Premier support a request from the Nambour Men's Shed support group that they occupy a vacant government shed in Nambour?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Nicklin for the question. This is a very similar question to the one that he asked me in the last parliamentary sitting week, as I recall. I am disappointed that the member for Nicklin has not taken the opportunity to come and talk to me about it. As I indicated then, I am not so scared that the member for Nicklin should be concerned about doing that. Member for Nicklin, come and talk to me about it. Come and have a chat about it.

The member for Nicklin likes to grandstand for his constituents in his electorate, but he does a very poor job of representing them in this place. I repeat: he does a very poor job of representing them in this place. That is what it is about, I would say to the member for Nicklin and all other members in this House. At the end of the day, we all share the same task; that is, representing our constituents in a responsible and an appropriate way; not using our constituents' issues to grandstand for our own benefit.

That is what the member for Nicklin is doing with this particular issue. I was advised after the member for Nicklin asked this question the last time that he actually wrote to the wrong department. I think he wrote to the department of my colleague the Minister for Communities about this issue and it was referred to my department. I am very happy to provide the member for Nicklin with a response if he would like to come and speak to me, which is what I told him last time.

We in the state government have been looking at appropriate uses for unused government land and unused government facilities and considering a number of options. We have put in place a program called GLASS, which is about providing not-for-profit organisations with access to state government land.

Mr Nicholls: Youngcare last week.

Mr SEENEY: Youngcare last week was a perfect example of that. We have provided state government land to a number of not-for-profit organisations that are doing wonderful work in our communities. We have already done that in a number of instances. We have identified a range of opportunities for those organisations and we will continue to do that. We understand the enormous benefits that those not-for-profit organisations, those community based organisations, can contribute to our communities. But we are going to do that in a non-political way. We are not going to make a song and dance about it and try to find the limited advantage, as the member for Nicklin is doing in this case.

(Time expired)

Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience

Mr CHOAT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience. Can the minister please advise the House what improvements have been made in his portfolio despite the dreadful budget situation left to Queensland by the former government?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the member for the opportunity to talk about this because it does highlight what can be done with a turnaround in relationships. There has been a successful building of relationships between the state and local governments. It has been done through cup of tea by cup of tea, not through pots of gold. We did not have the ability to go to local councils and throw many, many millions of dollars at them. But, to their great credit, they knew our situation.

As I toured the state and talked to every single mayor and councillor across Queensland they understood better than anyone the challenges we faced. The incompetence of those opposite impacted on local government, it impacted on their ability to deliver for their communities and it also impacted on their bottom line. The loss of our AAA credit rating was costing in effect over \$50 million extra per year in interest repayments for councils.

That is a fact that we often glaze over. Councils knew that. They knew that, as a result of a decision taken in the parliament a long way away, it was impacting on their bottom line. They had lived within their means and yet the actions of those opposite impacted their ability to balance their budget.

What did we do? Instead of throwing money at the problem we gave them the flexibility to deliver. We made changes to the act which clearly put mayors and councillors back in charge. No longer are they merely puppets—representatives or some sort of mouthpiece for those opposite—they are genuinely in charge. They are able to control their own future.

With that responsibility comes extra checks and balances. Members will remember some of the changes involved in making sure that there are greater penalties for those who breach or fail to do the right thing. That is the balance that exists when you are a government that believes in empowerment and not penalising the majority for the sins of a few.

This new relationship is most evident in the other part of my portfolio—the flood recovery area. Gone are the days of the paralysed approach to disaster recovery. Gone are the days of the months upon months of assessment while there is some sort of arm-wrestle with some person based in Brisbane who has never seen the local road that a council is applying for funds for.

There is trust. There are people on the ground. There has been a fundamental turnaround that is getting businesses and communities back up and running. That is good for the economy. When businesses are open they pay taxes and they employ people. That is what we should all do.

We will continue to do more with less. Whether that be flood mitigation or delivering grants to local councils, we will free them up to be able to spend on the ground because this is a government with a strong plan for a brighter future for Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Stafford Electorate, By-Election

Ms D'ATH: My question is to the Premier.

Mr Seeney: The rising star.

Madam SPEAKER: I warn the Deputy Premier under standing order 253A. I call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the fact that it took 2½ months—70 days—to call the Redcliffe by-election and that it has now been 11 days since Dr Chris Davis resigned as the member for Stafford, and I ask: will the Premier commit to calling an immediate by-election so that the people of Stafford will have a voice in this parliament?

Mr NEWMAN: I am a little—I am not confused; that is a little ambiguous, that question. Immediate in the minimum time? Is that what the honourable member is asking? Does the member mean that I better make an immediate decision, an immediate statement or an immediate announcement? These are important issues because this team has a strong plan for a brighter future. This team has that plan. Those opposite do not. I ask them again rhetorically: do they want a very quick by-election because surely they need time to actually get some policies, to get some team work?

Surely those opposite need time to actually get some policies. We saw today their lack of policy position in terms of electricity prices. Patrick Condren asked, 'Why can't you tell us now?' They said, 'Because we will be releasing those at the time and we will be able to tell Queenslanders with some clear air what our policies are.'

I ask them: do they want a quick by-election? If they want a quick by-election they probably will not have time to announce any policies, and I would not want to do that to them. They do not have a strong plan for Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! I warn members on my left. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: What they need to do is go away and come up with a plan. What they need to do is go and get some real policy ideas and put them forward. I would like to give them a bit of time to actually have the opportunity to present those policies to the people of Stafford. I can assure them that there will be—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the questions; you would think they would like the answers. The answer is, yes.

Sport

Mr RUTHENBERG: My question without notice is to Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister please inform the House how this budget continues to deliver on the Newman government's strong plan to get more Queensland kids actively involved in grassroots sports for an active and bright future?

Madam SPEAKER: You have two minutes, Minister.

Mr DICKSON: I thank the member for Kallangur for the question. He is a great supporter of our Get in the Game policy and the recipient of 400 Get Started vouchers. We are where we are today because of those opposite—a \$80 billion-plus debt and interest payments of \$4 billion a year. Our side of government is all about a bright future with a fantastic plan to deliver great outcomes. We are about building a foundation for the future regardless of whether it is main roads, education, science and technology. We are all about creating jobs and prosperity in our great state.

What our side of politics has done as far as looking after cost-of-living issues and delivering for those people who have concession cards is deliver the Get in the Game policy. Recently, we have delivered 29,500 vouchers to young disadvantaged children so that they can get out onto the paddock and play sport—to help those mums and dads out who are doing it very tough because those opposite left us with this debt situation.

Out of those 29,500 vouchers that were handed out, 80 per cent of the take-up was from concession card holders and 30 per cent of those young people who took those vouchers up are now playing sport. They had never, ever played team sport before in their lives. The Newman government has a great vision for our future and we are going to deliver better outcomes and more of exactly the same. We have a plan.

They have a plan to bring back Stirling Hinchliffe, Cameron Dick, Kerry Shine, Grace Grace and Di Farmer. They have a plan to bring back the people who destroyed our state, who made the debt situation what it is today. We are about delivering financial sustainability, and I have to thank the Treasurer of Queensland. What a great job this man has done with the help of every single LNP member in this House. We are about delivering great outcomes; they are about destroying the state of Queensland. Let us get on with the job of providing a strong, bright future for our great state.

Madam SPEAKER: The time for questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Madam SPEAKER: Before moving to the next order of business, I wish to acknowledge schools visiting today: Marymount College in the electorate of Burleigh and Enoggera State School in the electorate of Ashgrove.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Budget

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.00 am): Today we will hear from the Treasurer his third budget of broken promises. His first budget of broken promises delivered cuts and sackings. His second budget of broken promises delivered tax hikes. The third budget of broken promises will pave the way for asset sales.

Ahead of this budget the Treasurer has used taxpayers' money to defend his broken election promises. The Treasurer has spent millions of taxpayers' dollars on the Strong Choices campaign to blatantly peddle mistruths and political propaganda, to defend his broken election promise to pay down debt, to deflect attention on his broken promise to lower the cost of living, to deflect attention on his broken election promise to lower unemployment and to deflect attention on his broken election promise to get Queensland's economy 'back on track'. It is not the type of taxpayer funded propaganda you would expect to see in a modern democratic system.

Despite the biased survey instrument, Queenslanders clearly said that they do not want their assets sold. But the Treasurer said, 'Thanks but no thanks'—and last weekend he said he will go ahead with what he now calls the 'smart choices'—or is that 'smartie pants choices'? To imply that he is smarter than the rest of the state shows how out of touch and arrogant this Treasurer really is.

On the eve of this third budget of broken promises, let us not forget that the LNP spent more than twice what Labor did on election commitments during the last election campaign. Labor's plan was for a measured return to surplus and a AAA rating—without \$4 billion in unfunded LNP promises—and without the need to then sack 20,000 workers and hike royalties which has driven up unemployment and slowed the economy. The LNP weakened economic growth in their first budget by cutting too hard and too fast. Then they increased taxes by \$1,000 per family in their second budget to make up for the fall in economic activity they had caused with their first budget.

In 2011-12 Queensland recorded growth in gross state product of 4.8 per cent, which then fell to 4.1 per cent last financial year. The domestic economy was hit much harder, slowing from 8.3 per cent in 2011-12 to 2.2 per cent in 2012-13, with household spending, private investment, dwelling investment and business investment all weaker. Over that same financial year, Queensland recorded its worst result for employment growth in more than two decades.

In the latest figures on growth in Queensland from the ABS, state final demand was contracting in the December quarter. Meanwhile the Premier and Treasurer have been boasting about how the economy is apparently 'back on track' under their watch. This complete disconnect with reality shows just how arrogant and out of touch they have become and they are not listening to Queenslanders. This government is not—not—managing the economy in the interests of working Queenslanders. The

Treasurer wants people to concentrate on his misleading spin on debt because it is a convenient distraction from the damage he has caused to the Queensland economy, as well as his broken election promises.

The only way to see past the fantasy land this arrogant Newman LNP government lives in is to look at the detail in the budget papers: to look at the estimated actual growth for this financial year and the growth forecast for the next financial year to see whether it has recovered to the growth of 4.8 per cent that they inherited from Labor; to look at the forecasts for business investment over the forward estimates to see if the LNP have any plan for the economy beyond an LNG export industry established by Labor; to look at the operating and fiscal deficit for 2013-14 to see whether they have narrowed from the respective \$2.5 billion and \$3.4 billion blow-outs on the projections under Labor—we already know that the fiscal deficit has blown out by more than \$1 billion on Labor's projections for next financial year; to look at taxation per person to see if taxes have gone up even further under the Newman government, after the Treasurer when in opposition said that taxes and charges were 'out of control'; and to look at debt to see if the LNP have any plan to lower gross debt below the \$62 billion figure as at the March 2012 election.

A plan to pay down the debt incurred by the Newman government in office cannot be described as paying down Labor's debt. This claim is simply dishonest. The LNP before the election said they would pay down debt and oppose asset sales. Now, after the election they are increasing debt and selling assets without any election mandate. Already we have seen \$11 billion in assets go out the door, including Queensland Motorways, office buildings, schools and TAFEs. We are now seeing larger deficits under the Newman government. To claim that these larger deficits are paying down debt is a complete nonsense.

Let us be clear about this: the Newman government wants to sell the people's assets to pay for their government's increase in debt and their election promises—not Labor's debt. The Treasurer is saying that we need to sell assets to pay down \$25 billion to \$30 billion on the debt of \$80 billion that he himself is racking up. The Treasurer points to Peter Costello as the reason for this target. Yet Peter Costello recommended his debt repayment target on the \$64 billion of debt that existed at the time of his report—not the LNP's \$80 billion of debt. The Treasurer told 4BC last week that an appropriate level of debt would be \$50 billion to \$55 billion.

What was the total debt level before the 2010 and 2011 natural disasters belted Queensland and following the \$9.2 billion in revenue that was wiped out from the GFC? Gross debt was \$51.6 billion. When the Treasurer inherited gross debt of \$62 billion he claimed that Queensland had a 'debt crisis'—and the Premier was hysterically raving about a 'power dive into the abyss'. But now, according to the Treasurer, total debt at \$55 billion would '... get us back into the AAA credit rating and then if we did have a natural disaster or a financial disaster we would be able to do something about it'.

The Treasurer now wants to sell \$25 billion to \$30 billion in assets because of his increase in debt—not Labor's. The Treasurer says that if this debt paydown is achieved it will lower interest costs by \$1.5 billion per year. What were the interest costs the Treasurer inherited from Labor? They were \$1.5 billion per year lower—before the Newman government's \$14.6 billion increase in debt. So the Treasurer is committing to lower interest costs to the level left by the previous Labor government. To say that this is paying down Labor's debt again is rubbish.

The Treasurer has also failed to consider the lost revenue streams to the state from selling government businesses—revenue streams that will not be available to retire debt. The interest savings achieved from the sale of the assets placed on the auction block by the LNP will be wiped out by the lost revenue from these businesses. The Treasurer has pathetically claimed that he was locked into the infrastructure projects planned by the previous government and that he was forced into raising this debt. He says that all debt is bad and that it is all Labor's but that the infrastructure funded by these borrowings is good and is the LNP's. The LNP is happy to deride the method by which these infrastructure was funded but shows up to take credit for the projects and cut the ribbon.

The Treasurer is all blame and no responsibility. After his first budget he said it marked a 'line in the sand'—but still he refuses to take any responsibility for anything. The worst part of the Treasurer's hypocrisy is that he is arguing for asset sales to pay down debt on the basis that there may be a financial disaster or a natural disaster. It was only last month that the Treasurer was making a disgraceful comparison between Queensland's response to debt and the 2010 and 2011 natural disasters—the same Treasurer who denied the impact of the GFC on Queensland's economy and who has talked down the financial impact of the 2010 and 2011 natural disasters ever since they occurred.

There is no recognition from this Treasurer that the previous government was on track to return to a AAA credit rating until the 2010 and 2011 natural disasters struck, despite having weathered the global financial crisis. Before the natural disasters, ratings agency Standard & Poor's in June 2010 said, 'Although the rating remains on a "stable" outlook an upgrade may be possible ...' S&P were flagging an upgrade to a AAA rating under Labor prior to the natural disasters, but the Treasurer continues to deny this.

