



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 6 August 2014

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WEDNESDAY, 6 AUGUST 2014



The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

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

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Contempt of Parliament



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 6 June 2014 I received a complaint about the use of video footage of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on Twitter by a staff member employed in a ministerial office. I was subsequently advised of another instance of video footage of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly being used by a staff member employed in an electorate office, again on Twitter. I draw to the attention of all members and the staff of members the conditions of use of the broadcast of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, which have been agreed to by the Assembly, as set out on the parliament's website and in accordance with section 58 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. Those conditions make it clear that broadcast material must be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings and must not in any circumstances be used for, among other things, party-political advertising, satire or ridicule.

In both of the instances before me, the use of the footage appears to be a prima facie breach of the conditions of use. However, rather than refer these matters to the Ethics Committee, I have elected instead to refer each matter to the respective employers of these staff so that appropriate action can be taken in accordance with the respective codes of conduct, especially those provisions of the codes of conduct dealing with respect for the system of government.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 30 April 2014 I received a letter from the member for Chatsworth alleging that the member for South Brisbane had deliberately misled the House in a statement on 20 March 2014. The member for South Brisbane stated that the member for Chatsworth had done nothing when approached by a constituent distressed at the possible resignation of a medical specialist who treated his family. The member for Chatsworth denied the allegation that the constituent had contacted his office about the issue in a personal explanation on 3 April 2014 and the subsequent correspondence.

I sought further information, received from the member for South Brisbane, on 2 June 2014 and the member for Chatsworth on 20 June 2014. On the material provided to me, I conclude that the original statement made by the member for South Brisbane was based on a false premise and thus was misleading. It is clear that the constituent in question met with the member for Chatsworth in 2013 but had no further contact with that member in 2014. In particular, it appears clear that the constituent had no contact with the member for Chatsworth's office regarding the specialist's threatened resignation, which was the specific impression created by the member for South Brisbane's statement. Therefore, the statement was misleading.

Based on the evidence I have, I am not convinced that the member for South Brisbane, at the time the speech was made, understood that the statement was misleading. Therefore, I do not believe that there is sufficient evidence that the member deliberately misled the House. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence relating to this matter for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 30 April 2014, from Mr Steve Minnikin MP, member for Chatsworth, to Madam Speaker regarding alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member [\[5637\]](#).

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 2 June 2014, from Ms Jackie Trad MP, member for South Brisbane, to Madam Speaker regarding alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member [\[5638\]](#).

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 20 June 2014, from Mr Steve Minnikin MP, member for Chatsworth, to Madam Speaker regarding alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member [\[5639\]](#).

However, I take this opportunity to remind all members of the long-established convention in this House that members who inadvertently mislead the House should take it upon themselves to correct the record at the earliest opportunity after they become aware of such and apologise for their inadvertence. Members who fail to take this corrective action risk odium to their reputation.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Thackeray, Mr MH



Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.04 pm): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Mervyn Herbert Thackeray, a former member of the parliament of Queensland; and
2. That Madam Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Mervyn Herbert Thackeray was born in Mackay on 20 October 1925 and later was educated at Mackay primary school. In 1943, Mr Thackeray joined the Queensland government railways firstly as an engine cleaner and progressively worked his way to becoming an engine fireman in 1947 and then an engine driver in 1955. During this time Mr Thackeray worked out of many railway yards across Queensland, including in Gladstone, Rockhampton, Alpha, Emerald and Sarina, as he helped to run the trains that contributed much to the economic and social lifeblood of this state. Mr Thackeray was also a union delegate and a grazier before he was selected by the Australian Labor Party to contest the seat of Keppel at the state election of August 1957.

As historians will know, this was the time of the Labor split. However, Mr Thackeray was successful in his election to the seat of Keppel as he defeated the then sitting member, Mr Vivian Cooper, who some months previously had moved from the ALP to the Queensland Labor Party. Of course, the 1957 state election was also historic in that it saw the first change of government in Queensland from Labor to the conservative side of politics since 1932.

Part of the way through Mr Thackeray's first term in this House a redistribution took place and the seat of Keppel was abolished in favour of the new seat of Rockhampton North. Mr Thackeray contested the seat of Rockhampton North at the state election of May 1960 and he was successfully re-elected to this House. He was subsequently re-elected as the member for Rockhampton North at the state elections of 1963, 1966 and 1969.

History records that, in early 1972, the ALP disendorsed Mr Thackeray as well as two other sitting ALP members. Mr Thackeray decided to re-contest his seat of Rockhampton North as an Independent at the state election of May 1972. However, he was defeated at that election by the ALP candidate, Mr Les Yewdale. This brought to an end Mr Thackeray's almost 15 years of continuous service in this House and to his constituents.

Mervyn Herbert Thackeray passed away on 7 June 2014 at the age of 88. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service that Mr Thackeray gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Thackeray's family and friends.



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.08 pm): I rise to speak in relation to the passing of Merv Thackeray, a member of this place from 1957 through to 1972. As the Premier stated, Mervyn was born in Mackay in 1925 and he was educated at Mackay primary school. Before entering parliament he worked for Queensland Rail in a number of jobs, including as an engine cleaner, fireman and engine driver. His work took him around Central Queensland and he had stints in Rockhampton, Gladstone, Emerald and Alpha. The love and respect Merv—or 'Big Thack' as he was known—had for the railways and its workers is evident in many of his parliamentary speeches.

Merv was elected to the seat of Keppel in 1957 at the relatively young age of 31. He went on to serve as the member for Rockhampton North when the seat of Keppel was abolished in 1960. The electorates of Keppel and Rockhampton North were substantially similar. So while Merv served as the member for two electorates, he represented the same community for the 15 years that he was a parliamentarian. He was extremely affectionate towards the north of Rockhampton and Yeppoon. As he boasted in his inaugural speech—

The Yeppoon district embraces some of the most glorious beaches in Australia.

Merv clearly knew the benefits tourism could bring his local area and he worked to promote the industry during his career. Merv was an effective representative for the people of his electorate in an era when parliamentarians had far fewer resources available to them. In those days MPs did not have electorate offices; they generally worked from home. Merv was looking for ways to connect with his constituents, so rather than coming to him he went to them. He was well known for being in certain locations in the community at certain times each day so that people could catch up with him. These days we tend to call these arrangements mobile offices and they usually take place in parks and shopping centres. Merv, however, went one better. His mobile offices were in places such as the Scariff Hotel, the Anchor Hotel and the Post Office Hotel in Rockhampton. He was an MP who had an affinity with the community and his unusual office arrangements no doubt contributed.

Merv was a passionate supporter of public education and he made it his mission to fight for the state schools in his electorate. From his first speech to his last in this place, he fought for better services and facilities for schoolchildren. He could see that the schools in his electorate had become overcrowded and that class sizes were too large for teachers to provide sufficient individual attention to each student. We thank Merv Thackeray for his service to the Queensland parliament and on behalf of the opposition we extend our sympathies to his family.

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, will you please indicate your agreement by standing in silence for one minute.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

North Stradbroke Island, Bridge

Mr Davies, from 842 petitioners, requesting the House to give permission for the construction of a bridge, funded and built by private enterprise, to North Stradbroke Island via Russell Island [\[5640\]](#).

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

Heavy Vehicle Operators, Fatigue Management Scheme

Mr Krause, from 325 petitioners, requesting the House to adopt the West Australian fatigue management regulations for Queensland heavy vehicle operators as the only fatigue management scheme under national regulations [\[5641, 5642\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPER

MEMBER'S PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Capalaba (Mr Davies)—

[5643](#) Non-conforming petition requesting the House to give permission for the construction of a bridge, funded and built by private enterprise, to North Stradbroke Island via Russell Island

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Death of Soldier in Afghanistan, Motion to Take Note

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.13 pm): It is with deep regret that I rise to acknowledge in this House the recent death of Lance Corporal Todd Chidgey on 1 July 2014 in Kabul, Afghanistan. At the time of his death, Lance Corporal Chidgey was a member of the Australian Defence Force Headquarters in Kabul serving as part of the Protective Security Detachment. He was on his sixth tour of Afghanistan and had previously seen operational service on Operation Slipper in Afghanistan on five occasions. Lance Corporal Chidgey was born in Gosford, New South Wales, in 1985. He joined the Australian Army in March 2006 and on completion of his initial employment training he was posted to the then 4th Battalion (Commando), the Royal Australian Regiment, now the 2nd Commando Regiment.

It is reported that Lance Corporal Chidgey's colleagues in the 2nd Commando Regiment have described him as being 'a brilliant bloke to know and work with, who was loyal to the core and would do anything for his mates'. They also described him as being 'a consummate professional and a dedicated soldier' who was 'one of the hardest working members of the regiment who never sought recognition or reward'. His family have also described him as being the 'consummate gentleman' who was 'well mannered, loyal and always there for his family'. These are fine statements from Lance Corporal Chidgey's family and colleagues and I am sure that they bear true testament to the mark of the man.

On behalf of the House, I place on record our deepest regret for the death of Lance Corporal Todd Chidgey and thank him for his service to our nation. I also take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Lance Corporal Chidgey's family and friends. I move—

1. That the House take note of this statement; and
2. That the House acknowledges agreement by observing one minute's silence as a mark of respect.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): I wish to pay my respects and those of the opposition to Special Forces Soldier Lance Corporal Todd Chidgey who died on 1 July this year while on active duty in Afghanistan. He was merely 29 years old when he died, having been born in Gosford, New South Wales, in 1985. He joined the Australian Army in 2006 and after training was posted to what is now the 2nd Commando Regiment. He served six tours in Afghanistan ranging in duration from two weeks to six months. At the time of his death in a non-combat incident he was serving with a detachment. He and his fellow Special Forces soldiers were providing security protection for a senior Australian officer at Headquarters International Security Assistance Force Joint Command. Fellow soldiers in the 2nd Commando Regiment described Lance Corporal Chidgey as a loyal friend who was brilliant to know and work with. A statement issued by his mother and brother said, as quoted by the Premier, 'We will remember Todd as the consummate gentleman, a son and brother who was well mannered, loyal and always there for his family.' They also added, 'If you were his friend he'd stick by you and he was a champion of the underdog.' The Army itself described Lance Corporal Chidgey as a consummate professional and dedicated soldier. On behalf of the opposition I pass on our thoughts to Lance Corporal Chidgey's family, friends and fellow soldiers as well as our thanks and gratitude for his service to our nation.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

Glasgow Commonwealth Games

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.18 pm): Madam Speaker, what a magnificent sporting spectacle we have witnessed over the past two weeks in Glasgow. The 20th Commonwealth Games is now just a memory, but what great memories it has provided. The performance of our athletes was outstanding with sensational results in the pool, on the track and at every venue in between. Forty-nine gold, 42 silver and 46 bronze prove that Australia continues to be a formidable force on the world sporting stage while also highlighting the strength of the competition. I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the parliament to congratulate each and every one of the athletes who competed for our country.

From here the real excitement starts because it is our turn next. The focus is now well and truly turning to the Gold Coast for 2018 for what I am confident in saying will be the best Commonwealth Games ever. The Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, Jann Stuckey, took hold of the baton on behalf of Queensland yesterday and has invited the world to our beautiful state in just four years time. The Queensland government is working hard to ensure we are ready and waiting to welcome the athletes, their families and friends and the international sporting media to the sunny Gold Coast in 2018. We will put on a world-class show that will no doubt be complemented by world-class performances from our Aussie and Queensland athletes.

Crime Statistics

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.20 pm): We promised to get tough on crime and make Queensland the safest place to live and raise a family, and that is exactly what we have done. We have introduced tough new laws to crack down on the worst in our society, backed up

by more police on the beat, armed with the latest equipment and technology. We pledged to provide an extra 1,100 police officers over four years and already we have more than 800 additional police on the beat right now. We have funded two police helicopters for South-East Queensland, which provide us with valuable eyes in the sky. We have created agile borderless police hubs that are able to fight crime whenever or wherever it occurs. Alongside the Queensland Police Service, we have been working day and night to make a positive difference.

The latest crime statistics confirm that the hard work is paying off right across this state. Reported crime, that is, crime against the person and property, is down by 11 per cent across the state. Key statistics for offences such as robbery down 18 per cent, unlawful entry down 19 per cent and unlawful use of a motor vehicle down 20 per cent stand out strongly. The overall decrease in reported crime will resound with Queenslanders worried about offences including murder, assault, robbery, break and enter and theft. In my electorate of Ashgrove, reported crime against the person or property has gone down by 20 per cent. I repeat: in my own electorate crimes against the person or property have gone down by 20 per cent.

The latest statistics also reveal how police are cracking down harder on criminals, proactively detecting more crimes involving drugs, weapons offences and extortion. This means—and I acknowledge this today and we are saying this today—that in those statistical areas there has been a rise in crime figures due to proactive policing as we take the fight aggressively and proactively to the criminals. In other words, the statistics confirm that proactive policing is paying off. Police are doing their job finding the offenders and people feel more comfortable and are more confident in coming forward to report offences. The statistics using reported crime and other crime per 100,000 people have been reported in the same way for 20 years.

Unlike the Australian Labor Party, we will never lower our guard when public safety is concerned. Already we have a strong track record on law and order, but we will continue to crack down on crime by increasing police resources at the front line, improving available technology and equipment, and ensuring our laws keep pace with the needs and expectations of Queenslanders.

Party Houses

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.23 pm): In our government, every department and every minister is determined to play their part in making Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. My department is working hard to complement the tough laws that have been introduced and the additional 800 police on the beat by reforming the state's planning framework to ensure that it contributes to greater community safety. The State Planning Policy, which is one of the significant reforms our government has delivered, calls for the personal safety and security of residents to be enhanced in planning schemes. This direction leads to both better planning and safety outcomes for residents.

I am pleased to report further safety measures have been delivered overnight in amendments to the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. Families in some popular Queensland tourist areas have had their safety threatened and the quality of their life hampered by so-called party houses and for too long it was ignored and seen as an intractable problem. For too long residents have had to put up with living adjacent to large homes that were converted into commercial party houses. Those party houses have been centres for unscrupulous activities including excessive noise, offensive social behaviour, violence, littering, illegal activities and, on occasion, criminal activity. Under changes passed in the House last night, Queensland families have been freed from the nuisance and the unsafe and harmful effects of those commercial party houses in their streets and suburbs.

Our government's promise to deliver better planning will solve the problems arising from residential dwellings that are regularly hired, rented or leased out for the purpose of hosting parties on a commercial basis. The amendments will allow councils to force all existing or new party house operators to apply for a development approval and either close them down if their activities are inappropriate or apply conditions to their operation to protect the lifestyle and safety of local residents. Councils will also have the power to investigate and prosecute party houses that operate without such a development approval. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, causing burdens on councils where no party house problems exist, we have given councils the flexibility to opt in for all or part of their local area. Councils will also have the power to identify a party house restriction area in their planning schemes. This will mean any residential dwellings in the restricted area will not have the right to operate as a party house unless otherwise approved by the council.

These changes will not affect legitimate rental accommodation providers that are the backbone of our state's important tourism industry. They target only rogue party house operators who have been knowingly flouting the rules by purchasing or renting a residential dwelling and then turning it into a commercial operation for party events. Our government is determined to take the steps necessary to make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. These planning reforms will improve the safety and quality of life of residents living in popular tourism destinations.

Law and Order, Funding

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.26 pm): I acknowledge in the gallery the students from Pimlico State High School who performed for us earlier today. I am sure that they calmed many a savage beast before question time today.

The government understands that there is nothing more important to Queenslanders than protecting families and keeping them safe and, of course, Treasury has a role to play as well. That is why we are working every day to make sure the state is the safest place in Australia to live, work and raise a family. It is also why we are ensuring we continue to fund vital front-line services that will improve the quality of life for all Queensland families. The 2014-15 state budget is a demonstration of our commitment.

We are delivering for the children in most need of our care and protection, with \$406 million provided to implement the recommendations of the Carmody inquiry into child protection. Better protection of the most vulnerable Queenslanders is a priority for all of us. We are also helping to keep Queenslanders safe by boosting police numbers across the state, including funding for a further 267 officers in 2014-15. In all, the government will fund 1,100 police officers over four years, making all our communities safer places to live. We are also delivering a further \$3 million to continue delivering police helicopter services across South-East Queensland so that our police can respond as quickly as possible when needed. That is another example of the government ensuring our police and emergency services, as the Premier said, have the tools they need to protect the community.

We are also investing in the government wireless network, something that was promised by those opposite for 10 years but never delivered. This year we have committed \$72.5 million to begin the rollout of the network that will secure police, ambulance, fire and emergency officers to the one secure digital network for the first time. The network will progressively roll out in time for the G20 meetings in Cairns and Brisbane, followed by widespread deployments across South-East Queensland.

We want to ensure Queenslanders feel safe on our streets regardless of where they are or how old they are. When young Queenslanders go out to have a good time, we are making the streets safer for them with a \$44.5 million funding boost for the Safe Night Out strategy. Importantly, we are working with local communities to ensure the strategy includes local solutions that work for them.

As Treasurer, I am proud of the way that the government has managed the budget so we could fund those vital services to keep Queenslanders safe. We could do even more if we were not dealing with Labor's financial legacy, the \$4 billion a year of interest; money that cannot be spent on protecting Queenslanders. However, through our strong financial management, we will keep delivering on our pledge to make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. Only the LNP has a strong plan to revitalise front-line services and ensure our streets are safe and our children are protected.

Crime Statistics

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (2.29 pm): I note that I have a minute on the clock so I will be very brief. Today is certainly a great day for Queensland. We all know that where there is safety there is prosperity. I had the pleasure earlier today on the Gold Coast of joining the Premier and the Police Commissioner, Ian Stewart, to reveal that the rate of Queensland's reported offences are down 11 per cent for the 2013-14 financial year—down 11 per cent. Robberies are down by 18 per cent and unlawful entries are down by 19 per cent. I would like to table that for the information of the House. There has been a 20 per cent decrease in unlawful uses and fraud is down by 11 per cent. That is something that those opposite never dreamt of. Assaults are down by six per cent and arson is down by 20 per cent.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, I know that you have excited the chamber, but I have to ask you to sit down now because it is time for question time. Before we move to question time, I call the Leader of the House.

CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING—PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL

CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING) AMENDMENT BILL

Cognate Debate

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (2.30 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

- (1) That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill and the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Amendment Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages, as follows:
 - (a) second reading debate, but with separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
 - (b) the consideration of the bills in detail together; and
 - (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.
- (2) That, notwithstanding anything contained in the standing and sessional orders:
 - (a) the time limits and order for moving the second readings shall be: member for Dalrymple—10 minutes, followed by member for Yeerongpilly—10 minutes; and
 - (b) the time limits and order for reply to the second readings debate shall be: member for Dalrymple—30 minutes, followed by member for Yeerongpilly—30 minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURE, RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (2.31 pm): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 43 of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 19 March and 6 May*.

Tabled paper: Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 43—Subordinate legislation tabled between 19 March and 6 May 2014 [[5644](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (2.31 pm): I give notice that I will move—

That section 4 of the Electoral Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, Subordinate Legislation No. 154 of 2014, tabled in the House on 5 August, be disallowed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Madam SPEAKER: Question time will finish at 3.32 pm. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Crime and Corruption Commission, Chief Executive Officer

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (2.32 pm): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier rule out appointing the current acting chair of the Crime and Corruption Commission, Dr Ken Levy, to the position of CEO, the only commission position that does not require bipartisan support?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. I make the point that we are delivering on the commitment we made about a fortnight ago which is to see full bipartisan support for whoever chairs or heads the Crime and Corruption Commission. We promised that and we are delivering that.

In relation to the honourable member's question, I did take note that she made a statement of a similar nature or speculated in a similar way in the House last night and perhaps some comments were made in the media today. For the benefit of all members, I inform the House as follows. I have advice from the director-general of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. He advises that

applications were called for for the position of chief executive officer of the Crime and Corruption Commission. He advises me that the closing date for applications for the position was Friday, 27 June 2014. Furthermore, he advises that 14 people applied for the CEO's position. He also advises that Dr Ken Levy was not one of those people.

He recommends that a selection committee be formed and that the new, independent and bipartisan selected chairman of the CCC chair and oversee the appointment of the CEO. In other words, the person selected with the agreement of both sides of the parliament should actually chair the panel to select someone for a position that should never be a political appointment.

I will move on. The CCC has been doing a great job. I am limited in what I can say about their work with the Queensland Police Service. But can I say that not only have the QPS done a great job in dealing with the crime problems with organised gangs but so has the CCC. They have been working hand in glove. We are very happy with the level of cooperation and coordination, the sharing of intelligence and the results that have been achieved. That is why I have said that if you are a mum or dad and your child works, for example, at a 7-Eleven or a late-night store you can be more happy today that it is less likely that they will be held up by someone with a gun, a knife or a sharpened screwdriver because of the great work of the CCC and the QPS.

Newman Government, Performance

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his statement after the Stafford by-election that the LNP 'got it wrong and we are prepared to say so today', and ask: will the Premier admit he was wrong when he promised public servants they had nothing to fear and then sacked more than 14,000 workers?

Mr NEWMAN: I note the preamble to the question in relation to the Stafford by-election. I noted that that was being mentioned a fair bit yesterday. I should congratulate the new member for Stafford, Dr Anthony Lynham, for his elevation to this place. It is a great honour to be here. We welcome you. Can I also thank the new member for Stafford for his warm and generous remarks made after the election that he had the utmost respect for me and my wife and that he had known us for many years. That is indeed the case. I thank him for the generosity of his comments.

In relation to listening, we are demonstrating that we are listening. Today, I again reiterate that there are things that we said a fortnight ago that we are delivering on and have delivered on. Firstly, we said that we would make sure that there was a bipartisan process for the appointment of the head of the CCC. That is what we have done. I said that we would remove the uniform requirement and segregation requirements for criminal motorcycle gang members in the Queensland correctional system, and we have done that. I said that, if we were re-elected, we would restore the process for estimates to what it was before.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Mr NEWMAN: I did note at the time, somewhat ironically, that—

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition.

Mr NEWMAN: I did note somewhat ironically at the time that, as far as scrutiny went, I experienced almost double the time being questioned by the opposition—

Ms Palaszczuk: You didn't answer it.

Mr NEWMAN: I will take the interjection. The questions were not very good. I could offer some advice—

Mr Seeney: So could I.

Mr NEWMAN: So could the Deputy Premier, but I do not think that is our job. Our job is to repair the finances of Queensland. I say today, in relation to another aspect of that question, that we know that the expenses of this state went up 8.9 per cent every single year for 10 years because of their poor and reckless financial management. We took action two years ago. The action has restored our state's finances. But we now need to deal with the \$80 billion of Labor debt that has been accumulated and hangs over like a big black cloud.

(Time expired)

Stretton Electorate, Community Safety

Mrs OSTAPOVITCH: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Stretton has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for the question. The member has told me and the Minister for Police that crime and community safety is the biggest issue in her area, and that is why the government is acting. The member for Stretton, I acknowledge, is an active participant in the various Neighbourhood Watch groups in her electorate and she encourages her constituents to join up and support a safer and friendlier community. I know that the member for Stretton is hosting the Pinelands Neighbourhood Watch AGM in her electorate office in the next couple of weeks.

It is important that people living and working in the Stretton electorate can have confidence that the government is working to make their community safer. She has every reason to be excited by the great results in reducing crime in her electorate and in the southern region more broadly. The new figures that we have been talking about today are good news for all of Queensland, but they are also really good news for the families and businesses in Stretton. They are a result of this government's work to increase police numbers, update laws and provide better tools to fight crime.

I went to the Gold Coast this morning to officially release the new crime statistics. I was delighted to reflect that reported crime is going down. What we are seeing, though, is that other crime where the police are going out proactively is actually going up. For example, extortion is up because people have the confidence to actually lodge complaints with the police and see their issues pursued through the criminal justice system.

If I turn to Stretton—and I am sure this will excite the honourable member—crimes against personal property in the Stretton electorate are down 19 per cent; 19 per cent. What an extraordinary result! And it has happened not by accident, not by some chance, but because of the measures we put in place—strong laws, more police, use of technology and equipment and resources, and you see crime go down. Families in the electorate of Stretton are safer tonight than they have been for many, many years. Other crime in the electorate of Stretton—that is, crimes detected proactively by police—are down three per cent, and the overall Stretton crime figure is down 15 per cent.

I just need to reflect that we still do not know really where the Labor Party come from on this issue. We do know that, contrary to the expectations and the will of Queenslanders, they have said they would get rid of our criminal gang laws that actually allow us to crack these problems and make the community safer. The choice is becoming clear. You can have an LNP who is making it safer for your family or the Labor Party who will completely trash those laws.

(Time expired)

Sale of Public Assets

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his statement after the Stafford by-election that the LNP 'got it wrong and we are prepared to say so today' and ask: will the Premier concede that he got it wrong with his assets sales plan that will see \$33 billion in assets sold for an \$8 billion one-off sugar hit but with the loss of \$2 billion in annual revenue or \$60 billion over the next 30 years?

Mr NEWMAN: Again, there is a reference to Stafford. Again, I acknowledge that we said we would listen and we have been, and our actions in the days and weeks and months ahead will continue to demonstrate our preparedness to listen. I thank the honourable member for raising the issue of Strong Choices because there is nothing clearer in terms of an approach that demonstrates the willingness to listen—clearly. I contrast it with the Labor Party's approach. What was their approach? 'We're not selling anything. Trust us. Trust us. We're the Labor Party. We're not selling anything.'

Mr Pitt interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: After the election you then ran a campaign to sell assets. You sold a lot of assets and the finances—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I warn the Leader of Opposition Business. Your interjections are not being taken. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: So they said they would not sell assets but they sold assets. That is right, Madam Speaker. They lied and they will lie again because—

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am sorry, you may have been distracted for a short period. The Premier was using unparliamentary language and I ask that he withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, I believe you used an unparliamentary word and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr NEWMAN: Madam Speaker, I am in error. I withdraw. But I say again the Australian Labor Party misled Queenslanders. They can have an objection in this place but Queenslanders know what that means. They know. We have a plan. We have a plan to reduce interest payments by \$150,000 an hour—interest that the Labor Party is responsible for. What we are doing will also see \$8.6 billion worth of assets and infrastructure developed across this state.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Please pause the clock. I now warn members on my left and I will start naming them under the standing orders. There is too much noise and interjections that are not being taken. The Premier is answering the question. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: We have a strong plan for action to build \$8.6 billion worth of roads, hospitals, schools, sporting facilities, cultural facilities—the things that Queenslanders need and they deserve, and we are going to tell Queenslanders how that can be delivered. But where will the Australian Labor Party be in early 2015? Where they will be is once again in a position of having to tell some pretty breathtaking porkies because they will not be able to say how they will deal with debt. They will not be able to deal with debt. They will not be able to tell Queenslanders how the hospitals and schools will be delivered, whereas we can. Only the grown-ups over here can tell Queenslanders how we will extricate ourselves from the morass that the Australian Labor Party has left. Only this side of the chamber will tell Queenslanders honestly and openly about how we will build the infrastructure of the future to take this state forward. Only the people on this side of the chamber have the honesty and integrity to tell it straight, to tell it like it is, and take this state forward to a stronger future.

Burleigh Electorate, Community Safety

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Burleigh has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for Burleigh for the question and for his ongoing commitment to keep families in his electorate safe. The government has a strong plan for a brighter future and a safer future for all Burleigh families. Whether it be more front-line police officers for the Gold Coast, delivery of state-of-the-art police helicopters—I note those opposite are silent—or the rapid action and patrols hub, this government is committed to revitalising front-line services in the south-east region.

The member for Burleigh shares this government's vision for a safer Queensland. He works closely with the officer in charge of Palm Beach Police Station and the Burleigh Police Community Consultative Committee to proactively address crime issues in his area. I also recently had the pleasure of attending the local law and order forum with the members for Burleigh and Currumbin, with senior police officers and members of the local community to listen and see what they had to say.

The member is a strong advocate for GraffitiSTOP and Hoon Watch, and I congratulate him on holding a community barbecue with the local Neighbourhood Watch groups next month. I do encourage all members to attend. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank the member for his dedication and hard work in the community and his strong support for local police.

To help continue to make Burleigh one of the safest places to live, work and visit, this government introduced the rapid action and patrols hub on the Gold Coast. The hub will deliver officers directly to areas of need and keep them mobile throughout their shift. This allows more time for our officers to be out on the front line and making our communities even safer.

As a result of the great work being done in Burleigh, from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 there has been a 21 per cent decrease in the total reported offences against the person and property when compared to the same period last year—a 21 per cent decrease. The Burleigh electorate has also

seen a significant reduction in crime where reported offences of assaults are down 24 per cent; robbery down 37 per cent; and unlawful use down 29 per cent. Mums, dads and their families in the Burleigh electorate are the safest they have ever been in years because of a revitalised front-line police service, state-of-the-art technology and stronger laws. Only an LNP has a strong plan for a brighter and safer future to revitalise front-line services and to ensure police have the resources they need to crack down on crime and make our streets even safer, not just now but for the future generations of the people of Burleigh and this great state.

Cost of Living

Mrs SCOTT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his statement after the Stafford by-election that the LNP 'got it wrong and we are prepared to say so today', and I ask: will the Premier concede he was wrong when he told Queenslanders he would lower the cost of living and save Queenslanders \$330 a year?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for her question. I am happy to say that in this area we are always happy to talk about the difference between those opposite and people on this side of the chamber. As a bit of a history lesson, Labor made this state the most expensive state in Australia to own a motor vehicle. Car registration went through the roof. They said they would keep an 8c a litre fuel subsidy. They removed it cynically, capriciously and immediately after an election. They supported the carbon tax. The member for Redcliffe was there on the floor of the parliament supporting the biggest single impost on families that we have seen for 30 to 40 years. They removed the stamp duty concession for the family home, bungled water reforms leading to higher prices for water—and I spoke yesterday about what happened in 2007—increased public transport fares by 15 per cent each year for three years and wasted \$1 billion on a failed Health payroll system.