The Treasurer's blatant dishonesty on debt does not end here. Not only has the Treasurer increased debt, but his increase in debt has been concentrated in the general government sector. Unlike the debt held by government owned businesses, this debt is not self-sustaining, or paid for by charges for companies using our ports, for example. Under the Newman government, Queensland has gone from having the lowest general government net debt in the country at negative \$3.2 billion to having the third highest at \$9.2 billion. What is worse is that the Newman government has increased debt and deficit to pay for wasteful projects—like the \$2.6 billion in dead money for the Premier's new office tower, an office tower that taxpayers will not even own at the end of the day.

If the Treasurer is to meet the LNP's election commitments in this third budget of broken promises, he must deliver the plan he promised for lowering power prices by \$120 a year, instead of increasing prices by \$560. He must deliver the plan to deliver on the rest of his broken cost-of-living election promises, including on water and registration. He must actually reveal the plan he said he had to 'target the bad debt' without asset sales, including lowering debt below \$62 billion. Most importantly, he must deliver on his plan to lower unemployment and get the economy back on track after slowing the economy and leaving Queensland with 11,000 fewer full-time jobs.

This arrogant Newman LNP government still has no plan to deliver on these promises after more than two years in office. The only party in Queensland that has any policy or plan to support jobs and to manage the economy in the interests of working people is the Labor Party. The LNP promised no job cuts, lower electricity prices and no asset sales.

Government members interjected.

Mr PITT: I will say that again: the LNP promised no job cuts, lower electricity prices and no asset sales. Ever since we have had 20,000 sackings, electricity prices have skyrocketed and there have already been \$11 billion worth of asset sales. The next round of the Newman government's asset sales will simply be a recipe for more job cuts and even higher electricity prices. People should not believe the LNP when they say they are not privatising electricity. They are selling off profits, they are selling off board positions and they are selling off control. This is not what Queenslanders said in response to their Strong Choices campaign. Their response was clear, yet today we have seen tweets from the Strong Choices campaign congratulating Queenslanders on being part of a process where the Treasurer said, 'Thanks but no thanks.' The Newman government is keen on its three-strike policies. This afternoon when the Treasurer delivers his third budget of broken promises it could be a case of 'Three strikes and you're out'.

Queensland Sugar Ltd

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (11.10 am): This morning I wish to talk about Wilmar and the sugar industry issues around that. I must indicate upfront that my family is a supplier to Wilmar, the Singaporean marketing and production sugar industry organisation which operates out of Queensland with eight mills across Queensland. Recently, Wilmar has indicated that it will take two million tonnes of sugar out of the Queensland Sugar Ltd marketing operation, which is a wholly owned industry organisation by millers and growers that have statutory rights to market that sugar.

Interestingly, looking back over its history the Queensland sugar industry is the envy of all marketing export oriented industries across Australia and across the world because we market our sugar through a single entity that is owned by the industry. There have been accusations over many years that the Queensland sugar industry gains a very significant financial advantage by being able to do that. That has been indicated at world conferences of sugar industries throughout the world, accusing our industry of being manipulative in that respect. The end result is that we are able to organise our own industry, organise our selling and marketing, with the intention of bringing back the best premiums possible to the industry and finally back to the growers.

Wilmar, which has recently entered the sugar industry in Queensland by acquiring sugar mills throughout Queensland, has become a big player in the investment in the milling industry in Queensland. In some instances it is also producing cane. Many years ago the sugar industry was regulated. In the early 1990s when we had a change of government to Labor there was a move to

deregulate the industry. Before that, the sugar board was an organisation as an arm of government and did work quite well in regulating the industry. Since that time the industry has worked strongly to put in place a marketing organisation. In recent times there has been some disappointment in respect to the operation of Queensland Sugar Ltd, and rightly so there have been some criticisms of their operation in that they were not able to predict a downturn in the weather conditions and the crop output so they presold far more sugar than they could produce. Therefore, there was a penalty placed on farmers and millers to repay the amount of sugar that they had to buy in to supply the market.

Irrespective of that, over many years QSL, with the ownership of its ports, sheds and the marketing arm, has been a strong, honest broker in taking on board sugar from all of the mills and selling that into the world market. The real issue with Wilmar is the real possibility that QSL will no longer be a major player in the world markets and therefore will not necessarily be able to gain the premiums that they currently do. Therefore, there will be a reduction of return to growers and millers who are outside of that Wilmar base. At the end of the day the real concern for all farmers and some millers is that QSL will disappear and there will not be an honest broker to get a clear and transparent realisation of what the premiums are across the world. The end game is that we have to make sure that that does not happen. I call on Wilmar and cane growers to get together and make sure there are common-sense outcomes. We need a common and rational operator to market our sugar to the world markets.

Volunteers

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (11.15 am): Queenslanders are known for their willingness to roll up their sleeves and to help each other out through the worst of natural disasters. What is also well known is that there is a selfless army of volunteers across our great state who regularly donate their time and energy to help others. Queenslanders are likely to cross paths with these volunteers—or the fruits of their work—at least once a day. Whether it is regenerating the bushland in local parks or coaching young children to soccer greatness, there is nearly always a dedicated volunteer behind the scenes.

Volunteers perform a wide range of different tasks in their communities and a large number of organisations rely solely on volunteers. They would not be able to open their doors without the help and varied skills that volunteers offer. People volunteer for many reasons. Some do it to make a difference and gain valuable work experience and learn new skills. Others like to share their skills with others or meet new people and make new friends. Then there are people who are ideologically driven and want to support a cause that they care very much about.

As measured in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2010 Volunteering Work Survey Australia, the rate of volunteering in Queensland was 35.4 per cent, which equates to 1.2 million adults who volunteered. That is a lot of people doing the extra mile and during National Volunteer Week they deserved our very special thanks. This year was the 25th anniversary of National Volunteer Week, the single biggest celebration of volunteers and the impact they make here in Australia.

During National Volunteer Week the member for Mirani, the member for Whitsunday and I had the great pleasure of meeting some terrific volunteers in Mackay at radio station 4CRM. I was delighted to learn that the volunteers at this station have very broad backgrounds including people with a disability, seniors, young people, long-term unemployed and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. At 4CRM these volunteers had the opportunity to undertake free training in broadcast as well as have their own radio show.

At that visit I was absolutely thrilled to deliver the great news that the radio station was the recipient of a Caring for our Community grant. The \$12,844 grant will mean that the radio station is able to upgrade its communication and broadcasting equipment used by the volunteers. This will benefit the quality of live programming, both from the studio and at community events. Importantly, the upgrades will allow the station to enter the digital age, and they are very excited about that. The station managers told me that broadcasting on digital radio will give volunteers greater exposure and greater experience as they currently use an outdated analogue system. It will also make the broadcasting experience easier and more enjoyable for volunteers who will not be forced to use unreliable equipment. This is what Caring for our Community grants are all about—assisting community and volunteer organisations to purchase essential equipment so that they can continue their vital work delivering front-line services and supporting our communities. The Caring for our

Community grants were an election commitment, and we are delivering on that commitment. Round 2 of the \$4 million program has recently been announced, with 358 organisations receiving a grant of up to \$5,000 for equipment and materials or, in the case of radio station 4CRM, a grant of up to \$15,000 for more substantial projects.

Community and volunteer organisations are the backbone of our great state. So it is important that we support them in their efforts to help local residents—something the former government did not understand. The Caring for our Community program did not exist under Labor and community groups were struggling to afford to purchase the necessary equipment to provide these services. However, we understand the importance of these groups and have a strong plan to grow Queensland and communities and support volunteers not only during Volunteer Week but also throughout the year.

We know volunteers have the power to make a real difference in the community, but they often do not receive the recognition that they deserve for their hard work and commitment. I now put on record my sincere thanks to Queensland's army of volunteers for their selflessness and I urge them to keep up their very great work.

Budget

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.20 am): Today the Treasurer and this government will bring down its third budget. We know that this will be a horror budget. This budget will show how out of touch and how arrogant the LNP government is in Queensland. I am very disturbed about revelations we are hearing reported in the papers right across this state that some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders, our pensioners, will be targeted in this budget. This just goes to show how out of touch Campbell Newman, the Premier, and Tim Nicholls, the Treasurer, really are when it comes to vulnerable Queenslanders. Why do I say that? Because out there pensioners are hurting. At the moment the pensioners out there are struggling to pay their electricity bills, and now this government, courtesy of Tony Abbott and Campbell Newman working hand in hand, working in tandem, is going to take away their pensioner concessions.

What does this mean? It means a few things. It means that their electricity prices will go up higher. It means that their gas prices will go up higher. It also means that their travel subsidies will be reduced. I know that pensioners in my electorate—and it would be the case in many electorates right across this state—have worked hard all of their lives. They have worked, they have paid their taxes and now they are being attacked by this heartless, cruel government. They are being attacked and they will suffer the pain from this year's budget.

We do not expect anything less from this government because we have seen the impact of the Tony Abbott federal government—the LNP. Once LNP, always LNP; it is in their blood. It is in their blood to inflict pain and suffering on our most vulnerable. We know that in the Tony Abbott budget people will now be charged over \$7 a visit to their local doctor. Now, the pensioners are going to have to pay more to travel to the doctor and they are going to have to pay even more on top of the higher electricity prices that they have been forced to pay under this government.

I refer Queenslanders to Campbell Newman's pledge. His pledge, his contract with Queensland, was very simple: to lower the cost of living. Today there will be a budget of more broken promises. Our pensioners will suffer, and we know other parts of Queensland will suffer as well. We expect this afternoon in this budget that there will be a massive asset sale. The Labor Party knows what Queenslanders think of asset sales. Honourable members have only to look around this House to know what Queenslanders think of asset sales. That is why we were reduced to seven at the last election. And now this government shows how out of touch and how they are not listening to Queenslanders, because what we will see in this horror budget is the sale of the Townsville port and the sale of the Gladstone port. I have been to Townsville. I have been to Gladstone. The people of Townsville and the people of Gladstone do not want their port sold—pure and simple. They do not want their port sold.

We also have heard that there is going to be private sector investment in our electricity sector. This will be, yet again, another broken promise. What this will mean for Queenslanders is, once again, higher power prices. You cannot expect the private industry to buy into the power industry and not make a profit. Where will the profit come from? The profit will come from families across Queensland. Over the weekend the government was hiding. The Premier and the Treasurer were hiding because of their massive blow-out in the budget deficit, a huge blow-out that happened on their watch. This government cannot manage the economy. This government does not understand people. This government does not understand the pain they will inflict on our pensioners come this afternoon.

The Labor Party will stand up for pensioners in this state. We will stand up for the people in Gladstone. We will stand up for the people in Townsville. We will stand up for the workers in the electricity industry and we will stand up for families, who have seen broken promise after broken promise after broken promise from this government. My message to Queenslanders today is: the Newman government is no different from Tony Abbott, and it is going to be a horror budget.

(Time expired)

School Maintenance

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (11.25 am): Ever since I have been a member of this House it has struck me how the debate in this chamber varies between the political points being taken by those on the other side and the sound government and services being provided by those on this side. That is no more evident than in the speech we just heard from the Leader of the Opposition, which was about politics, politics, politics and contained nothing about management or delivery of services to the people of Queensland. It reminded me that during the recess I brought in some of my school captains, the leaders of my schools in my electorate, to attend a seminar on leadership at Parliament House. So schools are what came to my mind when I heard the politicking of the Leader of the Opposition. What great news we have to tell the people of Queensland about schools, particularly my schools in the Mansfield electorate. I know what has been delivered to those schools and what great benefits have been achieved. I thank my colleague the Minister for Education, who has been out to Mansfield, had a round table with principals and delivered some great results to my electorate.

The backlog of maintenance that Labor left was truly disgraceful. In my electorate, Wishart State School is celebrating its 50th year this year, and so I will start with them. The backlog in maintenance that Labor left, the basic, on-the-ground stuff that the mums and dads of Mansfield care about, was \$211,850. The Minister for Education has been able to fill that gap completely. We have caught up with \$211, 850 of backlog in maintenance. Yolanda Tognini and the team at Wishart State School are now able to get on with things in a school that actually works and has the downpipes and the drains well and truly fixed.

At Upper Mount Gravatt State School, Derek Brady and his team had a backlog of \$310,350. We have funded that to the extent of \$268,575 and Upper Mount Gravatt State School is once again starting to function properly. Do honourable members know what was the backlog at Mansfield State High School, the biggest school in my electorate? It was \$3.67 million of maintenance backlog. This is from the opposition over there, who talk about the wonderful services they provided, the on-the-ground services for mums and dads and the people in my electorate. That was a \$3.67 million backlog. We have funded that now to \$785,350. If honourable members go past Mansfield State High School today they will see the new suspended walkway that is being put in to replace the old and dangerous one, the great maintenance that has been caught up with and, in addition to all of that, the year 7 classrooms being built. There is a lot of activity on that site.

Not only have we been providing this great assistance to schools with their maintenance backlog, the Great Results Guarantee is delivering also at the educational end, just where we need it. Once again, it is absolute hypocrisy for the opposition to talk about the services they provided when we were left with literacy and numeracy numbers in this state trailing the rest of the country. This government has concentrated on exactly what the mums and dads of Mansfield want. They want their kids to be able to read, write and add up, and that is exactly what we have been doing. At Mount Gravatt East State School \$78,000 has gone towards that program. At Rochedale State School, a new independent public school—and there is another plus—\$225,000 has gone towards literacy and numeracy under this guarantee.

I have here the agreements that some of my schools have entered into in relation to this guarantee. The one from Wishart State School indicates the sort of issue that we have within my electorate, and these figures show it. The percentage of students in year 3 that they intend to get to a national minimum standard in reading is from 99 per cent to 100 per cent. That does not sound like much, but the principal there said to me that the one per cent of students who are in that category is very hard to move; they just keep sitting in that category. I think this fantastically targeted expenditure will make sure that they move ahead, and I once again congratulate the minister for it.

I want to finally congratulate the minister for his approval yesterday of a new school in my electorate, Yarranlea Primary School, which was previously a state school—and the parents were disappointed that that state school had to close—will now rise as a new independent school. It is great to have an independent school in my electorate. I congratulate Adrienne Innes and the team there who fought for this, and I will look forward to seeing its progress.

(Time expired)

Virgin Australia

 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): I wish to raise the opposition's concerns over an apparent threat by Virgin Australia to withdraw from Queensland over chaotic decision-making processes within the Newman government. If members missed the coverage in a variety of media outlets last week, including the *Courier-Mail*, *Brisbane Times*, ABC and Channel 7, I will summarise it for you.