In contrast, what have we done? We have halved the public transport fare increases that Labor had announced. For two years we halved them. We have brought in a deal where after nine journeys in a week on the go card all other travel is free. That saves, for example, people in my electorate who are commuting from The Gap when I last checked at least \$220 a year. It is probably more than that now. We also restored the concession for stamp duty on the family home. That is over \$7,000. It has actually cost \$917 million. That is a \$917 million reduction in the revenue of the state, and that benefit is being passed back directly to Queenslanders. That is \$917 million that the government is not taking out of people's pockets and taking to George Street. It is \$917 million over four years that the families of Queensland have. That is cost-of-living relief.

What about the freezing of the family car rego? That is \$132.3 million over three years back in the pockets of mums and dads across this state. What about the \$15,000 Great Start Grant for first home buyers of a new house or unit or one off the plan? These are real savings measures. This is the delivery of a commitment. We continue to work hard to make sure that we keep downward pressure on the cost of living because we are responsible financial managers. Unlike the reckless incompetence on the other side—

(Time expired)

Mount Coot-tha Electorate, Community Safety

Mrs RICE: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Mount Coot-tha has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for the question because, as in every electorate around this state, crime, particularly property crime, is a big issue. It has always been a big issue. I want to reflect on the personal cost of property crime. You go home to your sanctuary, to the place that is your castle, your refuge from a turbulent world. You get home at five o'clock or six o'clock and you find that someone has gone into your home and has been through your things, stolen your jewellery, credit cards, cash or perhaps an heirloom from your grandmother or your great-grandmother. There is a sense of violation from somebody intruding in such a personal way. That is why it is so important to be tough on crime and to give the police the resources to deal with it.

I am delighted to report that crimes against the person or property in the Mount Coot-tha electorate have gone down by 20 per cent over the past 12 months. The people of the Mount Coot-tha electorate can feel safer tonight. That is a 20 per cent reduction in people suffering that sense of violation. We will continue to work hard to protect people and their families because we are

fair dinkum about this issue. I do report that other crimes—these are crimes that have been detected proactively by police—are up 23 per cent. Before the member for Rockhampton goes off again on a tangent spouting all sorts of falsehoods, let us understand what that means.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They are probably after the member for Rockhampton—you never know. The crimes detected proactively by police have gone up because they are going out and making a difference on the beat. They are making sure that people who commit antisocial acts are apprehended. They are making sure that people who have been harassed by criminal gangs are being detected.

Before I conclude, I want to say this: I totally and utterly want to congratulate the hardworking men and women in the Queensland Police Service. They can be so immensely proud of these results. That is why when they had their 150th anniversary ball in Brisbane City Hall only a couple of weeks ago I was proud to go there on behalf of this government and thank everyone from the commissioner to the brand-new recruits for an outstanding job for all Queenslanders.

Kenilworth, Ambulance Services

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the health minister. Will the minister investigate the case to have an upgraded ambulance presence located at Kenilworth in the Mary Valley during peak holiday periods similar to the Rainbow Beach temporary ambulance model?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Nicklin for his question. I acknowledge that this is an issue of concern to the honourable member. It is one which he has previously raised in this place, if not during an estimates committee process going back a couple of years. The Newman government takes seriously our obligation to make sure that the Queensland Ambulance Service is properly resourced and that we properly invest in additional paramedic services around the state and that we have an appropriate number of support personnel for them and communities around the state. That is why we are proposing this year to employ an additional 100 QAS officers around the state and to put in place another 155 replacement vehicles as well as the upgrade and construction of new QAS stations around the state.

As I understand it, the Kenilworth facility is one operated by first responders in the community and has been for some time. It is similar in my electorate with regard to the Killarney and Torwood communities. This has been a traditional approach in recent decades where there has not been the demand to justify the provision of full-time personnel in that area where communities come together to work with QAS by the provision of good volunteers locally who are well trained to be able to respond to particular needs within the community.

We are certainly aware of the needs in Kenilworth, and I think it is probably fair to say that sometime in the future—yet to be determined—there will be moves towards the provisioning of permanent personnel at Kenilworth. As I understand it, next Monday evening the acting assistant commissioner locally of the LASN will be meeting with the local community in order to discuss what their particular needs are. Of course, this will have to follow a demand assessment because we need to ascertain what the current demand is there. Obviously, it is a very strongly supportive community that exemplifies itself with regards to the provision of the first responder support there.

I can assure the honourable member that, as far as we are concerned, if we had to look at a priority in the future for a new ambulance facility which was full time in some way, then Kenilworth would be one of those at the front of the list. I say to the honourable member, through you, Madam Speaker, that we need to ascertain that against available resources and also the demand which may be in that particular community. I know that in my area where we do have those first responders it is greatly appreciated, but it may not be that we need to move towards a full-time presence in the short term. They are certainly things we do monitor throughout the state as need requires from time to time.

(Time expired)

Thuringowa Electorate, Community Safety

Mr COX: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Thuringowa has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question and for his strong and continuous interest to ensure the community and families of Thuringowa feel safe. I know the member is a very active participant in his community, promoting the good work of the Queensland Police Service in the northern region. With 15 more police for the area and the announcement of the rapid action and patrols hub for Townsville—which I had the pleasure of announcing with the Premier and the member back in May—we are certainly seeing results, with crime rates being driven down.

I am pleased to report that the Thuringowa electorate has seen a reduction in total reported offences against person and property of 10 per cent compared to the last financial year. This is backed by further reductions in reported unlawful entry offences by 25 per cent and reported unlawful use of motor vehicle offences by a further 19 per cent. I also note that other offences such as drug, weapons and liquor offences, which are as a result of proactive policing tasks, were up by 13 per cent in the Thuringowa electorate. This is as a result of more police on the beat and greater community confidence.

I would like to say that the Premier said a great thanks to the police recently. I also want to say a great thankyou to the people of Queensland because it is only with the partnership of the police and the community working together that we see these significant great results, and the confidence is certainly up throughout Queensland.

Operation Mike Adamant, which is also in Thuringowa and Townsville, is one of the most proactive policing patrols being conducted in the Townsville area. The reduction in reported unlawful motor vehicle and unlawful entry offences that I mentioned earlier can also be attributed to the hard work that the police have done to stop crime under this particular operation. I mentioned the police hub earlier, which will deliver a further 22 officers directly to areas of need and keep them mobile throughout their shift rather than having them return to a station. This model of policing works wonders in the community and will be assisted greatly by Australian leading technology in that particular area. I note that the member for Thuringowa recently took local media for a ride-along to observe how this technology saves time for officers and helps towards improving policing responses. By allowing officers more time on the beat, it makes sure that our communities feel safe.

With strong laws and more than 800 extra police on our street, crime is going down throughout Queensland and Thuringowa. This can-do government will continue to build on our achievements to ensure that our police are adequately resourced, that crime rates continue to go down and that Queensland is the safest place to live, work and raise a family.

Teacher Aides, Employment Conditions

Mr HOPPER: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, I recently met with a number of teacher aides who were very concerned about their jobs. Is the minister going to put teacher aides in employment on contracts?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. I encourage everyone in the education, training and employment sector who meets with me to ask me about rumours they may have heard because it is the best chance for me to tell them that in our department we are increasing spending by about seven per cent in 2014-15 and we are going to be increasing the number of teachers and teacher aides by over 760. That is across the state. We have over 14,000 teacher aides in my department. They are a very, very valuable part of what we do in schools. They assist teachers and they assist with the Great Results Guarantee resources that local members know have been put in to their schools. Local schools have been able to identify the programs that will help their students and, importantly, they have then been able to employ more teacher aides to give them the extra resources to get the Great Results Guarantee going for our preps to year 2s.

It is a fairly succinct answer that I want to give to the honourable member and to every member in this House—that is, we respect and value our teacher aides and we have no intention of getting rid of them. They are an intrinsic part of our schooling system and we know that we could not exist without them. What I think we are seeing here is a scurrilous campaign being carried out by unions who have done this with school cleaners as well, so let me also address that issue. We respect and value the work of our school cleaners, and we have no plans to do anything but honour the current agreement we have with our school cleaners and we have no plans to outsource school cleaners. So hopefully I have dealt with the Together union or United Voice who constantly say that they are helping their own members but who in fact are only creating angst and concern amongst their members by raising these issues about what the government prospectively is going to do. I cannot be any clearer. Whether it is guidance officers, whether it is teacher aides—

Mr Hopper: They just want to know if they are going on contract. That is what they want to know. Are they going to go on contract?

Mr LANGBROEK: I take the interjection from the honourable member. The point is that employment arrangements are not going to change for teacher aides. Can I just make that as clear as I can. I do not think it can be any clearer than that. We have employees at the moment who are on contract; that happens in all aspects of my department—

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: That happened under the former government. Employment arrangements have not changed under this government for any of the people who are employed in my department—whether they are teachers, teacher aides, guidance officers, cleaners, psychologists. All of the various employees have different employment arrangements and we have no plans to make any changes that will do anything other than make sure we get the best outcomes in our schools.

Waterford Electorate, Community Safety

Mr LATTER: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Waterford has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for Waterford for his question because it does give me the opportunity to talk about more good news on this issue of community safety, good news for Queensland, good news for the people of Waterford. It shows that our work to increase police numbers to focus more on the front line, to give police the tools and update the laws to make them stronger and to give the systems supporting police the right reforms is all working. It was great to go to the Gold Coast this morning to announce the figures.

I acknowledge that the member for Waterford has a very strong interest in law and order issues. I am aware that he is working with Inspector Mick Dowdy of the Logan district police headquarters to address specific crime issues, especially break and enters in the greater Logan area. I am also aware that the honourable member is working with Senior Sergeant Scott Lacey, the officer in charge at Springwood, on road policing to address hooning and dangerous driving across his electorate. I am also aware that he has formed a partnership with Sergeant Charmaine Leafe, the officer in charge at the Loganlea police beat, to improve community safety around the Loganlea train station and foster more positive police and community relations. I commend the member for that work.

I refer to the comments the minister made earlier on in the proceedings this afternoon that for police to be effective, there needs to be a strong level of input from the community. I encourage honourable members to do the same thing as the member for Waterford and to actually engage with the community, build that bridge between the community and the Police Service. If we get that going everywhere across Queensland I am confident we will see further improvements.

In terms of reported crime in the electorate of Waterford, crimes against the person and property are down 10 per cent. The rate of detection of other crime in the electorate is up by nine per cent. This is proactive detection. In other words, the police are out on the beat, jumping on people who do the wrong thing—things like antisocial behaviour, hooning and other things—to make the community safer. The overall Waterford crime rate is down three per cent.

Again, I say let us just think about the families in the honourable member's electorate tonight. They are going home with the comfort that their place—their castle—their precious place, is less likely to be broken into this evening and in subsequent days due to that 10 per cent reduction in crime. That means that today Queensland is a safer place and Waterford is a safer place to raise a family.

Public Transport, Concession Cards

Dr DOUGLAS: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Public transport is a very expensive option for Gold Coasters. There is much confusion about free seniors public transport travel and Tertiary Transport Concession Card eligibility, and I ask: can the minister please outline what the government's policy position is? I table one of the fines given to a TTC card holder from a registered organisation.

Tabled paper: TransLink offence notices, dated 5 August 2014 [\[5645\]](#).

Mr EMERSON: I thank the member for Gaven for the question. In terms of seniors' travel on the Gold Coast, as the member knows, across our network we do provide concessions for seniors in terms of both 50 per cent discounts and free travel after a number of journeys. In terms of the Gold Coast specifically, the local council has a policy regarding seniors, and I do support the council implementing that policy. I know that Tom Tate, the local mayor, wrote to me recently to indicate that in their most recent budget they would be continuing that policy going forward. I do support him in doing that.

We introduced the Tertiary Transport Concession Card because across our system we were seeing that about 150,000 people were claiming to be a full-time student. In fact, on our figures, based on what the universities were telling us, about 85,000 were eligible for concessions. So we brought in that card. At this stage on the Gold Coast specifically, about 95 per cent of students who are eligible have applied and have received their Tertiary Transport Concession Card. That means that students are travelling correctly and are claiming concessions. What we do not want to see—and this is the problem that we faced—is people falsely claiming to be a full-time student and wrongly claiming the concession. They are basically penalising everyone else on our public transport system. Our estimates are that up to \$8 million is being lost because of people rorting the system. I do not have the recent figures specifically for the Gold Coast, but I will give members an example of the changes we have seen already since we brought in this policy. Once we started to crack down on this rorting, in terms of Central Railway Station, in just a week we saw a 4,000 turnaround; that is the number of students dropping and the number of adults going up. These were people who were previously falsely claiming to be students and claiming a concession when they were not eligible for it. These were students in suits. They did not have a right to the concession but they were claiming it.

So we have cracked down on this rorting and I make no apologies for that. I have seen claims that there has been a backlog. There has been no backlog. When we issued this, we said it would take up to 15 days. In fact, the turnaround time, on average, has been over seven days—less than eight days. We have seen the turnaround and at no time has there been a backlog. In fact, across the network about 80,000 cards have been issued to students. Let us not forget that we announced this in February, but we had a grace period. We did not bring it in until 1 July. The bottom line is—

(Time expired)

Springwood Electorate, Community Safety

Mr GRANT: My question goes to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Springwood has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. I would also like to thank the member for his continuing and ongoing interest in policing and community safety and for the work that he does in his electorate of Springwood. This can-do LNP government is determined to make electorates like Springwood the safest place to live, work and raise a family. As I said at the very beginning, where we have safety, we have prosperity. From 1 July 2013 to 30 June this year in the member's electorate there has been a 13 per cent decrease in the total reported offences against the person and property when compared to the same period last year. The reported rate of robberies in Springwood has decreased by 41 per cent and reported unlawful entry has decreased by 34 per cent. Thanks to this government's toughest antihooning legislation, reported unlawful use of motor vehicles in the Springwood electorate has decreased by 28 per cent.

The future is certainly looking brighter and safer for Springwood families. During the 2012 election campaign we committed to supporting community policing groups—and they are very important—such as Crime Stoppers and Neighbourhood Watch which do invaluable work in our communities. We know the value added by dedicated community members and communities. That is why this government is providing \$1 million a year over four years to renew Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers units right across this great state.

I note that the member for Springwood has a strong interest in his local Neighbourhood Watch group and devoutly attends local meetings. I thank him for his dedicated involvement and community support. Recently, the head of Crime Stoppers Queensland reported that, even though Queensland has one-fifth of the total population of Australia, last year over 41 per cent of the reporting to Crime Stoppers, particularly in the area of criminal gangs, was in Queensland. It has risen by over 480 per cent, and that is due to the partnership and the connectivity with the community over the last two years, which has been like never before.

It is only by working together that the Queensland government can deliver on a strong plan for a bright and safe future for our communities. With strong laws and more than 800 extra police on our streets, crime is down. The total number of crime rates reported in Springwood is down by nine per cent. We will continue to build on our achievements to ensure Queensland is the safest place for the residents not just of Springwood but right across the whole of Queensland. We will do whatever it takes to keep reducing crime so that all citizens can sleep safely in their bed, whether that be in Springwood or any other electorate, knowing that police are out on the streets fighting crime, making sure offenders are put away and that the rights of victims and the community are put first, unlike what happened under those opposite.

(Time expired)

Sale of Public Assets

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. The community in Stafford and, indeed, across Queensland has shown real concerns for the proposed sale or lease of Queenslanders' assets. Is this government so committed to the sale of the assets that they will not reconsider that position in the light of the community's expressed views?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Gladstone for her question. Of course, as I have said on many occasions, I understand the member for Gladstone's position representing, as she does, the city of Gladstone, the seat of Gladstone and one of Queensland's most thought about parts in terms of our industry and our capacity to do trade with the rest of the world through the port of Gladstone. As I have said—and I will say it again—Gladstone is Queensland's muscle town.

We have to consider where we sit. Where were we 2½ years ago when this government was elected? As an incoming Treasurer, I had the incoming Treasury brief prepared by the independent officers of the Queensland Treasury. What did that incoming Treasury brief say? It said that the state of Queensland's finances is unsustainable and restoration must be a priority for this term of government.

We also had the incoming brief from the Queensland Treasury Corporation, the bankers for the State of Queensland, the people who go out—and increasingly under the former government had to go out more frequently—and borrow money from the rest of the world. They go cap in hand to the bankers in New York, London, Kazakhstan, Poland and Israel asking for money because the former government kept their expenses going through the roof and in fact incurred something in the order of \$27 billion worth of deficits in their last five years in government. What did QTC say? The QTC said that, with the volume of debt on issue and the volume of debt likely to be issued, Queensland is entering into uncharted waters with respect to the resultant interest bill payable; and Queensland had lost its AAA credit rating, costing the taxpayers of Queensland an additional \$250 million in interest; and there was no plan to get us out of the red. And those opposite had abandoned the 8c per litre fuel subsidy; they had abandoned the stamp duty concession for people buying their first home; they had introduced a \$300 million plus tax on waste; they had increased car registration fees; and legislatively, in order to get the sale of the Queensland motorways away, increased the tolls by 30 per cent. So we have a problem: we have to pay down that \$80 billion worth of debt.

Member for Gladstone, I have travelled now 19,000 kilometres throughout the state. I have had 27 public meetings and community meetings. We can massively increase taxes, we can substantially reduce services, or we can consider the sale or lease of assets. There is no fourth or fifth or sixth option. We have to consider that if we are going to see a state that continues to grow.

Capalaba Electorate, Community Safety

Mr DAVIES: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Capalaba has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for Capalaba for the question, and I note that the member for Capalaba, Mr Steve Davies, has worked in youth services and he knows a bit about this subject. He knows the pitfalls for kids who become involved in crime and the dangers of drugs and criminal gang involvement. He knows how important good policing is to businesses in his electorate, and there are thousands of small businesses in places like Capalaba and Birkdale.

I know that he has worked very closely with the council to install speed mediation devices in problem hooning areas. I know that he has supported the distribution of information for St James Park Neighbourhood Watch. I know that he actively supports his local PCYC through a range of community programs and fundraising events. I also know that he is working closely with Senior Sergeant Andrew Gillies of the Queensland police in regard to local hooning and domestic violence issues, and I commend the honourable member for that work. I am also appreciative of his work conducting a law and order forum at a local community club on Drink Safe and alcohol related violence to get feedback on those matters which have gone into this government's processes in coming up with our Safe Night strategy. He took part in a program by Sergeant Graham Pearse called Deep Blue Line targeting young males in the age group 13 to 17 which is designed to help them find a crime-free way through this somewhat difficult stage in life.

The new crime figures today that are being released for Queensland and Capalaba are good news. I commended the police earlier on, and I have commended the member, and I commend the community that he has been working with and those organisations that I have nominated and others that also deserve praise for their great work collectively in getting crime down. So what are the figures? Reported crime in the electorate of Capalaba, particularly crimes against persons or property, is down 25 per cent.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr NEWMAN: The other crime that we have been talking about, which is proactively detected crime where they are out on the beat nabbing people for doing the wrong thing, is up 16 per cent. That is a good thing because it shows that there is a police presence out there and it is actually working. In time, once they have asserted control I am confident that we will see those figures turn around and go the other way. The overall Capalaba crime figure is down by eight per cent. So, Madam Speaker, tonight it is safer to raise your family in the electorate of Capalaba.

Crime Statistics

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to the government's presentation of crime statistics today—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Just pause. I warn the member for Lockyer under 253A for interjecting on someone asking a question. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to the government's presentation of crime statistics today on an electorate basis, which is a format not available to the public and I ask: has the minister directed the Police Commissioner to provide the government with information in a format that can be used exclusively today in a party political manner?

Mr DEMPSEY: It is a great opportunity to highlight the great effort that our police are doing in making sure that crime rates are going down.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! The minister has the call to answer the question and I ask that you cease your interjections. I call the minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: Thank you for your protection, Madam Speaker. For the member for Rockhampton's interest, he will see that offences against the person and property in his own electorate, if he cared at all, are down by six per cent. He would see that total offences of crime are down by five per cent. I know that—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr DEMPSEY: Madam Speaker, it is really desperation by those opposite to be—

Mr Byrne: You've got the commissioner to do your grubby work for you!

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I now ask the member for Rockhampton to withdraw that. That is unparliamentary.

Mr BYRNE: I withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you. I now warn members on my left. There are too many interjections. The minister has the call. I call the minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: It is an absolute disgrace that those opposite would put the reputation of the Queensland Police Commissioner ahead of their own political gains in any way. We have seen today, as reported on the Gold Coast, a reduction in crime right across the whole of this state; reporting that has been ongoing for the last 20 years under both sides of this House. The hypocrisy of those opposite is just unbelievable. I just ask them how many members—

Mrs Miller: Terry Lewis!

Madam SPEAKER: I am going to warn the member for Bundamba under 253A for continuing to interject when she had already been warned or I had warned generally. I call the minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The hypocrisy of those opposite! In relation to openness and transparency, they had two members who were sent to jail and now they come into this House and try to bring the highest law officer, the Police Commissioner, into the gutters by those scurrilous remarks by the member for Rockhampton—the shadow police minister who would not support police, voted against increasing assaults on police, voted against protecting families and young children and voted against increasing the reporting of those offences—

Mr Mulherin interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. The minister has time on the clock. I warn the Manager of Opposition Business under 253A. There are too many interjections. I call the minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: I hear the member for Mackay and the member for Rockhampton interjecting, and I ask them to really catch up with the modern century. As I said to the shadow minister in two lots of estimates, he merely has to go to the open data systems which we have on our computers. We are the only state in Australia to have open data systems. That does not just let the community know what is happening, but it reduces the fear of crime like never before. That is why we have great community confidence across this state. Apart from the hypocrisy of those opposite, we have a truly independent government separated from the Police Commissioner who works independently. These figures—

(Time expired)

Nudgee Electorate, Community Safety

Mr WOODFORTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister outline how the safety of residents and businesses in my electorate of Nudgee has improved due to the LNP government's strong plan to crack down on crime in Queensland?

Mr DEMPSEY: It is a great privilege to speak about the member for Nudgee's electorate. I would like to thank him for the work that he does. This government has a strong plan for a brighter and safer future for the people of Nudgee, particularly the families and young children in that electorate, whether it be the 25 more police for the Nudgee electorate, the delivery of a second police helicopter for the south-east region—again there is silence from those opposite; they never wanted even one of them—or the rollout of new technology. This government is committed to revitalising front-line services.

Between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014—wait for it—there was a 10 per cent decrease in the total number of reported offences against the person and property. The rate of unlawful entry has also decreased by 26 per cent, and the rate of unlawful use of motor vehicles has decreased by 16 per cent as a result of this government's tough antihooning legislation, which assists in getting police out from behind desks, which the previous Labor government shackled them to. We are releasing police to get out there and protect their community, providing new technology and passing the toughest laws in Australia. There are already an extra 800 police on the beat protecting those in the electorate of Nudgee and other communities right across the state.

The contrast is remarkable. Labor shackled police to their desks with paperwork and ineffective legislation whereas we have a strong plan for a brighter and safer Queensland to protect families, young children and our seniors by passing legislation and making sure our police are able to get out on the beat and do the job they were sworn to do—to serve the people of Queensland without favour, affection, malice or ill will.

(Time expired)

Madam SPEAKER: I have to apologise to the Manager of Opposition Business: I wrongly identified him under standing order 253A. It was actually his colleague the member for Mackay who interjected. As he has fessed up and been honest, I will just note that and thank him very much. The time for questions has finished.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Tabling of Documents

Madam SPEAKER: During question time a document was tabled by the member for Gaven. It included personal details of constituents, including their addresses. I have directed the Clerk to redact that. I understand that the Clerk has also talked to the member for Gaven to redact the personal details that are contained in that tabled document. I remind members to take care when they table documents such as that.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Madam SPEAKER: I wish to acknowledge the school students visiting today. The outstanding performance of Orpheus Strings from Pimlico State High School in the electorate of Townsville has already been acknowledged. Also visiting are students from The Southport School in the electorate of Southport, Merrimac State School in the electorate of Mudgeeraba and Bethania Lutheran primary school in the electorate of Waterford.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Finance and Administration Committee

Report

Madam SPEAKER: The question is—

That the report of the Finance and Administration Committee be adopted.

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.33 pm): I rise today with great pleasure to speak to the examination of the budget estimates and to bring to the attention of the House report No. 46 of the Finance and Administration Committee, *2014-15 budget estimates*. This was my first time as a—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Members, please. If you are going to talk, take it outside. I am struggling to hear the member. I call the member for Capalaba.

Mr DAVIES: As a first-time committee chair of an estimates committee I was quite fearful. To use a footballing analogy, it was like I was playing my first State of Origin: I was excited but also quite fearful, given it was the big game, having both the Premier and the Treasurer appearing before the committee. It was a bit of a tough call for me, but I really enjoyed the process.

First, I thank my committee members for their hard work and for the congenial nature of our committee in general, with the members for Mulgrave and Gladstone being part of our committee. It is great to work with them.

I also thank the Premier and the Treasurer for their hard work and commitment and for delivering a sustainable and sensible budget that puts Queensland well on its way to becoming the pre-eminent state in Australia. Both the Premier and Treasurer were suffering the dreaded lurgy during estimates. Both of their voices were very croaky, particularly the Treasurer's. The Treasurer was certainly struggling with his voice on the day but he soldiered on. The assistant minister certainly did a great job of helping him out and answering a few of the questions. It was very good.

I also thank the departmental staff of the Premier and Cabinet and Treasury and Trade. I also thank the many departmental heads including Andrew Greaves from the Audit Office and the new Integrity Commissioner, Richard Bingham. I thank them for their attendance and their contribution.

Finally, I thank the secretariat staff. These committees just would not work without the dedicated work of the secretariat staff. Deb, Maggie and Lyn from the Finance and Administration Committee—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, please. It is really difficult to hear the member. If you need to have a conversation, please take it out of the chamber. I call the member for Capalaba.

Mr DAVIES: The hard work and dedication of these staff mean that they do a fantastic job. As I said, we could not do what we do without them.

I will outline the highlights of my time chairing the estimates committee. The first was the Premier talking about the Queensland Plan. This is an unprecedented 30-year vision—a master plan for Queensland's future. This plan actually breaks the valid stereotype that governments are often only concerned with the three-year electoral cycle. The Queensland Plan actually shatters that perception. It is a plan that this government has put in place to allow Queensland to really think about where we are going and who we are going to be over the next 30 years.

I also mention the implementation of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, the Carmody report. Again, all too often this sort of review is done in response to an incident or a crisis; however, this program was a proactive response to an obvious need. I commend the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for the hard work they are doing and the money they have set aside in the budget to actually make this happen.

For me, the Treasurer's highlights included the strong plan for getting the budget back under control. We truly did inherit an absolute basket case of a budget from the previous lot. The Treasurer has put in place a great plan to return the budget to surplus by 2014-15; ensure expenses growth, importantly, does not exceed revenue growth—it is a very simple thing to do; 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 and superannuation in accordance with actuarial advice. The government has done this. We have waged a war on waste in government.

Hearing the great work of the Treasurer was certainly encouraging for me during the whole estimates process. We also saw the great work of Trade and Investment Queensland, with the opening of their new office. The Strong Choices campaign was another highlight. This is an absolutely fantastic plan to get us back on track, to actually deal with the \$85 billion debt—lowering it to an affordable \$55 billion—and to get back our AAA credit rating so that we can invest in the things Queensland truly does need and invest in our future. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP)** (3.38 pm): The hearing on Treasury and Trade was symptomatic of a shambolic, farcical series of hearings this year that reflect poorly on the Newman government. The Treasurer's response to questions from non-government members was to chew up the committee's time with government spin. Exhibit A: the Treasurer had his Under Treasurer read out over 125 figures when this information should have been tabled for accuracy. It was both disappointing and unbecoming. It shows just how desperate this government has become to avoid scrutiny.

Once again the Treasurer refused to detail how much money has been spent on asset sales scoping study consultants with no election mandate. The claims from the Treasurer that scoping study consultants must operate in a market of price secrecy are complete and utter rubbish. The Abbott government released its budget for scoping study consultants in the 2014-15 budget. If it can do it, why can't the Treasurer? The previous government released details of scoping study consultant costs in the 2009-10 Treasury annual report prior to transactions proceeding or, in some cases, commencing. If the previous government could release these costs, why can't the Treasurer? Of course the Treasurer can release this information, but he refuses to because he knows that Queenslanders will be outraged when they find out that the Newman government has spent tens of millions of dollars on its asset sales program in secret before even asking Queenslanders at an election.

The Treasurer also refused to rule out providing the private sector with a controlling management stake over the electricity network. He said it would have been a mammoth task to have told Queenslanders about this as part of Strong Choices. What this really means is that the hiring of scoping study consultants is not about informing Queensland about the structure of these proposed asset sales. He said a decision on whether he would hand control of our electricity network assets

over to the private sector would only be made after an election, so Queenslanders will not know what they are voting for. One thing Queenslanders can be certain of is that a vote for the LNP will be a vote for the divestment of Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. As described in the budget papers, this is in direct contradiction to the Premier's pledge in this parliament last year that he would not seek a mandate for the divestment of these assets.