The *Courier-Mail* headline on 30 May was, 'Virgin Australia threatens to pull out of Brisbane after State Cabinet backflip favoured Qantas'. Briefly, the story arose from documents which were released under right to information legislation which showed that Virgin Australia's chief executive John Borghetti was incredulous that the Newman cabinet reversed a decision to deregulate the Brisbane-Roma-Charleville route. Mr Borghetti wrote to the Premier to vent his anger because the backflip meant that Qantas retained its monopoly on an important route. If the media coverage is correct, the decision of the cabinet was overturned after the intervention of the member for Warrego.

This story also revealed that despite receiving a letter in which Mr Borghetti made it very plain that he believed Virgin's contribution to the state was not valued and that the disrespect shown by the Newman government would be taken into account in Virgin's future investment and network decisions, the Premier did not have the grace to reply to Mr Borghetti for more than a month. Little wonder that Mr Borghetti believes the Newman government is taking Virgin Australia for granted.

Mr Borghetti's conclusion that the Newman government was preventing the airline from competing and that as a result Virgin Australia would reconsider its commitment to Queensland evidently does not bother the Premier: but it should. Queenslanders, who have been major beneficiaries from reduced airfares for flying within the state as a result of the competition Virgin Australia has brought to the market, will not thank the LNP if the airline loses its enthusiasm to expand its routes here. Virgin Australia has played a major part in reducing the cost of air travel in regional towns and cities throughout Queensland including: Hervey Bay, Sunshine Coast, Gladstone, Cairns, Mackay, Townsville, Hayman Island, Gold Coast, Proserpine, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Moranbah, Cloncurry and Emerald.

I find it incredible that, through a combination of indecision, chaotic backflips and sheer bad manners, the Newman government has taken its relationship with one of Queensland's most important corporations to the brink. What does it say about the Premier's priorities, how decisions are reached by the LNP cabinet and the Newman government's breathtaking arrogance? While I do not believe that a company with Virgin's acumen and reputation would leave Queensland in a fit of pique over the inadequacies of the Premier and transport minister, I think it would be foolish beyond words to take Virgin for granted. There are reasons to fear that the company may decide to direct its future investments to states where it feels valued and where the government treats it with respect.

Again for those opposite who might be too preoccupied with their own chances of survival to pay much attention to what is actually going on around them, I will refer to another news story from last week which provides a valuable insight into the failings of the Premier and his transport minister. When Qantas announced that it was going to close its Brisbane call centre with the loss of approximately 200 jobs, it became abundantly clear that the Newman government had done nothing to try to persuade Qantas to keep those jobs in Queensland. The Premier and the transport minister might have looked sheepish and uncomfortable, but effectively they shrugged their shoulders and looked the other way. When journalists asked why he had not lobbied Qantas to keep its call centre operations in Queensland and why he had refused to meet with the unions representing the workers who will lose their jobs, all the Premier could say was that Qantas had to arrange its activities as it sees fit. What an attitude! It is an administration that just does not care.

Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—PUP) (11.35 am): Trust in the Newman government over asset sales is a matter of high importance. The Newman government's budget is about asset sales on an unprecedented level. It is a budget that requires a great deal of faith and the utmost trust in the

Premier and the Newman government. Accordingly, the Premier's trustworthiness should be thoroughly considered by all Queenslanders at this time in deciding whether to give the Newman government an election mandate to sell or lease our state's most valuable assets such as the port of Gladstone.

At this time of the 54th parliament there are many measures that can be applied to assess the Premier and Newman government's trustworthiness. Perhaps the most fitting is to revisit and examine what the Premier publicly stated when he addressed thousands of public servants before the 2012 state election. The Premier recorded a YouTube video, and the transcript really says it all. I will read the Premier's personal pledge to public servants so that all Queenslanders can scrutinise and measure the Newman government's trustworthiness as it is relevant to the forthcoming state budget. He said—

I am delighted to have this opportunity to say a few words, and I thank the Together union for making this possible. This election is about a clear choice: Labor's 20-year broken record, or the LNP with a strong and united team to get Queensland back on track.

All hardworking public servants in Queensland should look forward to a bright and rewarding future with the LNP, because the LNP has made clear commitments to work with Queensland's hardworking and dedicated public servants. Particularly we have promised no forced redundancies, and we will not continue Labor's unfair and arbitrary 2.5 per cent wages cap.

History proves that that was a lie.

Our state needs change and the next government, whether it be another three years of Anna Bligh and Labor or the LNP with its strong and united team, will need to do some things differently and some things a lot better.

To get Queensland back on track, we will work closely with Together union members and all Queensland public servants. We know that working very closely with a highly skilled and highly motivated Public Service is the key to making things happen.

We're totally committed to ensuring that you have the support needed to get your job done. We are also committed to working constructively with the Together union, and I am committed to enterprise bargaining in good faith.

That is obviously a lie.

Experience as the Lord Mayor of Brisbane taught me—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Member for Yeerongpilly, I allowed a little bit of latitude on the first use of the word 'lie'. You are making it a habit in your speech and it is unparliamentary, so I ask you to withdraw it.

Mr JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. That is clearly a questionable statement that he made. I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Member for Yeerongpilly, you need to withdraw.

Mr JUDGE: I withdraw that statement. His experience as Lord Mayor of Brisbane apparently taught him the importance of working closely with the Public Service and their unions, and he claims that his record was the lowest levels of industrial disputation in many decades. We need to consider what has happened post the Premier's instalment. He says that he has seen firsthand what can be achieved when the 'knowledge, skills and expertise of staff are valued and rewarded' and that is why he is committed to ensuring that Queensland's public servants are 'well paid and confident about job security'. Queensland's public servants might have a different view about that!

We'll have a real focus on front-line services for Queenslanders.

People tell him, apparently, that they feel many departments have become too focused on making public servants justify their work rather than allowing them to use their skills and expertise to build a better Queensland.

Campbell Newman said that he would work with the departments to cut internal red tape and give people the autonomy and authority to get on with the job. He claimed that public servants had been repeatedly let down by the Bligh Labor government in terms of the Health payroll system being rushed through, ill-thought-out machinery-of-government changes and an arrogant approach by government to enterprise bargaining. Again, Queenslanders can have their own view about whether he has changed that situation or not. He claimed that these things had all taken their toll on morale in that it has always been the public servants who get the blame, not ministers. He claimed that the broken record of Queensland Labor is on the record. He said that public servants deserved better and that is why he claimed that he was committed to working with Queensland public servants to get the state back on track. I would suggest the Queensland Public Service has an alternative view of the Newman government. All Queenslanders can now draw their own conclusions about the Newman government's trustworthiness and whether our state's assets—

(Time expired)

Road Transport Industry, Inspectors

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (11.40 am): Today I rise to speak about the situation surrounding road transport inspectors in this state. The most important thing on our roads is road safety. When it comes to the heavy transport industry, compliance is a contributing factor to that road safety where operators maintain their vehicles to the point of the law. The transport industry in my eyes appears to be the only industry where you get penalised to go to work. Some transport inspectors are indiscriminately directing and targeting their operations at the same people all of the time. I do not mind if somebody has done the wrong thing and they cop the full brunt of the law, but I am referring to discrepancies in logbooks and other minor defects in operations where trucks are on the road all of the time. Whilst we are doing the best to upgrade the roads in our state, there are many roads in remote areas that are gravel and the maintenance factor is always ongoing.

Mr Malone: And rest stops.

Mr JOHNSON: Yes, rest stops. I take the interjection from the honourable member for Mirani. Most of the rest stops in the far west of the state are usually chock-a-block with somebody camping there in the middle of the night and as a result trucks cannot get off the road anyway. We need to follow the Northern Territory model and put in place rules where caravans cannot camp at truck stops and trucks cannot camp at caravan stops. It is as easy as that. Getting back to the point, no-one condones blatant breaking of the law—for example, drugs and poorly maintained units and rolling stock. Some receivers of goods are culprits in the equation when they demand time lines be stretched. This is a direct violation of the chain-of-responsibility legislation. I have never heard of major suppliers and wholesalers like Coles and Woolworths being fined or charged under the chain-of-responsibility legislation. It is always the truck driver who might be running half an hour late or an hour late or whatever. This is an absolute blatant direct abuse of somebody trying to do their job. Some of these people do not have the education or the comprehension to work out things like some of us who have been given a good education can. I am referring to minor faults in a logbook where police or transport inspectors go through them. I had an occasion the other day where a driver from a very reputable company in Toowoomba was apprehended in Cloncurry. They went through his book and could not find anything wrong. Further down the highway going south he was apprehended again but they could not find anything wrong. Another 100 kays on he was pulled over again and this time they found a minor discrepancy in his logbook and he was fined \$600.

This is not fair and this is not right. At the end of the day, these are people just like surgeons in operating theatres who are doing a professional job or schoolteachers in classrooms who are doing a professional job. They are out there on the road all of the time. Given they drive for 14 hours and sleep for seven hours, that is what it is all about. If it is livestock or if it is fruit and vegetable produce, sometimes they might get an extension to go over a couple of hours. However, we have to be understanding and tolerant of these operators and the responsibilities they have behind the wheel. If some of the people in motor cars drove as responsibly and carefully as some of our truck drivers, I am sure we would reduce the road toll from what it is today. We have some of the best operators in this country driving trucks in this state and these discriminatory attacks on some operators have to stop and some of these transport inspectors have to realise that if drivers have to pay a \$600 fine after they have absolutely been victimised—and indiscriminately victimised—that is \$600 out of their wage. That driver might have his wife and kids at home or a house to pay off or a car to pay off. These are normal, hardworking Australians who are keeping this nation going. I urge the transport minister and his department to take stock of this issue and look very closely at those who are victimising the honest, hardworking people who are keeping this state and this nation moving. We depend on the road transport industry. It is one of the most up-market industries and professional industries we have in this state, if not in the world. I say to the minister and members of that department that we have to do something about it, otherwise we will not have an industry.

(Time expired)

Breast Cancer

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (11.45 am): I rise to speak on breast cancer risks and prevention. My mother has developed breast cancer and, due to a heart condition, is unable to have a mastectomy at this time. I have been attempting to educate myself more on why breast cancer develops. What I have found is alarming, not just because of the surprising contributing factors but because many of the risks that increase breast cancer are not public knowledge. That I find inexcusable. I wish to say to those who hide the findings to not treat women with such disrespect as

to decide for us what we should know and what we should not. I want to quote from a publication available online from the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute quoting research by Dr Angela Lanfranchi and Dr Joel Brind. It states—

Despite the widely held belief that it is unknown what causes breast cancer, the fact is most breast cancer risks are dependent upon lifetime exposure to oestrogen and the age at which a woman matures her breast tissue through pregnancy.

Research has shown us all about the biology of the breast and how modern lifestyle choices have made breasts susceptible to cancer. This is evident by the fact that, while most cancers have started to decline, breast cancer has increased by an alarming 40 per cent in the US. It is in the public's interest to understand that it is not just bad genes or family history that causes a woman to be at risk. Only five per cent to 10 per cent of all breast cancer is felt to be truly genetic and caused by a cancer gene. We all know that research has shown links to the pill and HRT and doctors monitor their patients very closely these days and warn about not staying on them for too long. Put very simply, the research shows exposure to increased oestrogen is the main culprit in developing breast cancer. Therefore, it has been found that, in addition to genetic predisposition, the pill, HRT and obesity, the more children you have the less risk there is; the younger a woman has children the less risk; the longer a woman breastfeeds the less risk; not being exposed to benzopyrene in cigarette smoke reduces the risk; having children reduces risk; carrying a baby to full term reduces risk; not drinking alcohol decreases risk as alcohol increases oestrogen by impairing liver function; and exercise can reduce risk by 30 per cent. The medical and scientific community also agree that the more full-term pregnancies a woman has the lower her risk of breast cancer and the longer the duration of breastfeeding the lower the risk of breast cancer because breastfeeding matures breast cells into the stable type 4 cells and also postpones the return of menstrual cycles with the exposure to oestrogen. All of these protective factors are mitigated against by induced abortion and women are not being informed of these basic facts.

A recent study by Chinese researchers Huang et al even showed that a dose effect, that is, the more induced abortions a woman had, the greater her risk of breast cancer. Another six studies have emerged from India and Bangladesh, confirming that induced abortion increases breast cancer risk.

Why are women not informed of these basic facts so that they can avoid induced abortions and thus lower their risk of breast cancer, the major cause of death other than road accidents for premenopausal women and the third major cause of death for postmenopausal women? I know that some of these choices will be unpopular or inconvenient, but women have a right to know. A woman has no choice at all if she does not know the choices in the first place. Let women decide if they want to make lifestyle choices that decrease or increase the risk of contracting cancer. I hope that this speech will raise awareness and get the conversation started about some real ways a woman can prevent contracting breast cancer.

Australian Curriculum

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.50 am): Recently, the impact of the national curriculum—or the C2C, Curriculum into the Classroom—in rural areas has again reared its ugly head. After almost two years of the rollout of this fast-tracked system, which was imposed on people in rural areas, its effects are no less disastrous on the lifestyles of families living in remote areas. Despite having so many flaws, in 2012 the education department suggested that the introduction of C2C not be delayed and it was introduced into the school of distance education. What has occurred since that curriculum was introduced is something that the education minister should be very worried about and one that he and his department should be spending sleepless nights on, working overtime, to try to resolve.

On the weekend in two different western towns that I visited two parents from cattle properties came to me, unprompted, expressing their deep concerns about the impact of these changes to the curriculum. To put their concerns into context, we have the drought and other things affecting these people, but the main thing that they want to raise with me is the impact of the national curriculum on their lifestyles. These people are clearly distressed. They get aggressive when talking to me, because this curriculum is impacting heavily on their lifestyles.

One teacher who I know has been involved with the School of the Air for over 20 years has described the impact of this curriculum as nothing short of diabolical. One parent observed that the numbers at the recent School of the Air sports day were down significantly and suggested that enrolment numbers may be down. I have now requested that information from the minister. That

parent suggested that the reduced number could be due in part to the impact of the curriculum. It could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. It could make workers and other people living on remote properties make the decision to move in town. I should also acknowledge that the numbers at the sports day could be impacted by other components of the rural crisis.

One of the parents from a rural property who I spoke to on the weekend had made the decision to get a house in town and move the kids into town. So for five days a week she is away from her husband so that the kids could go to school in Richmond. I congratulate the principal of that school, Patrick Brady, who does a terrific job. This parent said that her children are now getting a good education. But she should not have to make that decision. She should not have to leave the station where she helps her husband survive on the land because of these curriculum changes that have been forced on her children.

These changes to the curriculum might have some good effects, but they were rolled out too fast and the assistance to help with the changes is not there. Something needs to be done to resolve the issues. Some of the impacts of C2C include kids not getting their materials on time or not receiving them at all. Much of the material that they did receive initially was substandard and parents claimed that they had political agendas that were offensive to people living in rural areas. Parents had significant difficulties with downloading material. Lots of families had to extend their internet plans to cope with that and still they went well over their allocation. Evidently, no consideration was given to internet connectivity in the bush. Parents found the material in the C2C framework difficult to modify to different levels of learning ability. There were technological difficulties with miStick. It was unreliable and, in many cases, just did not work. That difficulty clearly increased the frustration of parents who are trying to be teachers and tutors. Many gave up and asked for hard copies of the program, which they were not supposed to receive. The C2C programs on literacy were deemed by almost every parent on a ICPA teleconference to be insufficient.

Currently, federally there is a review of this curriculum, but it is not moving fast enough. Everything needs to be changed as soon as possible—I would say immediately. The curriculum needs to be more adaptable and flexible. One parent, who was a teacher herself, said that her daughter failed year 7 science because she was learning the year 10 science course that her older daughter had learned a few years ago. That child now says, 'Science is just not my thing.' That parent said that the curriculum is seriously flawed and, in many cases, is a failed attempt at social engineering, because it does not always tell both sides of the story.

It must also be considered that the emotional stress that these curriculum changes is causing these families is coming at a time when a lot of them do not need it. For people who live on these cattle properties, they are facing too many issues already. The changes in the curriculum are a jump to a standard that is far too high and has occurred far too quickly for a lot of these kids. It is causing these kids to either become disillusioned or walk away from their schooling altogether.

This is a cry for help from parents to address this issue. Clearly, they are very distressed. The education department's website pledges to deliver world-class education to people at every stage of their personal and professional development. The delivery of that standard of education must include being delivered to these kids in remote areas. They cannot be forgotten. Many parents in remote areas are working very hard so that their kids can get off the land or get out of the situation that they find themselves in. They might be a fencing contractor up in the gulf who does not have the internet connectivity for their kids to learn the curriculum. They are having all of these problems and their poor kid is walking away from school. They want to give their kid an education so that they can get their kid off the land, but that education is not being made available because of the failures of this system. This issue needs to be addressed. The curriculum is having a disastrous effect on people's lifestyles in the bush. I plead for the minister to act on it.

(Time expired)

Agricultural Events

 **Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (11.55 am): Today, I would like to speak about some of the events that I have had the good fortune to attend in recent times and will attend this coming week in my role as Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries

and Forestry and as the member for Toowoomba South. These events include Ag.Trade.Life in Mackay, the Maleny Agricultural Show, the Queensland Day markets in Margaret Street in Toowoomba and, of course, FarmFest this week. These events play a very important role in bringing together local communities and providing an opportunity for businesses and farmers in particular to showcase the best of the region's primary industries and, of course, their hard work.

Canegrowers Mackay Community Bank Ag.Trade.Life Exhibition, which I opened on behalf of Canegrowers Mackay on Friday, 23 May, went for two days, celebrating and showcasing agriculture across the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions. It was a great honour and pleasure to attend alongside my friends and colleagues the local member for Whitsunday, Jason Costigan, and, of course, the member for Mirani, Ted Malone. The Mackay region is known for its tourism, with access to beautiful island escapes and our picturesque Great Barrier Reef; its rich basin for the coal industry; and, of course, importantly it is one of Australia's largest sugar-producing areas, producing around 20 per cent of our raw sugar. It was great to see the local support for this event from the Sarina Community Bank and numerous exhibitors.

Last Friday, I opened the 77th Maleny Agricultural Show. It was great to attend and open the event alongside the local member for Glass House and Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, Andrew Powell. The Maleny show plays a vital role in the region and it was wonderful to see the strength of the community at the show on both the Friday and, I am advised, the Saturday. Our agricultural shows are a time for entertainment: to celebrate and to enjoy the showcase of various regions' primary industries. Of course, our agricultural shows provide an opportunity for families to gather and celebrate their community, to catch up with old friends and to exhibit their unique talents. When I visit any show I love to walk through the pavilions to see the animals—the chickens, as does the Deputy Premier in his own electorate, the cattle and the sheep—to speak to local farmers, to view the creations from artworks to cake baking, to see the produce displays as well as the showjumping, the events in the main arena and one of my favourites—

Mr Johnson: What about show bags? You'd want to take one home with you.

Dr McVEIGH: Certainly the show bag, but for the benefit of the member for Gregory—and I am sure he agrees with me—I was going to mention the woodchop. The Sunshine Coast hinterland has a diverse agricultural sector. It is known in particular for providing boutique agricultural products.

Toowoomba's Queensland Day market in Margaret Street was a huge success. I had the opportunity to attend the market in my capacity as the local member with my colleague Trevor Watts, the member for Toowoomba North. A warm welcome was provided by the mayor. There was a flag-raising ceremony, led by the Girl Guides with that Queensland Day theme. Of course, this market provides an opportunity for people to look at local agricultural produce. Tomorrow, I will be attending the CRT FarmFest held at Toowoomba, which showcases over 2,000 companies on site and provides professionals, farmers and their suppliers with access to the latest information, machinery, equipment and other services available.

Events like these give people from communities all across Queensland the opportunity to come together, to learn and to connect with industry representatives as friends. As we all know, Queenslanders have faced hard times of late with the drought but as I explained when I was keynote speaker at the Showmen's Guild at Yatala in January of this year, local shows help bring people together and highlight the broader community and the appreciation of agriculture in those communities.

In closing, I reflect on my own experience attending just about every show across the Darling Downs with my father either showing his Clydesdale horses, entering his champion wheat crops or simply attending as a local resident. As I explained to the Showmen's Guild, that agricultural show blood is always there with so many regional members. As I announced at Yatala, I had drummed into me fond memories of what local shows mean in my part of the world and across Queensland now, as just last year I attended the show in Tully with the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. I will never forget, for example, that the hot and tasty dagwood dog on a stick is "makin', bakin', cookin' all the while. Come to the Highline Snack Bar for the hot and tasty dagwood dogs on a stick!"

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): The time for matters of public interest has expired.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING (RED TAPE REDUCTION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

Hon. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (12.01 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Deputy Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING (RED TAPE REDUCTION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT 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 amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Gasfields Commission Act 2013, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Queensland Industry Participation Policy Act 2011, the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Water Act 2000 for particular purposes, to repeal the Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Act 2007, the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act 1998, the Gurulmundi Secure Landfill Agreement Act 1992, the Racing Venues Development Act 1982 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005, and to make minor, consequential and other amendments to the legislation mentioned in schedule 1

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 3 JUN 2014

Tabled paper: Message, dated 3 June 2014, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5254\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (12.03 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Gasfields Commission Act 2013, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Queensland Industry Participation Policy Act 2011, the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Water Act 2000 for particular purposes, to repeal the Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Act 2007, the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act 1998, the Gurulmundi Secure Landfill Agreement Act 1992, the Racing Venues Development Act 1982 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005, and to make minor, consequential and other amendments to the legislation mentioned in schedule 1. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5255\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5256\]](#).

This bill is a red-tape reduction bill. It is the product of a review of legislation within my department and it clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to reducing the regulatory burden in Queensland. The bill will assist the government to meet its target of reducing red tape by 20 per cent by 2018. If enacted the bill will repeal five acts and amend a number of others to improve existing processes and produce efficiencies, remove redundant provisions and requirements and promote clarity for stakeholders.

Firstly can I address the section of this bill that proposes to repeal the Wild Rivers Act and regulation so that it can be replaced by a new framework which will safeguard iconic natural areas balanced with appropriate development opportunities for local communities and which local communities in Cape York themselves have had a major part in planning. The commencement of the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 facilitates the application of these land use policies in a consistent manner across the state. The act provides for a declaration of strategic environmental areas to recognise environmental areas that are significant to the communities surrounding these

areas. I table the final draft of the Regional Planning Interests Regulation which sets out those land use policies to be used within the framework of the Regional Planning Interests Act that was passed through this House earlier in the year.

Tabled paper: Regional Planning Interests Act 2014, Sustainable Planning Act 2009: Draft Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014 [5257].

All of the areas that were formally declared within the Wild Rivers Act will be declared strategic environment areas under the Regional Interests Planning Act. That is the result of extensive consultation in the development of the Cape York Regional Plan in particular where community representatives on the cape made it very clear to us that that was the outcome that they wanted. The only exception will be the addition of the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve which the government has made a policy about. All of the areas declared under the Wild Rivers Act, whether they be on Cape York, in the gulf, the islands that were declared wild rivers areas or the Channel Country, will be transitioned into the Regional Planning Interests Act as strategic environmental areas.

Amendments to the Regional Planning Interests Regulation will carry forward the land use protection of the Wild Rivers Act. Consequential amendments are also proposed to a number of acts and regulations affected by the repeal of the Wild Rivers Act including providing for transitional arrangements. The Regional Planning Interests Regulation, as I said, is the result of extensive consultation and evidence that we have listened to from the Indigenous people of Cape York. Those communities want to have a say in what land is protected for environmental and cultural purposes and they want to have a say in economic development opportunities for themselves and their children. They want to have a say in the future of their communities.

I cannot introduce this bill without expressing my gratitude and my admiration for the people of Cape York who have been involved in this process. They very clearly indicated to me that the original proposal that the government had put was too restrictive on their plans for the development of their communities. It has taken two years to get to this point where we can repeal the wild rivers legislation and replace it with a planning instrument that is consistent with other planning instruments that are being used across Queensland. The effort that has been put in by those Indigenous communities on Cape York needs to be recognised. It has resulted in all of the wild rivers declarations being carried forward into the Regional Planning Interests Act but it has also resulted in a process that will give those Indigenous communities the right of self-determination. It will end the paternalistic, politically charged, emotive nonsense that was the Wild Rivers Act, a piece of legislation that was used to trade off the futures of the people of Cape York for green preferences election after election. The people of Cape York themselves have been closely involved in developing this alternative which has taken a long time. It has taken two years. I thank them for their patience and congratulate them on the input that they have had and I look forward to the passage of this legislation and the adoption of the Regional Planning Interests Regulation, the final draft of which I have tabled.

The bill also seeks to repeal the Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Act 2007. A new statement on carbon capture and storage in Queensland has been developed in consultation with Australian Coal Association Low Emissions Technologies Limited and was published on the Department of Natural Resources and Mines' website on 1 May 2014. This new statement reflects the recognition by industry and the state government that carbon capture and storage technology can play an important role underpinning the long-term sustainability of the use and export of Queensland resources. The Queensland government and Australian Coal Association Low Emissions Technologies Limited have agreed that it is now appropriate to terminate the Clean Coal Agreement and repeal the Clean Coal Act.

The bill also seeks the repeal of the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act 1998 and the Racing Venues Development Act 1982. The Eagle Farm Racecourse Act was established to provide for the transfer of the Eagle Farm Racecourse lands to the Queensland Turf Club Ltd, now the Brisbane Racing Club. This transfer occurred in 1998. As the lands have been transferred and an equivalent provision to the act's one relevant continuing provision is contained in the Racing Act 2002, the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act now can be repealed. Construction of the Commonwealth Games Athletes Village commenced in 2013 at the Parklands site on the Gold Coast. The Parklands Trust, established under the Racing Venues Development Act, has been wound up. As Parklands Gold Coast was the sole remaining racing venue on lands held by the state, the Racing Venues Development Act will also be repealed.

The bill also proposes the repeal of the Gurulmundi Secure Landfill Agreement Act 1992. The Gurulmundi act is a special agreement act covering the Gurulmundi secure landfill site, located near Miles, on the border of my electorate although not quite in my electorate. The Queensland government owns and maintains the site and it has been unused since 1998. A number of parties are

interested in purchasing the site for waste management activities, such as composting and resource recovery, but are prevented from doing so by the continuing existence of the Gurulmundi act. Repealing the act will allow for the government to sell or lease the site, contributing to regional development and the effective use of a purpose designed waste management site.

The bill proposes amendments to the Economic Development Act 2012 to ensure its ongoing efficient operation. The proposed amendments relate to the revocation of priority development areas, the declaration of provisional priority development areas, changing a land-use plan in a development scheme, the making of community infrastructure designations, clarification of the role of the economic development fund, establishing a mechanism to fund the infrastructure costs required to support a priority development area and infrastructure related matters.

Following a review of indemnity arrangements within each agency's legislation portfolio, amendments to the Gasfields Commission Act will remove redundant references of the term 'staff' from section 44 of the act. Broad legislative immunities are now provided within the Public Service Act and the Police Service Administration Act.

The Queensland government spends around \$16.5 billion per year on goods and services. This represents a significant market for Queensland suppliers. The Local Industry Policy was originally introduced in December 1999 with the objective of increasing the participation of local suppliers in government procurement. As a result of the Queensland Commission of Audit, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning undertook a review of the policy and, in consultation with agencies and industry, has developed an improved Charter of Local Content to replace the redundant Local Industry Policy. The new charter reduces costs for government, is simpler to administer and reflects a best-practice framework that complements the Queensland Procurement Policy. It provides a framework for encouraging government agencies to apply best practice to ensure full, fair and reasonable opportunity for local suppliers. The charter also minimises the compliance burden on government agencies and contractors by including a simplified reporting system. The act is to be amended to roll reporting on the implementation of the charter into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning's annual report, instead of preparing a separate report to parliament.

The bill also seeks to amend the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 to improve decision-making processes and reduce red tape. Importantly, amendments will reduce impediments to timely decision making, clarify the responsibilities of the Coordinator-General and proponents, and provide the Coordinator-General with improved powers with respect to watercourse crossings and roads. The amendments will also allow the Coordinator-General to more effectively manage the environmental impact statement process and to facilitate development in state development areas. The Coordinator-General has set the ambitious target of reducing timeframes for coordinated project EISs under Part 4 of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act by 50 per cent. To date this target has been achieved through the introduction of a wide range of initiatives that have streamlined internal processes, reduced assessment timeframes, minimised the prescriptive nature of approval conditions and reduced compliance costs. In addition, these initiatives have improved the quality of the impact assessments and delivered positive outcomes for the environment and the community.