The Treasurer also repeatedly refused to detail the full cost of the Strong Choices propaganda. While the answer to question on notice No. 2 detailed an additional internal allocation of \$4.2 million in 2014-15, no answer was provided on the internal allocation for 2013-14. This means that, contrary to the statements of the Premier and the Treasurer, the confirmed expenditure on Strong Choices is actually \$15.4 million and once the internal allocation for 2013-14 is included it is likely to be around \$20 million. It is fundamentally dishonest and a disgrace for this government to spend over \$15 million of taxpayers' money to make categorically false claims that the previous government left \$80 billion of accumulated debt when the budget papers clearly state that gross debt was \$62 billion in 2011-12, nearly half of which was self-sustaining and held by GOCs. Gross debt is not even at \$80 billion today. For the same Treasurer to cut ribbons at projects funded by his government's increase in debt while denying all responsibility for its own spending decisions this entire term in office shows that it is an immature and hollow government. The Treasurer had few answers at the estimates for why deficits on his own preferred fiscal measure have blown out by \$884 million from 2011-12 to 2014-15 compared with the previous government. While there have been some downward revisions in revenue, these pale in comparison to those Labor dealt with during the GFC and natural disasters and are partly a result of the LNP's decision to cut too hard and too fast into essential services. These higher deficits under the Newman government also reveal the true reasons peak debt has lowered from \$85 billion to \$82 billion. The debt trajectory has lowered because of a \$2.9 billion sell down in Aurizon shares and a lowering in infrastructure spending of \$630 million from 2011-12 to 2014-15.

Over its first three budgets, the LNP has made over \$13 billion in policy decisions to either increase spending or cut revenue. These are decisions that, in the Premier's words, a 'grown-up' government would take responsibility for and not seek to blame on the former government. The Treasurer again refused to release the consultancy register or expenditure on consultants. The previous government released this information in response to questions on notice. This government will not even fully disclose this information in response to right to information requests. The opposition is aware of many private sector spin doctors other than the Phillips Group, which has made \$422,828 from the taxpayer to date. Two things that the Newman government's third budget confirmed are, one, that the economy is growing more slowly and unemployment is significantly higher under the LNP than it was under Labor; and, two, the LNP wants to undertake the largest privatisation program in Queensland's history—\$33.6 billion worth. *Brisbane Times* columnist John Birmingham has had this government pegged for some time. Queensland, 'Mr Strong Choices' is an idiot, and he thinks you are one, too!

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (3.43 pm): I commence my contribution to this debate by thanking the Finance and Administration Committee for its examination of the budget estimates of my portfolio and for its support for the Appropriation Bill 2014. As I outlined to the committee at its hearing on 15 July 2014, the 2014-15 state budget is about continuing to deliver on the things that this government is most focused on delivering for Queenslanders—that is, creating jobs for Queenslanders, supercharging the Queensland economy and making this the best performing state government in the nation. Despite the \$80 billion debt that we inherited from the former government—and I reiterate the debt that is costing Queenslanders \$4 billion a year to service—in this budget we have actually increased expenditure on health, on education and on front-line policing and we have not increased taxes or introduced new taxes. This has been possible because we have been prepared to make the strong and responsible decisions needed to get the state finances back on track. Fiscal repair measures totalling around \$7 billion have been implemented and we are set to return to a budget surplus in 2015-16. Queensland will be stronger because of the responsible decisions that we have taken.

I note that the member for Mulgrave has made some comments in a statement of reservations attached to the committee's report. I particularly note that the honourable member has had something to say about Queenslanders' cost of living. When it comes to the cost of living, this government is acutely aware of the pressures on all Queenslanders. That is why we acted quickly to reinstate the full level of pensioner and seniors concessions cut by the federal government in its budget and that is why we are providing overall \$5.1 billion worth of concessions to Queenslanders in 2014-15. We have also continued to deliver on our election promises by continuing the scrapping of the former

government's \$7,000 of extra tax on the family home, continuing our freeze on family car registration and the traffic improvement levy, and continuing to support rural and regional Queenslanders with \$683 million in electricity subsidies to ensure that they pay the same price for electricity as people in Brisbane and South-East Queensland. The member for Mulgrave may wish to reflect on what the cost of public transport fares would have been for users in South-East Queensland if this government had not halved the annual 15 per cent increases that Labor had in store for Queenslanders for two consecutive financial years and introduced free travel after nine journeys in a week on the go card.

We know that there is more to be done on the cost-of-living issue and we are committed to making sure that Queensland families get the fairest deal possible on what they pay for government provided services. The 2014-15 state budget is a sound and responsible budget based on our strong plan to reduce debt and get our finances back on track. It sets a very clear pathway back to surplus and back to lower debt, because that way—the only responsible way—means that we can get back to investing in quality roads, schools and hospitals and in world-class teachers, doctors, nurses, ambos and police officers that Queenslanders want and they deserve. I again thank the committee for its work in scrutinising the budget. I also thank all of those staff of the parliament and the government who have contributed to the estimates process this year.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.48 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Finance and Administration Committee's consideration of the Appropriation Bill 2014. From the outset I say that the opposition and Queensland reject the government's process for examining the budget this year. It was a complete disgrace. It was shambolic to have all of the estimates hearings reduced to two days and to have seven hearings running at the same time. It was a deliberate attempt by this LNP government—a deliberate attempt—to avoid public scrutiny from not just the opposition and the crossbenches but media scrutiny as well. We hear the government talk about policy. We hear the government say, 'What's the opposition's policy?' Let me say very clearly: our policy about the estimates committee debacle was very clear: return it to the original way. Return it to the full seven days. Why mess with something that has stood the test of time? The LNP has adopted Labor policy. Let that be on the public record. When you are talking about opposition policy, let it be on the public record that this government has adopted Labor policy.

I want to get into some substantives of this debate. One of the very clear issues that I was very concerned about was that, during the Stafford by-election campaign, there was a media leak where confidential personal information about Dr Lynham was released. I had fundamental questions to ask at that hearing to the director-general and to the Premier about the release of that confidential information. This government failed to investigate it at the time of that hearing. Subsequently, I have received advice that that matter is now under investigation. But it should have been investigated from day one and it suggests to the public that it was a cover-up because the director-general failed to act on it there and then. So we heard no response about that issue at estimates, did we?

I then asked the Premier a pretty fundamental, basic question about jobs. How many jobs have been lost from the government owned corporations? 'Don't worry, Leader of the Opposition. I'll get that answer for you. I want to make sure it's really comprehensive. I will get those details to you.' We got the answer and it was four sentences. Very comprehensive! This is supposed to be the most open and accountable government in Australia. It is a closed shop. In response to my question I got told, 'No, you can wait until the annual reports on 30 September.'

Then I wanted some information on behalf of Queenslanders about the amount of taxpayers' money spent on the Strong Choices campaign—a fundamental estimates question. What did the Premier say? 'Don't worry about that, Leader of the Opposition. Don't you worry about that. Go and ask the Treasurer the next day.' So I walked in and asked the Treasurer the next day. Once again, I did not get the answers. This is a flawed process. This is a government that is not intent on being open and transparent and will not stand up to public scrutiny.

It has been a disgrace. In every minister's session that I went into, I failed to get answers. I am not in there to score political points; I am in there to get answers to Queenslanders' questions. Queenslanders have a fundamental right to know how this government is spending their money. They cannot even give an answer about how many jobs have been lost from a government owned corporation. They cannot give information about how public servants' confidential files are obtained and they cannot give answers as to how much of taxpayers' money has been spent—or, shall I say, wasted—on their propaganda campaign called Strong Choices. The Strong Choices campaign, taxpayers' money, absolutely wasted!

I think the member for Gladstone summed it up. Each question from Labor members was met with argument, condescension or derision. This is not the intent of estimates.

(Time expired)

 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (3.53 pm): I would like to begin by thanking the members who attended our estimates hearing, in particular our chairman, the member for Capalaba, Steve Davies; the other members of the committee; those who appeared before it; and our wonderful staff of the Finance and Administration Committee, Deborah Jeffrey, Maggie Lilith and Lynette Whelan.

Recently, I conducted an extensive survey of the residents of the Moggill electorate. The No. 1 issue that concerned my constituents was their cost of living. Although people realise that there are aspects of the cost of living that state governments do not have control over, there are three very important areas where we can make a very real difference to the cost of living. The first is the avoidance of significant waste. Queenslanders know how much they pay and continue to pay for the appalling waste of the previous Labor government, particularly in areas of water infrastructure that never came to be used. Secondly, the avoidance of poor policy decisions can save Queenslanders a great deal in terms of cost of living. We do not have to look any further than the appalling policy failures in the area of electricity for which Queenslanders also pay and will continue to pay. But in particular, the effect on the cost of living can be improved by applying budget discipline. In the decade 2001 to 2012, recurrent expenditure in this state under a profligate Labor government grew by 8.9 per cent per annum. That led to a debt explosion from 2005-06 to 2009-10 from \$18 billion to \$52 billion of debt. What was the result of that? These are the things that Queenslanders paid for, are paying for, and will pay for for years to come. We saw forced asset sales by the Labor government as a fire sale to raise money desperately to cope with their explosion of debt and their spending. We saw massive increases in public transport fares—15 per cent per annum compound—which is an unimaginable impact on the cost of living of commuters. We saw them introduce a tax on buying your own home with the withdrawal of the stamp duty concession—thousands of dollars for every Queensland when they buy their own home. We saw a dramatic increase in an array of state taxes, in particular the imposition, of course, on the cost of petrol that every Queensland will pay from now on.

Under the LNP government, from 2011-12 to 2013-14 that recurrent expenditure was reined back to a mere 1.2 per cent. Some of those decisions were not really popular, but they resulted in this government being able to restore the stamp duty concession when Queenslanders buy their own home; slash the public transport fare increases down to just 2.5 per cent; impose no new or increased taxes, unlike the previous Labor budgets; and restore seniors' concessions.

In the area of competitiveness, we do not hear this word often enough, because it is competitiveness that makes jobs and better paid jobs for people here in Queensland. We have seen good policy in the area of workers compensation so that premiums have been reduced, reducing costs on businesses and employment. We have seen payroll tax relief. As I said before, we have seen no new or increased state taxes.

In the last year of Labor, Queenslanders were paying only \$387 per capita less in state taxes than were their interstate counterparts. In 2014-15, under the LNP, Queenslanders are \$536 better off per person than their interstate counterparts. Following the recent state budgets interstate, Queenslanders are now \$585 better off. These things did not happen by accident.

(Time expired)

 **Mr GULLEY** (Murrumba—LNP) (3.58 pm): I rise today to represent the good people of Murrumba and to speak specifically to the 2014-15 Appropriation Bill and the budget estimates. I refer to report No. 46 of the Finance and Administration Committee—a committee of which I am a member. Appropriation bills are the formal mechanism for governments to spend the hard earned taxpayer funds of Queensland residents. At this point I would like to compliment the Treasurer for getting our finances back on track. As a qualified accountant, I am well aware that, whether we talk about the humble home budget or government finances, at all levels we need to live within our means.

There is only one recommendation in report No. 46, that being the Appropriation Bill 2014 be agreed upon. I support that recommendation. I would like to acknowledge the Premier and the Treasurer and Minister for Trade for their responses during the estimates hearings and for their subsequent answers to questions on notice. I also wish to thank the departmental staff for making themselves available throughout the estimates process. I wish to thank my fellow members of the Finance and Administration Committee. I wish to thank the secretariat for their work during the estimates process and for the comprehensive report that is No. 46.

Mr Deputy Speaker Ruthenberg, I represent Murrumba, the Aboriginal word for 'good place', and, as you know, each morning I wake up I challenge myself to make Murrumba a great place. As you and I often speak in public, 'Murrumba' is the Aboriginal word for 'good place', which, as you know, is somewhat better than 'Kallangur', which is the Aboriginal word for 'somewhat good place'. I know you are stuck in the chair so your right of response is quite limited, but I am sure you will save it for another day.

In conclusion, \$80 billion of debt is significant. That \$80 billion of debt creates \$4 billion of debt per year of interest. My electorate's share of that is \$44 million. What could you buy for \$44 million?

Mr Rickuss: It'd build two schools, wouldn't it?

Mr GULLEY: You could build two new schools. You could employ 500 teachers and nurses a year. That is the consequence for my people, for my constituents, of the waste of the prior government. We have less teachers, less nurses and there are dozens of other examples that I could have chosen today.

On a more serious note, I would like to acknowledge the member for Mulgrave in the chamber here today. I have high regard for the member for Mulgrave and would like to comment on his last comment: be careful with what you say; often it is more a reflection on the person throwing the mud rather than where it is intended.

Mr Pitt: I was quoting faithfully a statement of fact, if that helps.

Mr GULLEY: Thank you, member for Mulgrave, for your interjection. To conclude, we live in a great state, we live in a state with great opportunities and I commend the Appropriation Bill to the House.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (4.01 pm): I rise to participate in this debate in relation to the estimates process. I think that since I have been in parliament it has become more difficult to identify individual spending in the budget documents. It used to be much more easy to identify spending in your electorate. It is now pretty much allocated by statistical division. In some of the allocations, housing and health and those sorts of things, much of the budgeting is done in statistical divisions and it requires even more so that this estimates process be responsive in terms of the questioning and the replies.

It was not in my notes to comment on, but I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that the government is re-implementing the Labor policy regarding the format of estimates. I would have to say that the format this year, whilst I really valued the extra time with each of the ministers—we had a full day with each portfolio—the removal of the timed responses mitigated against the effectiveness of that change. I voted against the change simply because with all of the hearings running contiguously it is very difficult to go to other hearings. It is impossible if you are on the committee and, with the opposition reduced in numbers, impossible for it to get across all of the portfolios. That may have been the intent. But certainly the use of estimates for the purpose for which it was intended has diminished. To say that this government, in re-implementing the old process, is implementing Labor policy, from my perspective, is a stretch. I think 1994 was the first estimates process of this type. I was privileged to be elected in 1995. The process has changed over time. I think the timed responses work very well and conducting them over the period of the 10 days works very well, too. But to say that the government is going to re-implement the Labor policy is a stretch, from my perspective.

I would like to thank the committee staff for the work that they do. I would like to thank the Treasurer who was working under a fairly constrained environment—his voice had given up. I certainly believe he did endeavour in most instances to reply to the questions that were asked of him—in most instances. I am sure that the Labor Party may have a differing view. I was very disappointed, however, and actually submitted a statement of reservation, because the first day, Tuesday, I think was insulting to the community of Queensland. I know that there is political point scoring going on, but ultimately we are there to ask questions of the ministers who have carriage of a great responsibility. I do not believe the Premier demonstrated a responsible or a mature attitude to that process. It was disappointing. Whilst I have to acknowledge that the Premier attempted to answer some of my questions, his attitude certainly towards the opposition's questions was at best disappointing and at worst, as I have called it, argumentative, condescending and derisive.

I would have to say that I did ask a question of the Treasurer in relation to the difficulty that the Gladstone Regional Council and my electorate have had in being successful in the Royalties for the Regions process. The Treasurer replied by listing all of the budget allocations for Gladstone. There was one allocation that we have been successful in with Royalties for the Regions, and that was Kin Kora roundabout which is a state controlled road. I know that council and the community are intensely frustrated that, as the Treasurer rightly says, Gladstone is the muscle town and we have been unable to get funding, whether it is through Royalties for the Regions but particularly Royalties for the Regions, to fund that critical community infrastructure. Those applications go through council. They have been unsuccessful in getting funding for that social infrastructure that is so necessary and strained with development the way it is. I certainly hope future estimates are more productive.