The bill that I introduce proposes necessary legislative amendments to further consolidate streamlining measures into project assessment processes. Amendments include introducing an alternative impact assessment report process for well-defined and low-medium risk coordinated projects where a comprehensive EIS process is not required for the project. In relation to state development areas, the amendments enable a development scheme to regulate development in all or part of a state development area; to regulate a broader range of development, including reconfiguring a lot and operational works in addition to regulating use of land; and to set levels of assessment for regulated development in state development areas. Amendments to the Land Title Act 1994 support amendments to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act by ensuring that the Coordinator-General has the power equivalent to a local government and the Minister for Economic Development Queensland with respect to approving and creating plans of subdivisions.

The bill also proposes amendments in relation to the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 to solve a long-standing problem with what have become known as 'party houses'. This issue has been around for many years. For seven years state and local governments have searched for a solution. This bill seeks to put in place a solution to allow local governments to deal with an issue that has been contentious for many of their residents. Residential dwellings that are regularly leased, hired or rented out for events such as bucks parties, weddings, birthday parties, special occasions or just weekend

parties are commonly referred to as 'party houses'. These events often generate nuisance in the form of traffic hazards, excessive noise, offensive social behaviour, violence, littering and illegal activities, and party house activities have an impact on neighbours. There is community concern about the need for the state to address the issue of party houses in residential areas. In particular, party houses have caused problems in locations on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, in Noosa and Cairns and on Stradbroke Island.

The proposed amendments to the Sustainable Planning Act define 'party house' as a use within the Sustainable Planning Act. The inclusion of this definition will enable local governments to amend their planning schemes to require that existing unlawful or new party houses, as defined in the Sustainable Planning Act, obtain a development approval. The amendments also provide that local governments can identify a party house restriction area in their planning schemes. The effect of the party house restriction area is to clarify that any residential dwellings in the area do not and never had the right to operate as a party house, unless otherwise approved by the local government under a development application process.

The proposed legislation will not prevent the owner of a residential dwelling from leasing their premises, or a property owner or tenant from hosting celebrations. The aim of the amendments is to deal with residential dwellings that are regularly being hired, rented or leased out for the purpose of hosting the type of events that mean the dwelling actually constitutes a party house as defined in SPA, and the use of the property has extended well beyond the residential use for which the property has a right. The proposed amendments will not deal with behavioural issues. The government has already taken action in relation to dealing with disruptive behaviour. The Police Powers and Other Responsibilities Amendment Act 2014 provides additional police powers to deal with out-of-control events and out-of-control behaviour, such as the behaviour that may occur at a party house. The proposed amendments provide local governments with the flexibility to opt in if desired, rather than mandating amendments for all planning schemes for an issue that is only a problem in a relatively small number of local government areas. We do not have too many party houses in Callide.

The bill also amends the Sustainable Planning Act to rectify an anomaly with the master planning transitional provisions. The complex structure planning and master planning framework was repealed in 2012. However, the transitional provisions introduced new third-party appeal rights that did not previously exist. This was not the intended outcome and is corrected in the bill. A definitional issue is also rectified. The transitional provisions also did not recognise the substantial consultation that was involved in master planning for a declared master planned area. The proposed amendments remove the requirement for public notification for any development that is consistent with the structure plan area code and any master plan area code. If development is not consistent with the structure plan area codes or master plan area codes, public notification and third-party appeal rights will apply.

The bill also provides for the removal of remaining iconic places provisions. Iconic places provisions were introduced to assist councils that were being amalgamated to give some protection to certain matters in their schemes at that particular time. Local government deamalgamation and scheme adjustments made since amalgamations makes this special arrangement redundant.

The proposed amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1994 will ensure its provisions are aligned with the Sustainable Planning Act to support development proposals. Amendments are being made to the Sustainable Planning Act for the same purpose—to ensure the efficient operation of the State Assessment and Referral Agency, or SARA, planning framework. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (12.20 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee.

LAND SALES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.20 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Agents Financial Administration Act 2014, the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Breakwater Island Casino Agreement Act 1984, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014, the Land Sales Act 1984, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Property Law Act 1974, the Property Occupations Act 2014 and the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 for particular purposes, to repeal the Land Sales Regulation 2000 and to make minor and consequential amendments of the acts mentioned in schedule 1. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Land Sales and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5258\]](#).

Tabled paper: Land Sales and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5259\]](#).

This government went to the election with a strong plan to grow a four-pillar economy based on tourism, agriculture, resources and, specifically, construction. The government has already made significant progress with respect to this commitment, but we are determined to do more to keep building on our strong plan for a brighter future.

As part of the government's delivery of its commitment to grow a four-pillar economy, I am pleased to present a bill for an act to amend the Agents Financial Administration Act 2014, the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Breakwater Island Casino Agreement Act 1984, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014, the Land Sales Act 1984, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Property Law Act 1974, the Property Occupations Act 2014 and the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 for particular purposes, to repeal the Land Sales Regulation 2000 and to make minor and consequential amendments of the acts mentioned in schedule 1.

The Land Sales Act 1984 regulates off-the-plan sales of land in Queensland, as well as the sale of lots proposed to be included in community titles schemes, such as apartments and home units. The broad purpose of the Land Sales Act, which continues to be highly relevant today, is to facilitate property development in Queensland while providing appropriate protections for consumers.

This bill is designed to modernise Queensland's Land Sales Act with a focus on reducing unnecessary red tape and regulation, which Labor burdened Queensland with for far too long. We will achieve this while ensuring effective and appropriate consumer protections for people buying land or apartments off the plan.

The government was elected with five key pledges—two of which squarely relate to this bill. Firstly, the government pledged to grow a four-pillar economy in Queensland based on tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. Secondly, the government pledged to revitalise front-line services for families by cutting waste resulting from unnecessary and cumbersome red tape and regulation. In this respect, members will be well aware of the government's target of reducing red tape by 20 per cent in six years. This bill continues the government's record on delivering real reforms that support and promote Queensland's property and construction sector.

We are well underway in eliminating unnecessary red tape that is suffocating individuals and businesses working in the property sector, which inevitably adds costs and other burdens for Queenslanders buying and selling property. For instance, we have brought an end to sustainability declarations—a regulatory burden that achieved nothing of substance other than unnecessarily complicating and adding costs to property transactions.

The government has also delivered legislation to repeal and replace the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act 2000 with contemporary, streamlined legislation that has been widely embraced by industry. We have also commenced, in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology, an extensive review of Queensland property laws, including community titles legislation. This review is being informed by consultation with peak industry representatives and the broader community.

Similarly, this bill is the result of an extensive review of the Land Sales Act which has been guided by a reference committee comprised of experts from the legal and surveying professions, the construction and development industry, academia and relevant government agencies. This bill is a further example of the government's proven record of working with industry and community stakeholders to improve Queensland property law and to develop a strong plan for Queenslanders.

One of the first highlights of the bill is that it will make finding the relevant law on off-the-plan sales significantly easier. Currently, there is significant overlap in legislation dealing with off-the-plan sales, particularly when it comes to the sale of proposed lots in community titles schemes. For example, both the Land Sales Act and the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 contain separate disclosure obligations that apply to a person selling an apartment or unit that is proposed to be included in a planned community titles scheme.

The bill proposes a more logical, streamlined approach to this issue. Specifically, provisions contained in the Land Sales Act applying to the sale of lots to be included in community titles developments will be removed from the Land Sales Act and relocated to the relevant community titles legislation—those acts being the Body Corporate and Community Management Act, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980 and the South Bank Corporation Act 1989. As a result, the Land Sales Act itself will only deal with the sale of proposed allotments of land that will not form part of a community titles style development.

Consistent with this government's clear commitment to supporting the property and construction sector, which is one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, the bill also eases a range of restrictions and bureaucratic processes that are unnecessarily adding costs and complication to property development in Queensland. For example, while the Land Sales Act currently allows a seller or buyer to seek an exemption from requirements of the act in relation to non-community titles developments of not more than five lots, these exemptions are subject to assessment and approval by the chief executive officer. Applications for exemptions are common and very rarely refused. Rather than requiring parties to spend their time and money applying for an exemption which will almost invariably be granted, the bill provides an automatic exemption for small developments. This will reduce costs for parties and government.

Also, the bill eases restrictions on selling unregistered, reconfigured land by allowing such land to be sold prior to receiving the relevant permits for developing the land, which is consistent with the flexibility provided to sellers of proposed lots in community titles schemes. Risks that development approval may not be granted or the actual land may vary significantly from the proposed land contracted upon will be mitigated for buyers by the consumer protection measures contained in the act. The bill reflects the government's position that buyers and sellers should be able to decide on contractual agreements that are suitable to them, without undue influence or intervention from government.

The bill allows deposits of up to 20 per cent of the purchase price to be payable. This will help with the financing of major projects which deliver economic growth, jobs and housing opportunities for Queenslanders. Buyers are protected as current trust account arrangements will continue to be applicable.

Similarly, the bill provides more flexibility for buyers and sellers of proposed lots in community titles schemes to contractually agree on the time for the seller to provide a registrable instrument of transfer to the buyer. Currently, a transfer must be provided within 3½ years of the contract being made—albeit, a regulation may extend the time for a further two years.

The bill does away with the unnecessary step of requiring extensions to be considered and approved by the Governor in Council. Rather, the amendments will enable parties to a contract to make their own agreement on when registrable instruments will be provided, as long as the agreed time frame is not more than 5½ years.

More generally, the bill modernises terminology and brings consistency to the application of termination rights for different types of developments. For example, the term 'vendor' will be replaced with 'seller'. The bill also improves disclosure to buyers by focusing on ensuring buyers receive information about the proposed lot that is meaningful and useful to them.

In summary, the bill is another example of this government's real commitment to supporting Queensland property and construction industries by making sure Queensland has a contemporary, streamlined property law framework that encourages innovation, growth and flexibility in our property and construction sector.

Separate to implementing outcomes of the review of the Land Sales Act, the bill also amends the Breakwater Island Casino Agreement Act 1984 to provide for the transfer of the ownership of the Jupiters Townsville Hotel and Casino from Jupiters Ltd to CLG Properties Pty Ltd as trustee for CLG Property Trust. Jupiters is currently party to a casino agreement with the state of Queensland, the form of which is ratified by parliament and incorporated into schedule 2 of the agreement act. In order

for the sale to proceed, the agreement act must be amended to recognise the form of the new agreement between the state and CLG as the new owners of Jupiters Townsville. The amendments are procedural in nature, executing an existing function of the Breakwater Casino Agreement Act.

Let me add that the sale will not be finalised until all of the Governor in Council and ministerial approvals required are satisfied. As the responsible minister, I will not determine these approvals until such time as a probity investigation that is currently underway in relation to CLG and its associates is completed. This is expected by the end of July 2014.

Finally, the bill makes minor amendments to the Property Occupations Act 2014 to correct a drafting error. This bill is a reflection of the government's commitment to grow a four-pillar economy and revitalise front-line services for families through red-tape reduction and delivers on the government's strong plan to ensure a brighter future for Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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.

WATER LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

Hon. MF McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.30 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Deputy Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

WATER LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT 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 amend the Water Act 2000, the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 3 JUN 2014

Tabled paper: Message, dated 3 June 2014, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Water Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5260\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Water Act 2000, the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Water Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5261\]](#).

Tabled paper: Water Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5262\]](#).

It is my pleasure to introduce the Water Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill 2014, which will make critical changes to improve the state's powers to respond to and manage water supply emergencies and flood events before the start of the next wet season. The need for these amendments comes from dealing with real events during earlier wet seasons. All of us in this parliament will recall the devastation of the 2011 floods in South-East Queensland and the event in 2013. The Newman government is determined to do all it can to mitigate the effects of future flood events on South-East Queensland homes and businesses. Whilst we cannot flood proof South-East Queensland entirely, we can act to reduce the impact of major flood events.

The bill will also amend the Water Act 2000 to improve the governance provisions for category 1 water authorities—that is, the Gladstone Area Water Board and the Mount Isa Water Board—and amend the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005 to align it with the Commonwealth act. The bill also makes minor amendments to the Water Act.

First, the bill amends the Water Act to streamline the emergency water supply declaration process to enable a more effective and timely response to short-term or immediate water supply emergencies. As the responsible minister, I can direct service providers to impose water restrictions under a water supply emergency declaration. However, the current act requires Governor in Council approval and gazettal to give effect to a declaration—a process that is time consuming and impractical for dealing with these types of situations.

In January 2013, heavy rainfall from Tropical Cyclone Oswald caused a spike in the levels of turbidity in the Brisbane River shutting down the water treatment plant at Mount Crosby, leaving some parts of Brisbane reliant on the water supplies in reservoirs at risk at the time the plant stopped operating. Due to the potential dire situation, the Premier and Seqwater urged residents to conserve water and only use it for essential needs—that is, drinking, cooking and bathing.

This bill removes the Governor in Council and gazettal requirements and provides for future declarations to have effect on their being made by the minister or on a later day stated in the declaration. The bill provides for a copy of the declaration to be given to affected service providers and, as soon as practicable after doing this, for a copy to be published in the gazette, maintaining a public record of the decision.

The bill also amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to provide for service provider emergency water restrictions to commence on the day they are announced, removing any delay in putting in place measures to manage the situation. The bill requires that, in these circumstances, service providers must give notice of the water restrictions to affected customers by radio or television broadcast or another form of electronic media.

It is important to note that a service provider such as QUU does not have the requirements that delay it in putting in place water restrictions that are imposed on me. A service provider can implement water restrictions immediately, whereas the minister has Governor in Council and gazettal requirements in making a declaration which may include emergency water restrictions.

Secondly, the bill amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act to better manage the impacts of potential floods in South-East Queensland by enabling quicker decisions to temporarily draw down the water levels of Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams in response to existing or emerging flood events. As the responsible minister, I have powers to declare a temporary full supply level for a flood mitigation dam after obtaining and considering advice from the dam owner, and I can also have regard to other information including weather forecasts. These powers were enacted following recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry and have proven an effective tool to assist in managing flood events in South-East Queensland.

In January 2013, declarations were made for Wivenhoe and North Pine dams to increase their flood storage capacity due to Tropical Cyclone Oswald, which caused widespread flooding in Central Queensland and parts of SEQ. During that wet season, I made temporary full supply level declarations for Wivenhoe Dam and North Pine Dam on a number of occasions, including on non-business days. History shows the limitations of the gazettal process, which could have delayed action at the dams to reduce the threat. The bill provides for future declarations to have effect when notice of them is given to the dam owner. A copy of the declaration will be published in the gazette as soon as practicable after it has been made, maintaining a public record of the decision.

There is also a need to clarify the steps for authorising alternative operating procedures before the next wet season. Approved flood mitigation manuals are in place for Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams. The dam owner, Seqwater, must operate these dams in accordance with the approved manuals during a flood event but may seek approval from the chief executive of my department to use a different operating procedure from that approved under the manual. The chief executive must consider the request and make a decision.

Communications, both ways, can be verbal and in most cases the process works. However, if the chief executive cannot be contacted within a reasonable time, the dam owner can adopt a different procedure—entitled an authorised alternative procedure—to manage the situation but must provide written explanation to the chief executive as soon as practicable. However, there is possible uncertainty about when Seqwater would be authorised to adopt such an alternative procedure where contact cannot be made with the chief executive officer or where contact is made but communication is lost before an answer is provided. The bill will ensure that, if Seqwater has attempted to contact the chief executive officer but has not received a response within a reasonable period, it can adopt an appropriate operating procedure to manage the dam during a flood event.

I turn to the amendments to the Queensland Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005, known as the Queensland WELS Act. The bill upholds the Queensland government's commitment to maintain legislation that forms part of a national scheme for water efficiency labelling and standards. The WELS scheme is a national scheme that was established in 2005 by the Commonwealth Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005, the Commonwealth act, with complementary state and territory legislation. It is supported by an intergovernmental agreement between the Commonwealth and all states and territories which sets out the roles and obligations of all parties. The Commonwealth is the regulator and administers the scheme on behalf of the parties to the IGA. The states and territories have little or no operational role but scheme changes cannot happen without the consent of a majority of states and territories.

The WELS scheme, through its water efficiency labelling, encourages water efficiency by providing information to consumers on the water efficiency of certain products at the point of sale. WELS products—showers and taps, toilets and urinals, washing machines and dishwashers—are star rated according to their water efficiency, similar to the energy efficiency ratings for electrical products. The higher number of stars the more efficient the appliance is. Consumers are well used to seeing the star ratings for both energy and water when buying products, and there is evidence that both registration and sales of four-star rated or better products have increased since the WELS scheme began.

In response to the independent review of the scheme in 2010, the Commonwealth, states and territories agreed to changes to the governance, compliance and administration of the scheme to improve the level of cost recovery from product registration fees and the introduction of civil penalty provisions. The Commonwealth act was amended in 2012 and 2013. The Queensland WELS Act should now be amended to mirror the changes to the Commonwealth act to ensure the scheme is nationally consistent.

The approach that has been taken to achieving consistency with the Commonwealth act is what is termed the applied provisions model of uniform legislation, which has also been adopted by other states and territories including New South Wales, Tasmania and South Australia. This model of uniform legislation applies the Commonwealth WELS legislation as laws of the state of Queensland. This model provides a high level of consistency between jurisdictions and has a number of other advantages including reducing red tape, equating to removing 34 pages from the Queensland statute book. This approach should negate the need for future amendments to the Queensland WELS Act. However, as with other jurisdictions, the amendments provide for the state to modify the effect of the Commonwealth act by subordinate legislation if required.

The bill will also improve governance arrangements for category 1 water authorities—the Gladstone Area Water Board and Mount Isa Water Board—which operate on a commercial basis similar to government owned corporations. The governance provisions under which the boards operate are in need of reform. The bill reduces red tape, removes spent provisions and better aligns the governance framework with commercial business practices.

In this regard the bill will, firstly, remove the requirement for the boards to advise the minister before buying or selling property of \$1 million or more; secondly, streamline the dividend recommendation and payment process to align with government owned corporations; thirdly, remove the separate process of resignation of the chair of the Gladstone Area Water Board and terms of appointment for the board's directors in favour of generic provisions; fourthly, require disclosure of money received for community service obligations in the board's annual financial reports; and, fifthly, remove requirements dealing with the establishment of category 1 boards. Finally, the bill makes minor amendments to the Water Act to include the local government area of Noosa shire in the definition of the SEQ region and to remove sections that refer to the former Queensland Water Commission following its abolition. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. MF McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.42 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (12.43 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for particular purposes, and to make minor and consequential amendments of the acts as stated in schedule 1. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Local Government Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5263\]](#).

Tabled paper: Local Government Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5264\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Local Government Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. The government's local government legislative reform program began in 2012 with the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012. That act began the process of erasing from the statute book the absurd one-size-fits-all approach to local government put in place by the former Labor government. Last year the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013 delivered another milestone on the road to empowerment of local communities and the local governments representing them.

The government went to the last state election with a clear platform to grow a four-pillar economy, deliver better infrastructure and better planning, revitalise front-line services for families and restore accountability in government. The government regards local governments as key players in the work necessary to achieving these goals. At the last election the government released the Empowering Queensland Local Government policy. The government has delivered on what it said in this document. Let me tick off for the record the local government reforms that have been delivered in this term:

- ensuring mayors and councillors are clearly in charge of their councils, tick;
- giving mayors, along with committee chairpersons and deputy mayors a voice on the appointment of senior executive employees, tick;
- allowing mayors to direct both CEOs and senior executive employees, tick;
- allowing local governments to hold voter polls to better inform council decision making, tick—

and we all remember why that power was removed from local government, and wasn't that a very, very dark day?—

- repealing the blatantly unfair requirement imposed by the Labor government that forced councillors standing as candidates for state parliament to automatically resign, tick;
- reinstating the body corporate status of local governments, tick;
- restoring joint local government arrangements so councils can share resources and cut costs for ratepayers, tick;
- significantly cutting red tape, saving councils money and manpower, for example, repealing the long-term community plan requirements, tick; and
- giving local people the choice about deamalgamation and consequently deamalgamating the local governments of Douglas, Livingstone, Mareeba and Noosa, tick.

Today I bring to the House the third critical component of reforms for local governments in Queensland, the Local Government Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. The bill delivers the final element of empowerment for local governments by giving local governments the choice to run their own quadrennial local government elections under defined circumstances and honours the Partners in Government Agreement signed by the state government and the Local Government Association of Queensland on 4 July 2012. The agreement provides that local government governance arrangements including electoral arrangements should, where appropriate, be consistent with those applying to the state government. Consistency between the two systems promotes certainty and clarity for the voters of Queensland leading into the next election. The government cares about democracy, and by that I mean the government cares about electoral fairness, transparency and accountability. That is why the bill has been developed only after Queenslanders were invited to share their views and make suggestions for improvements to the local government democratic process.

In November last year the government released the local government electoral act review discussion paper seeking community feedback on a number of issues and options for improvements to Queensland's local government electoral laws. The discussion paper was informed by reforms proposed to the state's electoral laws at the time and learnings identified by the local government sector and the Electoral Commission following the 2012 local government elections. Once again, the plea from submitters was for the government to undo the damage done by the Labor government's obsessive control of local government and for the government to return power to local decision makers. The bill delivers on that plea by empowering the chief executive officer of a local government to be the returning officer. Of key concern to local governments is the inflexibility of the current system, which prohibits them from making savings by using council assets, both human and material, for an election. From now on, making electoral decisions, for example, the simple decision of the location of a polling booth or deciding if savings are to be made by appointing local government employees or contractors to perform electoral duties, can be made by the CEO at the local level and without interference.

Let me assure Queenslanders that the bill maintains the integrity and impartiality of local government elections as the Electoral Commission of Queensland continues to have the overall responsibility for local government elections. The bill also continues to prohibit a returning officer from being a member of a political party. Of course, should a CEO be unable to undertake the role of returning officer, the Electoral Commission will have the power to appoint a returning officer. We have struck the right balance, and that is what good governments do.

To assist the Electoral Commission and CEO returning officers in performing their respective roles, a CEO returning officer is required to prepare an election plan for approval by the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission will work in consultation with the CEO returning officer in developing the plan. The Electoral Commission proposes to provide an information pack to CEOs which will include an election plan template, statistical information from the last quadrennial election, and information on staffing, polling booths and the last general return from the quadrennial election, which includes feedback on the logistical set-up of the election. This was proven during the last election as to why the need for local know-how is so very important. During my consultation across the state with mayors, councillors and local electors we were very disappointed when we heard stories of people turning up to polling booths but being unable to cast their democratic vote because the polling booth had run out of ballot papers. We had other situations where it was alleged that people turned up to cast their vote only to be told they had run out of ballot papers but if they wanted, their name could be crossed off a list.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: That is a great comment from the member for Lockyer. The whole process of the mail-out was, quite frankly, comical. We had a situation where some people received multiple ballot papers, some people received no ballot papers and some people received the wrong ballot papers. When you try to centralise everything in life it always ends in tragedy. That is the difference that divides this side of the House from the other. We believe that local decision makers can control their own destiny. We believe that, provided you put in place fair and balanced situations, good people will always make good decisions for their community because their community means something to them. The idea of centralisation is a flawed concept and has been for many, many years.

Further, to ensure CEOs are fully equipped to perform their responsibilities, the Electoral Commission will provide the necessary training to CEO returning officers and local government appointed electoral staff. The bill also makes the following reforms specific to local government: changing voting for mayors in undivided local governments from first past the post to optional preferential so voting for mayors across all councils is the same and is consistent with the system of voting for members of the Queensland parliament.

Allow me to explore this. This pertains to councils that operate as undivided councils. For those members who might have only ever experienced councils that have divisions, I say that this is the process where there is a certain number of councillors that people can vote for and when people turn up to vote they can tick the box, however many. But when voting for a mayor, for some reason you are allowed to exercise a preference if it is a divided council, but you are not able to exercise a preference if it is an undivided council. I am confused. I do not understand why that could possibly be of benefit. We are not saying that people's vote will be invalid if they do not preference. We are not saying they have to preference. We are giving them the option to exercise that vote in the same way they have the option to do that for every single member who is sitting in this House today. They can just vote 1—

Mr Stevens: A true democracy.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—they can vote 1 or 2 or they can vote the entire ballot. As the member for Mermaid Beach quite rightly points out, that is as true a democracy as we will find. What voting should be about is allowing as many people as possible to vote and to, wherever possible, express their view in the best manner they can. I feel that if somebody has a particular aversion to an individual on the ballot paper in the same way that they may have a particular passion for someone on the ballot paper and they want to put that person first, they deserve the right to also put another person last. I think this makes a lot of sense and brings it into line with those councils that operate on a divisional set-up.

The bill also simplifies the voting rules in first past the post elections in undivided councils, aimed at reducing the number of informal votes. Allow me to express my view here. Let's say we have a council where six councillors are able to be elected and there are 12 people on the ballot paper. Currently, if I list one through to five, my vote is invalid. That is absurd. I may only want to vote for five and I am deprived of the ability to cast my vote and to show my voting intention, and that is silly.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Exactly. Surely we should have a situation where if somebody clearly gives their intent as to what they want to occur, we should facilitate that wherever possible.

The bill also introduces a cut-off date for a full postal ballot application and it declares the election results of mayors separately from other councillors. I am going to go into that one briefly because I know the Leader of the House has a particular burning interest in me discussing this, certainly for at least another four or five minutes. The reason why this provision is so very important is that often there will be a situation where the mayoral result is very clear very early. There is a clear mandate, a clear majority. Somebody wins on primary votes, bang! That person is unable to hit the ground running, to get their feet under the desk, until the declaration of all of those councillors. I do not think that is a good set-up. I understand the need for the process of the declaration of councillors to continue; that is fair and reasonable and that process should take the time that is needed. If that involves the flow of preferences in a division, that is very important and the time should be taken. However, the prospect of somebody being given a mandate from their community, a strong mandate, and having to stand on the outside looking in as though they are some sort of imposter is bizarre. They should be able to be declared, get in there, talk with the senior staff and outline the agenda on which they ran. We in Queensland have separate elections for mayors and councillors. When people elect a mayor, they know what he or she stands for and they should be given the opportunity to go in and say, 'Notwithstanding the fact that my group of councillors, whoever they may be, will operate as a good and strong board to set the vision'—the mayor is first amongst equals of his or her council. The mayor is still elected on a platform and still deserves the right to be able to get in and start working in that organisation.

The bill makes the following amendments to align with the state's electoral laws—and I acknowledge the work of the Attorney-General in that regard. It allows a candidate's nomination deposit to be refunded before lodging a gift return. It changes the roll closure from 31 January in the year of the quadrennial election to five to seven days after publication of the candidate nomination notice. I say to the Leader of the House that I have to start hurrying now. Without amendment, the roll may be more than two months old at the time of the election in March, potentially disenfranchising a number of voters. Again, we want to make sure that everyone who wishes to vote can. It also allows people to vote whose names are not on the roll but are entitled to be enrolled if they notify the Electoral Commission no later than 6 pm on the day before the polling day. It introduces a register of special postal voters to automatically receive postal ballot material. It is great to have the member for Gregory in the chamber. His constituency relies very heavily on that. Special postal voters may include silent electors, distance electors, religious electors, overseas electors and voters who need help voting because of disability, motor impairment or insufficient literacy levels. It allows the Electoral Commission to direct a recount of votes. It increases the maximum penalty of one year imprisonment to seven years imprisonment for giving false or misleading information to a returning officer or the Electoral Commission.

The House has recently passed state electoral reforms which, when combined with this bill, will ensure that Queensland's electoral systems operate with the highest integrity, are systems people can rely on and are modern, up-to-date systems that encourage participation in the political process by all Queenslanders. Unlike the Labor government, which incompetently neglected local government electoral laws when making changes to state laws, this bill seeks to align the two systems—and long may that continue—so that Queenslanders have one set of rules when they go to exercise their democratic rights.

The bill adopts the following reforms made recently to the Electoral Act—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I cannot. I am running out of time. Those reforms include: increased access to postal voting, regulation of how-to-vote cards, electronic voting and proof of identity when voting. The explanatory notes to the bill detail the application of the reforms at the local government level. The introduction of electronic voting and proof of identity requirements will be implemented at the local government level following implementation at the state level. Finally, the bill amends the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the Local Government Act 2009 to clarify that a councillor who is subject to a suspended sentence is disqualified from being a councillor immediately. Mr Deputy Speaker, you will note that sensible reform is the legacy of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (12.58 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

Membership

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (12.58 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the member for Pine Rivers, Mr Seath Holswich, be discharged from the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee and the member for Coomera, Mr Michael Crandon, be appointed to the committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.30 pm.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.30 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) 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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2014 and 1 July 2015

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 3 JUN 2014

Tabled paper: Message, dated 3 June 2014, from her Excellency the Governor recommending the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014 [\[5265\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.31 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the financial years starting 1 July 2014 and 1 July 2015 and I table the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014 [\[5266\]](#).

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5267\]](#).