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak on the examination of the estimates conducted by the Finance and Administration Committee. In June the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls MP, handed down a sensible and fair budget and, more recently, through the parliamentary estimates sessions all MPs, government and non-government members, were able to scrutinise the performance of the Premier and the Treasurer on the achievements of each department.

In the estimates process we learnt that the Newman government could meet the \$54 million per annum federal shortfall to pensioner concessions because of the financial disciplines set by Treasurer Nicholls since the Newman government came to office in 2012. Queensland is now able to absorb unforeseen expenditure and disasters.

In law and order, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, the Hon. Jack Dempsey MP, has been delivering on the strong plan for brighter and safer communities with better technology, more staff—including over 800 additional police officers—and smarter legislation. Crime is being driven down. In particular assaults are down six per cent; robberies down 18 per cent; unlawful entry down 19 per cent; and fraud down 12 per cent. I understand some of those figures have changed for the better since I wrote this. New penalties and powers have been enacted to shut down out-of-control suburban events and the Newman government has delivered on not just one but two police helicopters. Youth boot camps have seen a 91 per cent success rate so far, which means that we may have diverted these young people from a life in and out of court or jail with the added benefit of a safer community.

In real money terms, I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering on law and order, with spending up \$129.6 million to \$4.1 billion. Health expenditure is up \$532 million to \$12.3 billion and \$1.7 billion has been allocated to Health infrastructure. Education expenditure is up \$707 million to \$11.4 billion. Housing expenditure is up \$24 million to \$932 million. And Disability expenditure is up \$64 million to \$1.4 billion. We have budgeted for 724 new teachers and support staff and 155 new ambulances. Waiting lists for public housing, elective surgery and dental work have been slashed by many thousands and inhumane ambulance ramping is a thing of the past.

I now move on to an area of the Treasurer's portfolio that is particularly important to my large community of ethnic entrepreneurs. I refer to report No. 46, which states—

Trade and Investment Queensland (TIQ) was established as a statutory body as the principal export promotion and investment attraction agency on 1 February 2014.

TIQ has the following key objectives:

- to facilitate, promote, identify, attract and develop trade and investment opportunities
 - to conduct research into, and analysis of, trade and investment opportunities
 - to partner with governments, industry organisations and international networks to promote Queensland business and international trade and investment opportunities through representation in 16 locations worldwide and eight regional locations.
- ...
- maximise potential investment and trade opportunities from the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (September 2014) and G20 Leaders Summit in Brisbane in November 2014;
 - participate in major international and domestic trade show events;
 - increase export activity, by matching competitive Queensland companies to international business opportunities;
 - attract business migrants to Queensland.

I close by expressing my highest regard for our chair, the committee and especially the FAC staff. I thank them for their attention to detail and professionalism. I also thank the Premier and the Treasurer for their concise and detailed answers.

 **Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (4.11 pm): I rise to address the House on the 2014-15 budget estimates that were examined by the Finance and Administration Committee. Oversight of proposed public expenditure is the crux of an open and accountable administration. As a government, we hold the key to the public purse and must rightly carry out our fiscal responsibility in a system of checks and balances. The Finance and Administration Committee, of which I am a member, is one such check on the public funds. After thorough examination, the committee has recommended that the Appropriation Bill 2014 falling within the committee's areas of responsibilities be passed without amendment. Together, estimates and committee review ensure that money is spent not only in an open and accountable manner but also wisely. It is important that the Appropriation Bill 2014 lays the financial platform to support our government's legislative reform agenda.

During the estimates public hearing I had the opportunity to ask the Premier how the legislative reform being undertaken by our government is making our communities safer by improving our justice system and how this reform will be reinforced by budget allocations. I thank the Premier for his considered response. In the past, budget papers have laid the groundwork for appointments of JPs to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Then there is the Safe Night Out Strategy, which increases police powers and responsibilities and provides safe and supportive spaces in safe night precincts. The Blueprint for the Future of Youth Justice will create safer communities and give young people the best chance in life. Some reforms are not only community orientated but also have fiscal implications themselves. An example is the new levy on any offender sentenced in Queensland to help pay for the costs of law enforcement administration.

I also take this opportunity to thank the Treasurer for responding to a question that at various times has been put to me by a number of constituents. The Treasurer was good enough to answer it at the estimates hearing. Since the budget papers showed that the state budget will be back in fiscal surplus from 2015-16, I asked the Treasurer why we cannot simply rely on the fiscal surplus in future years as a way of reducing Queensland's total debt. I thank the Treasurer for highlighting the urgency of reducing our current debt so that we can take advantage of Queensland's strong economic growth in the coming years. As we know, at three per cent Queensland's forecast economic growth rate in 2014-15 is the equal fastest of any other state. By 2015-16, Queensland is expected to be the fastest growing state with a growth of six per cent. However, making a small surplus each year is not going to be sufficient to reduce the \$25 billion worth of debt in a short period. It would take 50 years of one per cent revenue surplus to reduce the debt by \$25 billion. Whilst we have stabilised the debt, we need to be in a position to restore Queensland to full financial health.

I also thank the Treasurer for drawing the attention of the committee to the reasons gross debt is the most appropriate way of measuring Queensland's true financial position. With so much talk and excitement as Queensland shapes up as an economic powerhouse in the coming years, it is easy to assume that the restoration of Queensland's AAA credit rating will simply be a matter of course. However, as the Treasurer noted during the budget estimates, credit rating agencies look at the level of borrowings and accumulated debt as a proportion of revenue and the level of borrowings also determines the amount of interest the state is required to pay. Those considerations have played a part in the Appropriation Bill 2014, appropriately balancing the need to reduce the state debt while investing in Queensland's future in anticipation of strong future growth.

Finally, I thank the Treasurer for his response in relation to the pensioner concessions. The decision that the government would not pass on the federal cuts to pensioners was made after the budget had already been delivered. Therefore, there was the question of how the \$54 million was going to be found to restore the full level of concessions. I understand that the Treasurer will be looking at various ways to make up the shortfall. This seems appropriate given the timing of the decision. At the end of the day, the money needs to be found, both because we have given an assurance that this will happen and because it is the right thing to do. As a government we must listen and take action. This was a wonderful example of that in practice.

I thank the chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, Mr Steve Davies, for making time for all members to contribute. According to my comprehensive timing and record keeping, both hearings were conducted in a professional and fair manner. I thank the members from both sides and the Independent member for Gladstone for their contributions. Special mention must go to the staff of the Finance and Administration Committee. I particularly thank the—

(Time expired)

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (4.16 pm): This budget confirms that the government has a strong plan for a bright future for Queensland, that we are well on the way to repairing the state of Queensland's finances and that we are locking in the gains we have made since the election of this government in 2012. We undertook the fiscal repair that was needed to stabilise the patient. Expenses had been growing at almost nine per cent a year and, whilst revenue was coming in and rivers of gold were flowing into the coffers, under the control of the Labor Party they were flowing out even faster. Therefore, we have taken steps to make sure that our expenses growth, at 0.2 per cent in 2012-13 and 2.2 per cent in 2013-14, is the lowest rate of expenses growth since accrual accounting was introduced in Queensland. It is probably the lowest ever; certainly it is the lowest since we can find figures for it.

We are getting on with the job of strengthening the economy and growing the four pillars of agriculture, tourism, resources, and property and construction. We are working hard and making sure that we have the fastest growing economy in the nation. In fact, in 2015-16 we will have a nation-beating six per cent economic growth. According to the Treasury forecasts, we will continue to grow at about four per cent a year after that. We are doing that while we are continuing to deliver on vital front-line services, whether it is in education where we are putting extra money through or even doing things such as streaming through the additional funding from the Commonwealth without taking a brass razoo for administration or bureaucratic expenses; whether it is in the health sector, where we are continuing to deliver health services to reduce things such as the category 1 and category 2 long waiting lists; whether we are doing it in things such as clearing the lists of people who have been waiting too long for a cochlear implant or eliminating the list of those people who have been waiting for more than two years to see a dentist, reducing the numbers by more than 60,000 to zero. Those are the things that an LNP government that is focused on getting the finances right and getting the service delivery right is doing for the health and benefit of Queenslanders.

We are also building the infrastructure that a growing state needs. In this budget, we have put money aside to build Toowoomba's second range crossing. That had been promised by Labor for 20 years but was never ever going to be built under Labor. We are putting more money into upgrading the Bruce Highway so that in eastern Queensland we have a vital eastern artery that will carry much traffic, commerce and tourism through the state. We are joining with our federal counterparts to do that. Again, that is something that Labor was never able to do. Ten new schools are being delivered under a public/private partnership, because we are willing to engage with the private sector. We are harnessing the power of the private sector to deliver that. The first of those schools will open in 2015.

We are making major investments in our hospitals. These are things that Labor could do. When it comes to health Labor has had and will have no answer. They are the people who burdened us with a Tahitian prince who walked out the door with \$16½ million. They are the people who burdened us with \$1.2 billion worth of expenses to fix up a failed health system that did not pay people, paid them too much or, in fact, made no attempt whatsoever to pay them, and caused us to spend billions of dollars fixing up the problem. We are fixing that. This budget shows that we are getting on with the job of building the economy, delivering on front-line services and keeping taxes down for Queenslanders.

In the short time that is left, I want to deal with a couple of matters. Firstly, I want to thank the member for Gladstone for her comments in respect of the time for questions. I also want to acknowledge the fact that, notwithstanding that my voice was going, the member for Gladstone did provide me with—and I do not know whether I should say this—a hot cup of tea and some lozenges which I used to get through. We did have more than double the time normally spent answering questions. So we had double the amount of time answering questions, but, I have to say, we did not have double the intelligence in terms of the questions. It became an endurance test rather than an intelligence test at that stage of the proceedings. I do thank the member for Gladstone for asking pertinent questions relevant to her area.

It is interesting to note that, after banging on about employment or unemployment or participation in the state of Queensland for a long time, there was not one question from the shadow Treasurer on that. The party that is supposed to represent workers had six hours to ask questions and there was not one question about employment or unemployment. It shows how much they care.

When it comes to the statement of reservations, I clearly put on the record that we will be clearly disclosing the costs of studies and work. Those opposite did not do so. Their 2009-10 paper which was put out after they sold forestry plantations did not detail scoping studies. They simply said, 'This is how much we have spent.' This is a good budget and well delivered. I am sure it will be well appreciated by the people of Queensland.

(Time expired)

Report adopted.

State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee

Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! The question is—

That the report of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee be adopted.

 **Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (4.21 pm): It is with great pleasure that we tabled report No. 45 of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee. For me this estimates process was a great experience. As someone who has been in this House for many years now I have seen the estimates process evolve from the farce that it was when I first came into parliament where if a member interjected on a minister's answer the clock started again for the minister to respond to what we have now which I think is a maturing of the estimates process. We were able to see greater time allocated to the examination of the various portfolio expenditures. I think it showed that as a parliament we are continuing to improve and reinvent the process and ensure that there is an appropriate level of scrutiny.

In the past, the estimates process was done one committee at a time because there was only one room. There was only the Legislative Council chamber where we could meet. As the new committee process has evolved we now have additional rooms. For our committee the process worked particularly well. We had some logistical challenges. Meeting in the green chamber is not ideal. It makes it difficult in terms of interaction with the ministers. We note with regard to the video footage for Hansard that it made its job a lot easier. We can accept that. I would encourage governments of all persuasions to continue to evolve the estimates process so that it can continue to improve and provide a service for all Queenslanders.

Estimates is a time for non-government members to be able to hold the executive to account. As chair, I wanted to ensure that non-government members had greater than 50 per cent of the time to ask questions. I can say quite comfortably that during the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee's hearings the non-government members had greater than 50 per cent of the time to ask their questions. They were able to ask questions, in accordance with the standing orders. We know the games that are played. We know that questions outside a minister's portfolio will be asked. We reined them in on those occasions. Overall, I would say, as a committee we were able to conduct ourselves in a bipartisan way and ensure we examined the expenditure as appropriate.

I wish to put on the record my thanks to the deputy chair. There was a little bit of testing towards the end. I thank Minister McArdle as well. The banter between those two gentlemen, good spirited as it was, tested my ability as chair, but I thank them. I thank the other committee members as well. I particularly want to put on the record my thanks to the secretariat for the work that they did. I also want to thank the three ministers involved—the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, the Minister for Energy and Water Supply and the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. I also thank their departmental officers and the various statutory officers who appeared before the committee as well. I believe that we were able to examine the expenditure as appropriate.

When people say that estimates is a farce or nothing happens, I point out that it was the estimates process that first identified the corruption of then Minister Gordon Nuttall. I do not think Queenslanders should ever forget that. It was questioning by Stuart Copeland at the time that flagged, highlighted and set the wheels in motion with regard to a Labor government minister who was corrupt. That was triggered by the estimates process. Let us never underestimate the value of the work that is done in estimate committee hearings.

In the time remaining, I will touch on a few minor things that I felt were really important. We were able to hear about the progress in terms of the Mary Valley Economic Development strategy. I think that is one of the highlights of the government's work at a grassroots level. We took what was a basket case under Labor with the Traveston Dam debacle and we are now driving the renewal of an area of Queensland that has a bright future.

I also want to touch on the rail trail project. One of the great things that came out of our questioning—and I have got on to my council already about this—is that councils can seek funding for some of the Mary Valley branch line. Part of the rail line is not being used. They can seek funding for a rail trail in that area.

Something of great concern to many people in my electorate is the Bruce Highway bypass. Tragically, in the last two months we have seen four accidents, three of them fatalities, in sections C and D of the Bruce Highway that are not currently having work conducted on them. To hear from the Deputy Premier the commitment to fast track that work and the desire of the federal government to step up with the funding I think highlights its importance. I commend the report to the House.

 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.26 pm): At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the professionalism of the member for Gympie in chairing the estimates committee hearing for the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Committee. It sounds like a mutual admiration society. In contrast to many other estimates hearings, the chair afforded sufficient time to non-government members. This is one of those rare instances in which I agree with the Deputy Premier.

I would also like to acknowledge that, unlike the Premier and many other ministers, the Deputy Premier at least took the process of estimates seriously and for the most part attempted to answer non-government questions. That said, the opposition has reservations about some of the answers provided by the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier advised the committee that he had not had any one-on-one meetings with Clive Palmer after a meeting in April 2012 at which it is alleged by the Deputy Premier that an inappropriate advance was made. This advice contradicted the Deputy Premier's claim at the 2012 hearing that he had a one-on-one meeting with Mr Palmer on 8 June 2012 and that the opposition leader was nitpicking for asking about that meeting.

The Deputy Premier restated his support at the hearing for previous approvals for 100 per cent fly-in fly-out operations despite the Premier's commitment that he will not allow 100 per cent FIFO. The opposition takes issue with the approval of more permanent FIFO accommodation under the Newman government at a time when vacancy rates in the Bowen Basin for hotels and motels has shifted from two per cent in 2011 to 37 per cent in 2013. The Deputy Premier advised the committee that community concerns in relation to FIFO were due to a 'downturn in the resources sector' while simultaneously trying to argue that more FIFO accommodation had been approved under his watch because of a concern that communities would be overrun by mining camps. In the current economic environment, it is simply not justifiable for more FIFO accommodation to be approved.

It appears that the Newman government policy on the use of FIFO workforces is based on an ideological position of postcode apartheid—that mine workers should not live in regional towns. The Labor opposition believes that workers should have the right to decide where they and their families live and work and should be afforded the option to live in regional communities.

Disappointingly, the Deputy Premier failed to advise what the budget was for hiring the probity adviser and consultant for the integrated resort development and casino process. The opposition is not satisfied that proper process had been followed in relation to the appointment of the probity adviser who also has secondary employment for the LNP on election costings. The probity consultant is also a significant donor to the LNP and has donated \$64,700 since the second half of 2011. Considering that the Premier has described casinos as a 'licence to print money', the opposition has reservations over the previously existing connections between the probity adviser and consultant for this process and the Newman government.

The Deputy Premier also failed to clarify his claims from last year's estimates hearings in relation to meetings held with successful EOI proponents prior to the appointment of a probity adviser and consultant. The Deputy Premier has not explained why he described those meetings as 'formal negotiations' at the time, but then later claimed otherwise, again insisting that they were merely part of a 'consultation process' and that no decision had been made in relation to issuing new gaming licences. At the time of these meetings the Deputy Premier had clearly flagged that a casino licence would be issued, stating—

It is almost impossible [to see] that sort of development without the inclusion of a casino and without the involvement of some big players. So we are starting to talk to those big players about how that process might be facilitated.

The Deputy Premier seemed unaware of the findings from an Auditor-General's report that 72 per cent of budget expenditure is not covered by efficiencies and effectiveness standards, making it even harder for the parliament to hold the government to account. The opposition also expressed concern at the \$24.9 million shortfall in funding for tourism in the budget and expenditure on a tourist campaign in Sydney with little to do with Queensland. Serious questions also remain for the member for Southport around where the money went from a book that improperly used the Commonwealth Games logo.

Finally, while I commend the chair and parliamentary staff for their work on the 2014 estimates hearing, it was a disservice to this parliament that these hearings were crammed into just two days—and it should never happen again.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.31 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to discuss the budget estimates for 2014-15. Report No. 45 of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee provides me with some information that I would like to allude to. First of all, the responsibility of our committee is one where we oversee, if you like, the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and the Minister for Energy and Water Supply. In my view, those two areas, taken in their essence, are probably the most important areas for the people of Queensland. On the one hand, we are talking about the development of infrastructure and planning for the people of Queensland and how important that is with the growth that we are experiencing.

If I can reflect on the growth in Queensland, I absolutely have to reflect on the growth in the Coomera electorate—the massive growth that is occurring in the middle of the electorate, keeping in mind that as part of that infrastructure we are putting in place a brand-new primary school in the Pimpama area. That school will be No. 6 of seven new schools built in a six-year period in a 10-kilometre strip of the M1 in the Coomera electorate. Nowhere else in the state can we find seven new schools in such a small area. That is the type of development we are talking about.

I wish to reflect on the importance of the Deputy Premier, who is open to listening to the issues of individual members when they bring them to him. I have spoken many times to the Deputy Premier about the roadblocks to economic development for the state seat of Coomera. Those roadblocks—and I know members have heard this from me many times before—surround exit 54 and the Coomera River. They are the two main areas of roadblocks, and those roadblocks are being cleared as we speak because of the responsible way in which the Deputy Premier is managing his portfolio.

We are also in the middle of doing a review of the South East Queensland Regional Plan, and a very important part of that South East Queensland Regional Plan is what is going to be the future of the cane lands. What are the options for the cane lands in the decade ahead and in the next two or three decades ahead? We know that there will come a time when it is uneconomical to continue to grow sugarcane in that particular area. So we have to plan ahead. Once again, the strength of the Deputy Premier as the Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning is that he does look well into the future. He does not look at the next election. He does not look at what the electorate might be thinking about in the next five minutes. He is worried about this state for the next five years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years and way into the future.

On the other side of the coin, I need to allude to how important the Minister for Energy and Water Supply and his portfolio is to the people of Queensland. Why? Because of the cost-of-living pressures that we are all under. When people think about cost-of-living pressures, they do not necessarily think about the cost of their registration going up incrementally and what have you. What do they think about? They think about their water bill. They think about their electricity bill. They are the first two things that come to people's minds—their water bill and their electricity bill. This minister is working hard to ensure that we minimise the increase in the cost of those things to the people of Queensland, ensuring that the people of Queensland do have a happier future as a result of his efforts and those of his department and certainly the tough decisions that he has been making over recent times.

We are moving towards market monitoring for South-East Queensland retail electricity from 1 July 2015. We have had meetings again today with various players in the area. The intent of that is to keep down, force down, hold down electricity prices for the people of Queensland. That is the cornerstone of this government. It is keen to ensure that we have a future and future development of the state but that we also have a state where people can afford—

(Time expired)

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the committee estimates process. I would like to start by thanking my committee colleagues, especially the chair, the member for Gympie, who does a wonderful job of chairing our committee. We all learn a lot as new members of parliament—most of us are new members—from our chair, the member for Gympie, as we did from the member for Mirani before him and also the member for Mackay. We all get on very well. I think as a committee we perform very well. I thank the member for Mackay for his contributions to our committee.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr HART: I also thank our new member, the member for Coomera. We are obviously learning a few things from him—some good, some bad. The member for Mount Isa adds something to the committee and also the member for Sandgate and the member for Keppel. At the estimates hearings we were also visited by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Gaven, the member for Logan and the member for Bundamba.

We could not exist as a committee without the wonderful staff that we have, led by Erin Pasley, our research director. We also have Margaret Telford, Mary Westcott and Dianne Christian. They do a wonderful job for our committee. They are people who work in the background most of the time, but they are always there for us, they are always there supporting us and they do a wonderful job.

I would also like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, the Department of Energy and Water Supply and the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games during the committee inquiry. The committee investigated a number of service areas across a number of portfolios including: driving business and economic growth; leading infrastructure policy and planning for the state; reforming Queensland's planning system; and major project assessment, approval, facilitation and delivery.

We have already heard from our chair, the member for Gympie, and he was backed up by our deputy chair, the member for Mackay. I think the estimates process this year was very constructive. The Deputy Premier came in at nine o'clock on the first day and he was there till five o'clock in the afternoon.

We broke the day up into a number of periods. We spent two hours purely on economic development and another two hours on planning and property. We spent an hour on major projects, another hour on the GasFields Commission, and the Deputy Premier then answered questions on any field whatsoever for another hour. You cannot say that the Deputy Premier was not available or avoided any questions. He answered as many questions as were asked. As we have already heard from the member for Mackay, he was straightforward in his answers. The assistant minister, the member for Southport, answered some questions on the Gold Coast Hospital site.

As the member for Coomera has mentioned, the committee also heard from the Minister for Energy and Water Supply. That is a very important area for the people of my electorate. When you mention the cost of living, people talk about increases to electricity and water. They talk about what this government is doing to keep the prices down as best we can. This minister is doing a wonderful job of that. He was able to explain quite a bit to the members of the committee how he is going about that in his position. We talked about solar panels. We talked about desalination plants and the western corridor recycling project. We talked about the problems that were left behind by the former Labor government that are really driving up the cost of living because of the amount of debt they have left us in and the way they mishandled this state over the 20-odd years they were in power.

We heard from the member for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. We all know that the minister has been in Glasgow for the last week or so representing the state and collecting the flag to come back to have what will be a wonderful Commonwealth Games in 2018 on the Gold Coast. It is the Queensland games but it will be based on the Gold Coast. We are expecting to have a great legacy for the Gold Coast from the Commonwealth Games. The minister was able to tell us how that process is going, how it is starting and where it will end. I commend the members of the committee for the process and—

(Time expired)

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (4.42 pm): I found the estimates committee to be very well conducted. I would be very surprised if the chair of any estimates committee conducted the committee in a more bipartisan way than our chair did. We were given a very good run and a very good opportunity to ask questions. I have to give the minister credit for attempting to address any question we fielded so I am appreciative of that. Some of the answers I found very dissatisfactory and they are the ones I would like to focus on now.

The first one was with the Deputy Premier on the Hann Highway. Of particular interest to me is the section of the inland highway which is the Hann Highway. The whole impetus for an alternative to the Bruce Highway is to get away from the flood effects. The point I made in my question to the Deputy Premier is if you are going to have an inland highway and want to get away from the flooding

effects, you have to go as far west as the Hann Highway because everything else will incur the high rainfall river systems that influence east of the great divide. His response was that it is too far west. That is the whole point of going down the Hann Highway. It is a pointless exercise unless you are willing to acknowledge that fact. It is a very important point, talking about the inland highway, and that point needs to be addressed.

We talked about strategies for developing alternative energy supplies in North Queensland. It is a very difficult subject; I acknowledge that. There are no easy answers but there have to be some answers. Unless you want to kiss goodbye to any future development in the North West Minerals Province, there needs to be a solution. Some of the solutions I acknowledge would be very tough, but that is why we mention things like gas reservation policies. That could be limited to new developments in new areas or perhaps it needs some tweaking. But we have councils that are celebrating the gas finds in their district because they think they will get access to cheap gas, and that is ridiculous. They will not get access to it because it will all be sold overseas. We are 100 per cent reliant on gas fired power in the North West Minerals Province. It is going to be very hard for any government to reconcile the impetus for northern development with the fact that in the North West Minerals Province we are 100 per cent reliant on gas fired energy which is set to go up by a factor of three or four.

I asked about the progress of the implementation group for the 50-year freight strategy. In my opinion that has flatlined ever since it was rolled out. With the commercial challenges and the people it is trying to confront, the objective it set out to do is not being met at all. That is something that needs to be addressed.

A question that also came up in that session was FIFO. I do not think that issue has been addressed. It is particularly relevant in my area, but I think it is just as disastrous to communities and the social fabric of areas like Collinsville and Moranbah. I completely acknowledge the challenges there. We do want mining development and we want to attract investment there, but it cannot come at such a great cost. One of the responses is it is about giving people a choice. I disagree. There has to be some leadership shown by the government. It was always the case in Mount Isa that, if you want a job, you go out there and you work out there. Unless you do that, unless there is some leadership shown by government at all levels, it will happen, it will grow and it will destroy western communities, as it is doing now.

We spoke about Royalties for the Regions, which is a very big issue for me. That program and the announcement by the government of that program raised a lot of hope to people in my area and the government received a lot of kudos, but it has been a continual disappointment, particularly in my region and in Gladstone. Whether it has been thrown around for political purposes or not, it simply does not deliver. Mount Isa received \$500,000 and Blakey's Crossing in Townsville received \$21 million. I think that sums up the effectiveness of that program.

The energy minister touched on the gas reservation policy. I was quite pleased with the response he gave on the equalisation rate and CSO being maintained for regional areas, which is very important to us. I thought it was a very dissatisfactory response to the Mount Isa water issues because we are paying a very big price—

(Time expired)

 **Mr YOUNG** (Keppel—LNP) (4.47 pm): It is with great pleasure that I stand as a member of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee as we table our report No. 44. I would like to acknowledge the member for Gympie, who did a magnificent job of chairing the estimates committee. I also want to acknowledge the bipartisan support of fellow members and committee members. We have a fantastic secretariat staff and a very capable research director.

We received a briefing from the Deputy Premier, who provided a very detailed breakdown of the Royalties for the Regions across the state. I will mention the Banana Shire Council, which received funding of \$20 million. The reason I say that is that we have seen massive resource sector activity contributing to rapid growth in the Banana shire causing pressure on infrastructure such as the Eidsvold Theodore Road. Although I am obviously not the member down there, I still get a lot of phone calls in relation to the Eidsvold Theodore Road.

Of special note, Rockhampton Regional Council received \$1 million. I am very pleased to see that the Livingstone Shire Council received funding on a 50 per cent basis for the total cost of the northern strategic link road, Panoramic Drive as it is known. Although costs are yet to be finalised, they will come in at about \$26 million. That is a joint partnership with Livingstone Shire Council. I cannot stress enough the importance of this road. Not only is it a strategic road to further

development to our northern areas of Yeppoon; after the flooding event of 26 March this road will prove pivotal in getting all of the traffic up to those northern suburbs, understanding that they do get cut off at the roundabout in Yeppoon.

We have heard the member for Gladstone talk previously about Gladstone being the engine room for Central Queensland. I want to point out that the Rockhampton and Livingstone shire councils can also claim this because of the large amount of people who live in those regions and travel to the mines on a daily and weekly basis.

I want to also acknowledge the Minister for Energy and Water Supply. We received a very good briefing from him. We touched on the cost of Labor's infamous carbon tax, the Renewable Energy Targets and various green schemes and the solar bonus. In the short time that we have been in office, we have applied the one-off freeze on 2012 prices for tariff 11; we have increased the electricity rebate to \$320, with more available to pensioners and cardholders; we have committed over \$50 million per annum to cover the shortfall in Commonwealth funding and concessions; we have the community service obligation for 2014-15 of \$666 million, and we heard the member for Mount Isa praising that scheme; and we have the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme, which provides households with up to \$720 if they are facing an emergency and cannot pay their electricity bill.

The other thing I want to touch on very quickly is that the Competition Authority estimated that when the Solar Bonus Scheme reaches maturity in 2028 it will cost Queenslanders \$3.4 billion. Obviously, that was a seriously undercosted policy, although there are benefits there. The QCA determined that this would cost the typical household \$276 in 2015-16. These are costs that people should not have to wear. Although the scheme was introduced in 2008-09, the 44c feed-in tariff for electricity exported back to the grid was reduced down to 8c because of the unknowns that were there. What is happening now is that there is emerging technology and people are still signing up, even at 8c. Batteries will be the future technology and the real harm that will come is yet to be seen. We have seen deregulation and we will move towards deregulation within Queensland. We have seen the benefits of deregulation of the power industry in Victoria and South Australia.

In closing, I want to thank the Deputy Premier, his departmental staff and his senior management team. I also thank the Minister for Energy and Water Supply, his senior management team, his departmental staff and the GOCs who attended on the day, Energex, Ergon, Powerlink and Seqwater. It was a very good briefing. I also want to thank the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and her ministerial staff.

(Time expired)

 **Ms MILLARD** (Sandgate—LNP) (4.51 pm): I rise today in support of the government's reform of the estimates process. I appreciated the additional time and involvement this allowed committee members in terms of questioning ministers from the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, of which I am a proud member. Under the Newman government, this was an accountable, transparent, efficient and more time focused estimates process, which is a testament to the principles of good governance in the Queensland parliament and for all Queenslanders. I also support the adoption of the report of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee on proposed expenditure regarding the areas of responsibility under this committee. I thank our committee secretariat for all the preparation they did. I also thank the government and non-government members of this committee, all of whom are a pleasure to work with. I also acknowledge the role of the departmental heads and parliamentary staff in ensuring that information was provided and that the process went smoothly.