Following the practice of years past established to ensure the independence of the parliament, the government again this year provides a bill authorising me to pay amounts to the parliament in order to meet the obligations of the parliament to pay members' salaries, look after members' staff, engage electorate office staff and for the running and operations of the parliament for the year ahead.

This year we do incorporate the changes as a result of the Independent Remuneration Tribunal's recommendations. We also take into account the capital outlays, including some further security items that have been requested and approved by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. We also continue with the work in relation to restoration of stonework for the parliament, bearing in mind that the sesquicentenary of the parliament is rapidly approaching and the desire of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly is to ensure that the building is in its finest and best state as we approach that landmark momentous occasion.

Other details will be found within the legislation and the appropriation bills, and the appropriation for the parliament continues in the normal fashion.

First Reading

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.32 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Madam SPEAKER: The bill is set down for its second reading in accordance with Standing Order 177.

BUDGET PAPERS

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.33 pm): I lay upon the table of the House the following documents: Budget Speech; Appropriation Bills Booklet; Budget Strategy and Outlook; Capital Statement; Budget Measures; Concessions Statement; Queensland

State Budget 2014-15 Brochure; Regional Budget Statements; Service Delivery Statements, including statements for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland; and the *Strongest & smartest choice: Queensland's plan for secure finances and a strong economy*.

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Budget Speech—Budget Paper No. 1 [\[5268\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Appropriation Bills [\[5269\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Budget Strategy and Outlook—Budget Paper No. 2 [\[5270\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Capital Statement—Budget Paper No. 3 [\[5271\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4 [\[5272\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Concessions Statement [\[5273\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Brochure of Queensland State Budget—A strong plan for a brighter future [\[5274\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Brisbane [\[5275\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Cairns [\[5276\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Darling Downs [\[5277\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Fitzroy [\[5278\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Gold Coast [\[5279\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Ipswich [\[5280\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Mackay [\[5281\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Outback [\[5282\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Sunshine Coast [\[5283\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Townsville [\[5284\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Wide Bay [\[5285\]](#).

Tabled paper: USB stick containing State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements [\[5286\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Governor, Public Service Commission, Queensland Audit Office [\[5287\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Treasury and Trade [\[5288\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Legislative Assembly of Queensland [\[5289\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs [\[5290\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry [\[5291\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services [\[5292\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Education, Training and Employment [\[5293\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Energy and Water Supply [\[5294\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Environment and Heritage Protection [\[5295\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Housing and Public Works [\[5296\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Electoral Commission of Queensland, Office of the Ombudsman, Public Trustee of Queensland [\[5297\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience [\[5298\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing [\[5299\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Natural Resources and Mines [\[5300\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Health [\[5301\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Public Safety Business Agency, Office of Inspector-General Emergency Management [\[5302\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts [\[5303\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning [\[5304\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games [\[5305\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Transport and Main Roads [\[5306\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: The Strongest and Smartest Choice—Queensland's plan for secure finances and a strong economy [\[5307\]](#).

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.34 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION 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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2014 and 1 July 2015

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 3 JUN 2014

Tabled paper: Message, dated 3 June 2014, from her Excellency the Governor recommending the Appropriation Bill 2014 [\[5308\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.35 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2014 and 1 July 2015. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill 2014 [\[5309\]](#).

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5310\]](#).

A STRONG PLAN FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

In February 2012, on the first day of the last election campaign the Premier and I launched the LNP's Economic Blueprint for Queensland. It was a key part of our plan to Get Queensland Back on Track.

In that plan we said we would;

- return the budget to surplus by 2014-15,
- ensure expenses growth does not exceed revenue growth,
- subject major projects to cost benefit analysis,
- put in place a plan to regain the AAA credit rating to reduce the cost of borrowing; and
- fully fund long term liabilities such as superannuation in accordance with actuarial advice.

We undertook to wage a war on waste in government by reviewing spending across departments to stop taxpayers' money being squandered.

We also promised to establish an Independent Commission of Audit to detail Queensland's current and long term liabilities and to chart a path back to the triple A credit rating.

Many informed commentators, and not a few critics, thought we would not achieve such an ambitious target. They thought perhaps we would lack the political will, the courage or the determination to do what after almost 20 years of Labor mismanagement so obviously needed to be done. Perhaps they were jaundiced in their opinions by the obvious failures of discredited Labor Governments.

Nevertheless we started to implement our strong plan.

In our first week in office I appointed the Independent Commission of Audit. Following receipt of the Commission's interim report we finalised the first Budget of the new Government.

In my Budget speech in September 2012 I described that first Budget as the most important in a generation.

It delivered on our promise to help Queenslanders with cost of living increases. In all, the savings measures we announced saved families up to \$260 that year alone.

We also took the methodical and disciplined decisions to begin fixing the State's finances so we could deliver better services for Queenslanders. By starting to fix the finances we started securing a brighter future for Queenslanders.

It pays to remember why we had to make those tough decisions. Some so called experts have conveniently, or perhaps consciously, forgotten the parlous state Queensland's finances were in just two short years ago.

Queensland Treasury officers reported to the incoming government

“Queensland’s fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority of this term of government”

Queensland Treasury Corporation, the bankers to government, told us

“The States debt has reached unprecedented levels. Together with its published forward estimates showing an even greater volume of debt required, Queensland is now in uncharted waters with respect to the volume of debt on issue and the resultant interest bill”

And the Independent Commission of Audit reported

“Urgent fiscal repair is necessary just to stabilise debt which will continue growing in the absence of corrective measures. After that the State will need a very large amount of debt repayment to recover its AAA credit rating”

Of course the rest of the world had also told the former Labor government something was wrong when credit ratings agencies downgraded Queensland's prized triple A credit rating forcing taxpayers to pay hundreds of millions more in interest payments.

Madam Speaker, no one would now doubt that making those decisions and implementing our plan in that first budget has led to a better and more financially resilient Queensland today. As I said when I introduced the appropriation bills then “This Budget starts to deliver a brighter future for all Queenslanders”.

In our second Budget we had to address the issues of growth, rebuilding and resilience following the cyclones and floods of 2013. We needed to lock in the gains of that first Budget as well as help our communities rebuild from the devastation of a summer of storms.

That second Budget also put in place the actions needed to boost growth to help pay off the debts of the past while supporting the jobs of the future.

We are now making significant progress in growing Queensland's four pillar economy, revitalising frontline services and funding infrastructure projects and jobs, with more than 60,000 jobs created for Queenslanders in the last year. But to sustain this growth we must reduce the \$80 billion debt Labor burdened Queensland with.

In my Budget speech last year I said that the government would be upfront about the challenges we face and take the community with us on the choices we need to make. I also said we would not kick the can down the road for our children to solve our problems.

So Madam Speaker it is with great pleasure that today I deliver the third Budget of the Newman LNP Government. Today's Budget continues delivering on our promises and our commitments to restore our great State's finances.

I can report to the House that today's Budget shows we are meeting all of those commitments made that February day just over two years ago when we released our economic plan.

We are on track to deliver an operating surplus of \$188 million in 2014-15.

We will deliver a fiscal surplus in 2015-16, the first in a decade. Fiscal surpluses are also predicted in each year of the forward forecasts. No longer will Queensland have to go cap in hand to financiers meekly asking for loans. We will have stopped the long descent into debt that Labor charted with its locked in deficits of the last half dozen years.

We have reversed the trend of Labor governments past that saw General Government expenses grow on average at 8.9% per annum in the decade to 2011-12. Expenses growth in every year of this government has been less than revenue growth, despite revenue write downs of \$5.4 billion.

General Government expenses will only grow by 2.2% in 2013-14, after growth of only 0.2% in 2012-13. These are the lowest such increases since accrual accounting was introduced in Queensland in 1998.

As promised at the election, all major projects now undergo a cost benefit analysis. No longer do we have dams without pipes, pipes without dams, nurses without pay and trains without seats!

We are fully funding our long term obligations including to our hardworking public servants' superannuation.

The Budget I present today is not one of flashy new announcements and programs. It is not a Budget of big headlines or irresponsible spending sprees.

It is a Budget that is right for the times.

It is a Budget that underscores our commitment to responsible financial management. It lays the foundations for strong and sustainable economic growth into the future.

We are also getting on with delivering better services through better and best management.

Madam Speaker despite all these achievements more needs to be done. We cannot grasp the bright future that beckons while we are burdened by an \$80 billion debt that costs Queensland \$4 billion in interest each and every year.

So today I am also announcing our strong plan to secure our finances by making the strongest and smartest choice to reduce debt so we can sustainably invest in the schools, hospitals and other vital infrastructure that will secure our great State's bright future.

Madam Speaker, this year's Budget is a Strong Plan for a Brighter Future.

THE ECONOMY

The 2014-15 Budget has been framed in the context of an economy on the cusp of strong growth. In turn, good financial management will further boost our future economic prospects.

The Queensland economy is expected to be the strongest performing State economy in the nation in 2014-15 and over the forward estimates period.

In 2013-14, economic growth of an expected 3% has been underpinned by household consumption growth, a recovery in dwelling investment and a significant contribution from exports.

Following a strong rebound in 2012-13, tourism has again performed well in 2013-14.

Demand from China has driven double-digit growth in coal export volumes, which are expected to hit 200 million tonnes for the first time ever in 2013-14.

The harsh Queensland climate has again seen the agricultural sector face challenging conditions. The emergence of China as a key market has however supported the State's agricultural exports, particularly beef.

The Queensland economy is of course in a period of transition as the investment phase of the large LNG projects nears completion and the production and export of LNG begins. The transition is, in effect, the quantitative handbrake that constrains the headline growth rate in 2014-15.

In 2014-15, Queensland's economic growth is expected to be 3%—again, the strongest in the nation.

Dwelling investment in Queensland is forecast to grow 9½% in 2014-15 and a further 6% in 2015-16.

In 2015-16, the ramp up in LNG production is expected to underpin a surge in exports which, combined with an improved domestic economy, is forecast to boost economic growth to an 11-year high of around 6%. This will be the highest in the nation.

Growth is expected to settle back to 4% in 2016-17—reflecting a more even contribution from all sectors of the economy.

This Government understands that not all Queenslanders are experiencing the benefits of this growth. We know there is more work to do.

Employment growth has picked up during the course of 2013-14, supported by some recovery in the labour-intensive sectors.

The latest ABS figures show that Queensland is responsible for over half of the jobs created in Australia in the last twelve months.

This recovery is expected to support further improvement in labour market conditions in 2014-15 and beyond.

As employment opportunities improve, so too will participation, as workers are encouraged back into the labour market. This so called “encouraged worker effect”, combined with the realignment of skills across the economy following the mining boom, will limit downward pressure on the unemployment rate.

So, while the employment growth is there, the improvement in the unemployment rate is expected to be slower and steadier, moving from 6% in 2013-14 down to around 5½% in 2016-17.

BUDGET OUTCOMES

Madam Speaker, the General Government fiscal balance is estimated to be a deficit of \$6.1 billion in 2013-14 compared to a forecast deficit of \$7.6 billion in the 2013-14 midyear financial and economic review.

The improvement in the forecast fiscal balance since that midyear review primarily reflects deferral of some Commonwealth Government funding, changes to the timing of natural disaster expenditure and tight control over expenses.

As I said earlier, following on from growth in expenses of only 0.2% in 2012-13, expenditure growth of only 2.2% is expected in 2013-14. We continue to honour our commitment to the people of Queensland to keep costs down and cut waste and bureaucracy.

A fiscal deficit of \$2.27 billion is budgeted for 2014-15 compared to a forecast of \$664 million in the 2013-14 midyear financial and economic review.

This is due to a downward revision to royalty and taxation revenue estimates, as well as changes in the timing of Federal Government natural disaster funding.

Madam Speaker, the revenue side of the Budget remains under pressure, and we have again had to write-down our projections.

Key revenue items such as payroll tax are weaker than expected.

Falling coal prices are adversely affecting our royalty receipts, and there has been no respite from the Australian dollar, which is stubbornly higher than we would like.

Yet, despite all this, we have resisted the temptation to hike taxes to boost revenue.

There are no new taxes in this Budget. We remain on track to achieve a balanced budget in 2015-16, the first time in a decade.

In the absence of unavoidable shocks, the 2014-15 Budget will be the last of the Labor legacy deficits and we can look forward to a future free of red ink.

Consistent with the plans I outlined in our first Budget in 2012-13, this Budget has us firmly on track to deliver Stage 1 of our strategy to deal with the State's debt.

The 2014-15 Budget has borrowings at \$80 billion compared to Labor's last projection of \$85.4 billion—an improvement of over \$5 billion achieved through careful management.

This stabilisation of the State's debt has been achieved despite those large revenue write-downs over the last three years and the devastating impact of Cyclone Oswald.

SERVICES

Madam Speaker, through its renewal program, the LNP Government is committed to delivering better services for Queenslanders through good management, improved productivity and better value for money.

As a result of our strong decisions, disciplined approach to expenditure and better management we will not have to lessen the delivery of services to Queenslanders. Our response to the recommendations of the Commission of Audit is also paying dividends in improved service delivery across the state.

As I said at the launch of the new Youngcare housing project in the Clayfield electorate last week, great financial results are not an end in themselves, they are the means to an end. For this government that means delivering better services to all Queenslanders.

Madam Speaker, there is no issue more important or more difficult than that of child protection. The most significant new policy item in this Budget is the funding and implementation of the Carmody Inquiry's report into child protection.

It is an area that has challenged governments around Australia regardless of their political persuasion. Indeed, it is an area that is rightly considered beyond politics. We all want to do the right thing, but knowing what the right thing is can be tough.

This Budget commits the resources required to implement the Carmody Inquiry report named "Taking Responsibility". This roadmap reshapes our child protection system—to provide a platform for enhanced family support and early intervention. Non-government organisations will be a big partner in this effort. The Government will invest \$406 million over five years to ensure its successful implementation.

Madam Speaker, as Members know all too well, Queensland is a State of climatic contradictions. At any given point in time, we can be simultaneously fighting fires, floods, cyclones and drought. Much of rural Queensland is battling a prolonged drought and they need our help.

This Budget allocates \$62 million for drought assistance including fodder and water subsidies, fee and rent relief, and community and mental health support programs.

I am also pleased to announce that from the first of July this year the Family Primary Production Concession will be extended. Currently, the concession is limited to lineal descendants, most often this is parent to child.

Recognising that lineal descendant are not always the family member who chooses to continue the family business, the requirement of a direct lineal descendant will be removed. This opens up the opportunity for better succession planning for those on the land who want to keep their property in their family.

Now for example, transfers to nieces and nephews will benefit from the concession. It's important to note that a family relationship will still be required and that the transfer will still need to be by way of gift.

The Budget also provides a further \$11 million for reef protection in 2014-15, bringing total reef protection funding to \$55 million over five years.

At the last election, we promised to deliver 1,100 new police officers on the front line. This Budget sees funding allocated for a further 267 new police officers as we deliver our promise over four years.

The Government will invest \$44.5 million over four years to implement the Safe Night Out Strategy, to deal with alcohol and drug related violence in entertainment precincts.

Madam Speaker, no one doubts the Government's commitment to law and order. This Budget contains \$132.2 million over four years to address capacity constraints in correction centres and undertake security upgrades, including the recommissioning of the Borallon Correctional Centre.

I am also particularly pleased that this Budget contains further funding for our Great Results Guarantee in Education.

With \$131 million set aside for the Great Results Guarantee, Principals and school communities are being empowered to decide how the money should be spent—depending on the unique situation in every Queensland school.

The Health budget will increase in 2014-15, by over 6%. But improvement is not always about spending more money.

The results of our hard work are evident in the figures that matter most to Queenslanders.

Since this Government was elected:

- The number of category one patients waiting more than 30 days for surgery has been cut by 83%
- The number of category two patients waiting more than 90 days for surgery has been cut by 69%
- The average time between ambulance dispatch and being available for the next job has been reduced by 18.75%.
- The number of long-wait dental patients has been reduced by 98.5% in the last 14 months and
- The long term social housing waiting list has been reduced by 37% over the last two years

Madam Speaker, real results matter most to Queenslanders. That is part of our strong plan delivering a brighter future.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL RELATIONS

The change of Government in Canberra has paid dividends to Queensland in terms of infrastructure funding.

We have been able to secure almost \$1.3 billion for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing project—one of the largest regional roads projects ever to be undertaken in Australia. And today I announce that I have signed the much anticipated Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Government ensuring funding for this great project. I can also announce that tomorrow the formal Expressions of Interest document will be released to the market.

Make no mistake about it, after 20 years of talk by previous Governments this LNP Government is delivering on its commitment to the people of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs to deliver this project.

I acknowledge the great work of local members Dr John McVeigh of Toowoomba South and Trevor Watts of Toowoomba North in supporting this project as well as Mayor Paul Antonio and the federal Member Ian McFarlane.

The Federal Budget will also provide nearly \$1 billion for the Gateway Upgrade North project, as well as funding to deliver critical works on the Bruce Highway—\$6.7 billion over ten years.

More than most, I know what it is like to inherit a Labor designed fiscal time bomb. But we, as the Queensland Government, have a problem with Canberra and that problem relates to the national partnership programs and agreements that have been unilaterally terminated as part of the Federal Budget.

States operate big service delivery systems that can't change course quickly. With nearly a quarter of our revenue coming from national partnership type payments, the unilateral cutbacks announced in the recent Federal Government Budget have hit us hard.

In particular, the Federal Government has reduced its funding for concessions by some \$50 million per annum. The Queensland Government is increasing its funding for the affected concessions, but this will not be enough to offset the impact of the Federal Government's decision.

There are also other agreements that face an uncertain future.

At this point, a particular concern we have relates to Early Childhood Education. In 2008, the then Queensland Government signed up with the Federal Government to provide universal access to kindergarten programs delivered by qualified teachers. These programs are delivered to approximately 50,000 children in kindergartens and day care centres.

Unfortunately, the federal Budget provided no certainty of funding beyond the end of this calendar year. We are seeking urgent clarification from the Federal Government.

Without a doubt though, the most pressure relates to Health. The problem is serious:

- National Partnership on Preventative Health—terminated.
- National Partnership on Improving Public Hospital Services—terminated.

From 2017-18, the Federal Government is turning its back on the challenges of health funding. With the ageing of the population and rapid advances in medical technology, health expenditure is expected to grow by around 8% per annum into the future.

But the Federal Government thinks the States can survive with less. Their funding falls well short of what is required to meet the reasonable expectations of Queenslanders.

Queenslanders can be assured that this LNP Government will engage in a robust and vigorous debate with the Federal Government to protect their interests.

This is the discussion we intend to have with the Federal Government over the coming months.

THE STRONGEST CHOICE IS THE SMARTEST CHOICE

On 13 April, I launched the Strong Choices campaign to ensure Queenslanders could access the information they needed to have their say about reducing the State's \$80 billion debt.

The centrepiece of this campaign was Australia's first interactive 'People's Budget'.

I know there are some for whom consultation with Queenslanders means assembling the usual suspects in George Street on the basis that they represent Queensland's so-called "key stakeholders". I have never subscribed to that theory.

Ultimately, more than 255,000 people visited the Strong Choices website, and over 55,000 Queenslanders submitted their own 'People's Budget' online.

Almost 20,000 people attended public forums or participated in virtual town hall meetings.

I travelled more than 19,000 kilometres to meet with Queenslanders personally to discuss the Strong Choices available.

The public response clearly showed Queenslanders recognise the debt and interest problem, and support a disciplined and methodical plan to reduce the State's \$80 billion debt and the accompanying \$4 billion interest bill.

I have always acknowledged that the decision as to how to best reduce the debt would be one for the Government to take and ultimately, and rightly, decided by the people at the next State election.

I am proud that this Government's approach to the issue in terms of its treatment of the people of Queensland stands in stark contrast to those opposite who took the "get elected first tell Queenslanders later approach".

The Government expected Queenslanders to have a mixed view about the Strong Choices campaign. Our research shows that 70 percent of Queenslanders approve of the campaign and recent media commentary supports this approval.

The popularity of some choices over others relies on one's individual circumstances. Analysis of the 'People's Budget' tool shows that 28 percent of submissions mostly favoured increasing taxes, while only 18 percent of submissions mostly favoured service reductions.

Most significantly, 46 percent of submissions chose to raise the majority of the \$25-30 billion required for debt reduction through the sale or lease of some assets.

Overall, raising taxes or reducing services were the least preferred options for achieving the \$25-30 billion in savings required to reduce debt to sustainable levels.

After cutting waste, reducing the size of the Public Service, and lifting some taxes and mining royalties to stabilise the Budget after coming to office, the Government recognises Queenslanders are concerned about service reductions or tax increases.

With spending cuts and increased taxes in the recent Federal Budget, it has become even more important to avoid fuelling cost of living pressures felt by everyday Queenslanders.

Now is not the time to burden people with taxes upon taxes, or to reduce services that have already been made more efficient.

The State Government has taken this new economic context, framed by the Federal Government's own debt reduction efforts, into consideration. The strongest choice for Queensland is also the smartest: the one that secures Queensland's future, without placing an undue burden on Queenslanders.

That is why the Government is now proposing a program of asset transactions. The transactions will vary, depending on the asset. Most transactions will involve either long-term leases or sales.

However, in some cases, the Government will propose an innovative option of private sector participation, where the Government will retain 100% ownership of the ordinary shares, with private sector investors funding future capital expenditure.

The Draft Plan I have released today as part of the Budget provides for debt reduction of \$25 billion down to \$55 billion. This new debt level would mean Queensland's annual interest bill would drop from \$4 billion to \$2.7 billion per annum.

Significantly, this Draft Plan will also release \$8.6 billion for the Strong Choices Investment Program, a suite of new infrastructure and investment funds designed to build more schools, hospitals, roads and other vital infrastructure to ensure this State's growing population can enjoy a brighter future.

After a period of further consultation, in which Queenslanders will be invited to nominate projects in their communities that may qualify for funding from the Strong Choices Investment Program, the Government will deliver its final plan for the Strongest and Smartest Choice in September 2014.

None of these proposals will be implemented until the Government has taken this methodical and disciplined plan to the next State election.

Not everyone will agree with all of the choices this Government has made about how to pay for things into the future. But at least Queenslanders now know we will have funding certainty into the future, so we can invest in the things we need for a growing and ageing population.

Madam Speaker, the LNP Government was left a legacy of debt and deficits by the previous Government.

We do not intend to leave an ongoing debt legacy for our children and grandchildren.

Now is the time for decisive action and new investment to build a brighter future.

This is what the LNP Government pledges to the people of Queensland—A Strong Plan for a Brighter Future.

I commend the Budget to the House.

First Reading

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Madam SPEAKER: The bill is set down for its second reading in accordance with standing order 177.

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.03 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the Land Tax Act 2010, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 and the Taxation Administration Act 2001 for particular purposes and I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5311\]](#).

Tabled paper: Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5312\]](#).

The bill I have presented makes changes to a number of acts affecting duties. The Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 delivers an amendment to minimise potential for transfer duty avoidance as well as providing two transfer duty relief measures. The bill will also facilitate improvements in the administration of the state's royalty revenue and strengthen royalty compliance measures. Additionally, it creates greater flexibility and improves efficiencies for government through three additional amendments, including to support the reform program for SPER—the State Penalties Enforcement Registry. In light of the time available I seek leave to have the balance of my introductory speech incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Office of State Revenue (OSR) has become aware of new property developments being structured to use an existing duty exemption for conversion of home unit companies to strata title under the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 in unintended circumstances. The application of the exemption in these cases provides an inappropriate competitive advantage to developers exploiting that structure, through transfer duty savings. Amendments will ensure the exemption is limited to its intended application.

This Bill also delivers tax relief. Amendments to the Duties Act 2001 will allow an existing concession from transfer duty for transactions for early succession planning in a family primary production business to apply across a wider range of family relationships.

Further, amendments to the Land Tax Act 2010 will provide a new exemption for people who are in the process of selling their old home and moving into a new one when annual land tax liabilities arise at midnight on 30 June each year, where the relevant conditions are met.

Madam Speaker, the Bill also amends the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 to implement initiatives designed to strengthen royalty compliance, assist with the collection of royalty owing to the State and improve royalty administration.

A number of the amendments will adopt specific aspects of the administrative framework used for State taxes under the Taxation Administration Act 2001. This will deliver benefits to both royalty payers and the State through improvements in royalty administration and compliance.

The Bill inserts a consistent royalty assessment and reassessment framework, modelled on that in the Taxation Administration Act 2001, to provide greater certainty for royalty payers and the State regarding how royalty liability is determined and the amount payable. Where royalty liability has been incorrectly assessed, a reassessment may be made for the correct amount within specified time periods. To balance the need to provide royalty payers with sufficient time to seek a reassessment with the need to provide certainty for the State's revenues, reassessments decreasing liability will generally be required to be made within five years. To ensure there are no benefits to a person from understating royalty liability and delaying determination of the correct liability, no time limits will apply to reassessments increasing liability.

To foster voluntary compliance and provide a cost effective alternative to prosecution for an offence, a royalty penalty of 75% of the understated royalty will apply from 1 July 2014 where a reassessment is made increasing royalty liability. There will be a discretion to fully or partially remit the penalty and to increase it by up to 20% where a person has hindered or prevented the person's royalty liability being determined. However, to allow royalty payers to start with a 'clean slate', a six month penalty amnesty will apply if a person voluntarily discloses an underpayment to OSR by 31 December 2014.

Madam Speaker, this Bill introduces a number of other royalty compliance strengthening amendments consistent with those in the Taxation Administration Act 2001, including investigation and information access powers, as well as record keeping obligations for royalty payers.

The investigation and information access provisions of the Taxation Administration Act 2001 will be applied for royalty purposes to allow investigators to exercise entry powers, in some cases without a warrant, and to seize, test and retain items, subject to appropriate safeguards to protect a person's rights. A person can also be required to produce information and documents and attend to provide information and documents.

New royalty record keeping obligations will ensure records are kept and made available for an appropriate time for determining royalty liability.

Madam Speaker, to provide a cost effective mechanism for recovering unpaid royalty owed to the State, this Bill will allow for the issuing of a garnishee notice to a third party, requiring that person to pay to the State any monies owed to the royalty payer in satisfaction of their royalty liability. Additionally, new administrator provisions will assist in ensuring unpaid royalty can be recovered from a royalty payer's administrator, subject to appropriate protections for the administrator.

The royalty refund provisions are being amended to clarify when a royalty refund entitlement arises and to provide a consistent manner for making royalty refunds. This will mean that an overpaid amount may be repaid to the royalty payer or be credited against the person's current or future royalty liability.

To replicate arrangements currently applying for mineral royalty, the Bill will enable the date for paying petroleum royalty to be brought forward where it is considered necessary for the protection of the public revenue. Importantly, this does not change the actual royalty liability but merely crystallises it earlier to enable its timely collection where necessary.

This Bill delivers benefits to petroleum producers by giving them the flexibility to change the basis on which they lodge their annual returns from a calendar year to a financial year basis, or vice versa. It also recognises and supports the use of information systems for making royalty decisions.

Madam Speaker, the Bill also introduces several amendments that will result in greater efficiencies for Government. The Bill will amend the Payroll Tax Act 1971 to exempt wages paid by State Government departments, with certain exceptions, and wages paid by Queensland Hospital and Health Services.

The application of payroll tax to wages paid by entities in either category results in Government funding being recirculated between the departments and the consolidated fund. The amendments reduce consequential inefficiencies and compliance costs.

Following a review of SPER, amendments to the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 will facilitate significant efficiencies in the collection of unpaid infringement notices and court ordered amounts.

Specifically, the Bill facilitates a new service delivery model for SPER which will allow SPER's functions to be delivered more efficiently and effectively. The new model will allow debt collection agents to be engaged, either directly by the Registrar or indirectly through the engagement of a broker, to perform debt collection functions for the Registrar. This will allow SPER to focus on using its powers to recover uncommercial debt, while utilising the debt collection industry's experience to collect commercial debt. Any broker or agent engaged will be subject to the oversight and control of the Registrar.

Finally, an amendment to the Taxation Administration Act 2001 will remove a limitation on the persons who may be appointed as the Commissioner of State Revenue, for greater flexibility.

First Reading

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.03 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**APPROPRIATION BILL****REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****Declared Urgent; Cognate Debate**

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.04 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

- (1) That under the provisions of standing order 137 the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill to enable the bill to be passed through all remaining stages at this week's sitting; and
- (2) That in accordance with standing order 172 the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill, having already been treated as cognate bills under the provisions of standing order 176, be also treated as cognate with the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill for the second reading debate but with separate questions being put with regard to the second reading of (a) the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill and (b) the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.05 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 3.05 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, D'Ath, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young