There are a few highlights relating to the priorities I see in the Sandgate electorate that I represent that I would now like to turn my attention to. This relates to the three portfolios covered by the committee. Firstly, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning has achieved much during the past year and in preparation for the days ahead, including the introduction of the planning and development bill which will underpin economic prosperity, opportunity, infrastructure development and environmental sustainability. This is complemented by legislation and efforts to reduce red tape, which has been the Achilles heel for a development push in Queensland.

Priority development areas are a great initiative and will ensure that the public has more input into associated developments and that these areas will be used for maximum community benefit. Likewise, land use plans can now be adjusted with more flexibility in line with development of these areas. Finally, amendments to the Economic Development Act allow a mechanism to fund the

infrastructure costs required to support a priority development area, involving recouping of expenses incurred in delivering infrastructure through charges levied on rateable land. Importantly, this allows for an efficient and rational process for how costs are incurred and recovered.

While only so much of these changes directly impact the Sandgate electorate, economic development affects us all. A prosperous state equals increased employment and it equals more opportunities for the many, many industries that have input into and support the development processes. We all pay when economic development lags, as we know too well from the previous administration, and we all benefit when economic development picks up, as we are now experiencing with the reversals of the economic fortunes in Queensland. This includes the thousands of jobs created and the expectation that Queensland is poised to be Australia's next economic success story, the fastest-growing state economically in the next year.

I now turn to the energy and water portfolio and the major changes it is driving in the PowerQ and WaterQ plans and the 30-year strategy to drive efficiencies in the area of our utilities. This relates to a major concern in my electorate, particularly increasing electricity prices, where our many families and pensioners have paid the price for entrenched inefficiencies. I enthusiastically support implementation of the agreed outcomes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Electricity Sector Reform and I cheer on the long-term tariff reform strategy which will give consumers more options for managing their bills through improved price signals. This one measure alone could cut my constituents' concerns in half.

I thank the Newman government—and, yes, I do thank them—for boosting concessions for electricity to \$321 a year for pensioners and seniors card holders in 2014-15. I want to emphasise that this includes the commitment of an additional \$50 million to cover the shortfall in Commonwealth funding for concessions. If this was not enough, households who are facing an emergency and are unable to pay their electricity bill can now access up to \$720, which is more than double the previous funding, under the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme. Likewise, eligible pensioners will also continue to receive up to \$120 a year for their water.

Sandgate, as with many other electorates, is comprised of small businesses, with over 2,400 of them. I have enjoyed watching our area grow and thrive, with increasingly more on offer for those who live there or who move into the area. Unfortunately, I have also seen businesses struggle and close and I know that they need all the support they can get. I applaud this government's efforts at revitalising our economy because this, in turn, will support the small businesses that are part of my community and other communities as they account for so much of our employment.

I thank the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and everybody in that department for their hard work on facilitating new opportunities that Queensland will prosper from. Finally, I commend to the House again the estimates report of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee. It lays the foundation for another year of solid economic planning—

(Time expired)

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (4.56 pm): As shadow minister for energy and water supply, I always enjoy the opportunity for some quippy repartee with the minister and the chance to personally ask questions of him and officers of his department and GOCs. But due to the new format of estimates, that was not possible for me to do, unless I left my post at the Finance and Administration Committee and important questioning of the Treasurer. I am pleased that the Premier has adopted the Labor Party's position and reinstated the process and format used at previous estimates hearings. If only he had listened in the first place.

The story of the government's record in this portfolio is one of promising big and spectacularly failing to deliver. This has been the case over and over again, and the information revealed during this year's estimates proves it. Members would recall the announcement by the Premier that the government was proposing to construct eight new dams. The opposition sought clarification on the progress and details of these new dams at estimates this year. It was revealed that three sites that were being considered have been set aside for various reasons. Those sites were at Peachester, Cressbrook Creek and Lockyer Creek. In their place, three additional sites were identified—one at Laidley Creek and two at Warrill Creek. The opposition is concerned that residents in the areas that would be affected by these dams are unaware that these locations are being considered for future dam construction. The level of uncertainty around these proposals and the lack of any funding or time

frame are also of concern. Once again, it is evident that this proposal is simply a distraction by the government—or perhaps pork-barrelling for how they will use their \$8 billion of future investment. They are promising big but, again, failing to deliver.

Perhaps one of the biggest campaign promises made by the LNP during the 2012 election campaign was the one to lower electricity and water prices across the state. Government members will be familiar with this promise because they were the ones who promised it. Electricity bills were supposed to go down by \$120 a year and water prices were supposed to go down by \$80 a year. The proof of any election promise is in the delivery and, to the lament of nearly every Queenslander, the LNP has failed to deliver on these promises even if the Minister for Energy and Water Supply cannot bring himself to admit it. Instead of accepting responsibility for these broken promises, the government seeks to blame anyone and anything but themselves for increasing prices. Average household bills are rising by \$442, or by more than 40 per cent, over the first term of the Newman government, and that is after the repeal of a carbon price. The increase in the average cost of electricity under this government is more than 3½ times the total increase from the carbon tax. They promised prices would go down, and prices have gone up. It is that simple. It is a broken promise.

The minister has frequently blamed 'gold plating' as one of the reasons for increasing electricity bills. However, when he was pressed at the hearing by the deputy opposition leader, he was unable to nominate a piece of infrastructure that represented the kind of 'gold plating' he so often talks about. The fact is that network reliability will be reduced as a result of reforms being considered by the government. The minister has to be upfront with people about that. Despite the Premier promising in December 2012 that there would be no more job losses, it was revealed that hundreds of jobs are still being cut from the energy sector in order to ready the government-owned electricity corporations for privatisation.

In an answer to estimates question on notice No. 15, the minister confirmed that in the 2013-14 year another 567 jobs had been cut from Ergon, Energex, Powerlink, CS Energy and Stanwell combined. That comes on top of the 1,213 jobs lost in the transmission sector in the 2012-13 financial year. This is a rapid and dramatic reduction in staff and the opposition holds grave concerns that the quality and level of service provided by the government-owned corporations will suffer as a result of these savage job cuts. Just like the previous year, there has been a significant capital underspend in the 2013-14 financial year. The energy generation sector's estimated actual capital expenditure was \$220 million in 2013-14, but the budgeted expenditure was \$301 million for that sector, amounting to an \$80 million underspend.

I want to place on record my thanks to the committee secretariat for their efforts, as well as all of the parliamentary staff who assisted with estimates this year not only for the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee that I was unable to attend but across all committees, including my own Finance and Administration Committee. Despite the warnings from the opposition, the new format for estimates has been a failure and nowhere more so than the undue pressure that was placed on Hansard reporters to ensure that, in particular, the opposition and other non-government members could get timely access to transcripts of proceedings, which had never been an issue until this year's hearings. The opposition warned of this when the original motion was put to the House. We knew that this was all about avoiding scrutiny and ensuring that the media were in a state of confusion as to where they should be covering hearings and when. Thankfully, in terms of Hansard, I finally wish to thank the Clerk of the Parliament for his leadership and pragmatism on this front. I extend my personal appreciation to all Hansard staff for the enormous efforts that they put in over this year's truncated hearing process.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (5.02 pm): I was co-opted to this committee late in the day, and I would like to thank the committee for allowing me to come in. I also thank the minister and his department.

It was an interesting spectacle. The Deputy Premier answered some questions, but generally he referred those questions that I was allowed to put as the co-opted member to departmental staff. My concerns had been highlighted by the Deputy Premier's admission earlier that day that business in Queensland was generally down 20 per cent. That is a very big statement and it reflects what everyone is currently feeling. Despite all the insincere statements of the LNP government, the state is chugging and not just because coal prices are down. People may not realise, but the banks are not loaning money to Queensland borrowers, although they will if people are domiciled in New South

Wales. This is at a time of historically low interest rates. This is because we have a laggard government that is trying to determine the market and is trying to be the market setter. Therefore, it decides who wins, which is usually their mates. The tragedy is that they are bad pickers in terms of a winner and, of course, then we all lose.

The questions I put to the Deputy Premier related to land resumption or acquisition in the Galilee Basin and whether the department would use a method that most people would say is fair, that is, take an average for land purchases over at least 10 years. That would reflect the fact that there is drought affected land in that area. I had said to the Deputy Premier that people would not want to see the government taking advantage of low land prices, particularly in the state development area of 1.8 million hectares, largely all drought affected. The Deputy Premier did not appear to answer the question that I asked. In fact, I am still not clear what the real answer is. He did shunt it to a staffer. I have to say that those people are still left in limbo.

Furthermore, I asked a question about the inland rail, and I know that has been raised this week by the member for Lockyer. I asked why this new corridor that would go from the Charlton industrial area down the range to Murphys Creek, which is notorious for flooding, was being developed. It then transpired that there are three corridors. That question was diverted back to a staffer. This did not seem to make any sense because the standard gauge rail goes from Beaudesert down to the port and it has been there for years. Then it transpired that they are looking at a new loop that would go down through the Lockyer and once it gets to Murphys Creek it is going to go down to Beaudesert. I asked about costs, the lack of logic and what was behind this. There appeared to be nothing other than that the line should have gone from Warwick down to Beaudesert, which is the standard corridor for inland rail. Somehow the answer reflected back to the fact that a federal department is responsible for this project. Then it turned out that they had actually started acquiring land and that one of the blocks in Murphys Creek has been acquired already. The explanation was totally unsatisfactory.

This week I have seen that the member for Lockyer feels the same way because he has been asking the same sorts of questions. He is a longstanding former National Party member and now a member of the LNP. The whole transport corridor discussion seemed to have a strange element of 'just wait and you will see'. This seems impossible to accept. An enormous amount of flood recovery—NDRRA—moneys has been poured into roadworks on the road that leads from Toowoomba down to the Port of Brisbane. Interestingly enough, the money has all been spent on the downwards section of the road; it is not being spent on the upwards section. That leads me to believe that there will be massive tonnage travelling on that road.

The inland rail option was even more confusing because it did not seem to address anything that is not going to happen for several years. The SDS gives no clues as what is going on. We do know that anyone who currently travels on the Warrego Highway is experiencing roadworks that are totally disproportionate. Secondly, the inland rail corridor discussion defies any regard for safety relating to flood or any other considerations. I left the hearing looking for more answers than when I started.

I would like to thank the chair, the member for Gympie, who gave me consideration for what was a very restricted estimates session. It was exactly the failure that I had predicted. Remember, this was two per cent of the practical available time that we had previously had for estimates discussions. I know this point has been raised multiple times. At the end of the day, it is the government that suffered as a result of it—it was not the opposition—and the public are the ones who suffer those consequences.

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (5.07 pm): I rise to make comment about the report before the House. Like others, I would like to start by congratulating Mr David Gibson, the member for Gympie, on the way he chaired the committee. I thought he did an excellent job and was very professional. I also indicate that the members of the committee from both sides of the chamber did an excellent job. It was a solid committee process and one at which some telling questions were asked.

I also thank my staff, both ministerial and departmental. Those members who are, or who have been, ministers will understand that preparing for an estimates process is fairly long and can be quite taxing. Thanks need to be given to those people. I also say thanks to the people in the parliamentary complex for the great work that they did in ensuring that we were ready, that all the equipment was working properly and that we got what we needed on time.

This is, indeed, the Newman government's third budget and, in my opinion, it is a key budget to develop a strong plan for a brighter future. The budget clearly lays down a plan and a long-term proposal to pay down Labor's debt of \$80 billion by going to the polls next year and seeking from the people of this state a mandate to sell certain assets and also to inject private capital into other assets. We believe that process will deliver \$33.6 billion of which \$25 billion will be used to pay down debt and \$8.6 billion will be used to create infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and the like in years to come.

It is quite clear that this is a firm plan by the government to understand the needs of the state and also to seek the consent and adoption by the people of Queensland of our proposal for long-term planning. It is of course important that governments do plan for the future. It is a refreshing change in this state to see a formal plan laid out and also to seek the consent of the people of this state in regard to what we do intend to do.

The member for Mulgrave raised a couple of points, and I have to admit that until that point I believe that we had got on fairly well. In relation to those on the committee, we had shared a few chuckles and laughs and then the member for Mulgrave came along and raised the issue of three dams. I make the point that we told the people where the dams might be—unlike Premier Beattie, who caught a helicopter or a plane over Traveston and appeared to point to the ground without telling a soul that that is where the dam would be, thereby causing enormous disruption, harm and concern to the people of that area. We had a plan; we have a plan; we are consulting; and we will come back to the people in due course.

The other point I want to raise is the history that I have gone into on many occasions concerning the debt in regards to power, the poles and wires. The water grid debt of \$10.3 billion and the debt that we are incurring and paying for on a daily basis in regard to power lands itself at the feet of the Labor Party and, can I say, their reckless spending and the incompetent planning or lack of any planning at all that they put into this House and have inflicted on the people of this state whilst they were in government. It is incumbent upon this government to put together a long-term plan, and that plan will also deal with short-term and immediate concerns and propose a scenario whereby we are no longer going to be caught in either the flood-drought scenario or the issues that arose in 2003-04 that led to blackouts and brownouts requiring the expenditure of billions of dollars. This government is committed to making certain that we do not repeat those mistakes, and that is why we developed both WaterQ and PowerQ: 30-year strategy documents that look to the long term. We understand that we do not want to repeat the same mistakes that have been made in the past, but, more importantly, we crystallise how we view the future and also bring together those men and women by way of expert panels who can deliver insights so that we can plan for a long-term scenario. Without that planning we are doomed to repeat Labor's mistakes. The Newman government has a strong plan for a bright future for the wonderful state of Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Honourable members, there are too many conversations being held across the chamber. Could you please keep the conversation levels to a lower level. I call the member for Cairns.

 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (5.12 pm): I rise today to address the report of the estimates hearing of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee as assistant minister for tourism and the very proud member for Cairns. Today I also speak on behalf of the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, who of course is currently overseas representing the Queensland government. Before I begin, can I acknowledge and thank the hardworking committee members, the chair and honourable member for Gympie, and those parliament staff who assisted in this very important process. My appreciation and thanks are also extended to the DTESB departmental staff and Minister Stuckey's office. I would also like to take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation for the hard work of the minister in her important portfolio.

This year's hearing was a fantastic opportunity to hear directly from the minister about how the government's strong plan for tourism, small business and the Commonwealth Games is providing opportunities for this great state to grow and prosper. While it was incredibly pleasing to listen to the questions raised by the members for Gympie, Burleigh, Keppel and Mount Isa, I must say it was quite disappointing to listen to the ongoing disrespect, ignorance and apathy the Labor Party has for the

thousands of Queenslanders who are employed in these important industries. The 2014-15 budget is testament to our government's strong plan for a brighter future for all Queensland and recognises the importance of all aspects that fall within the minister's portfolio.

When it comes to small business, the backbone of the Queensland economy, it is worth noting here the opposition's complete and utter lack of concern. They did not ask one single question about the small business facet of this portfolio. I repeat: not one single question about small business during our hearing. I can only assume or guess that the opposition are so in awe of our achievements in this important sector, that it has almost stunned them into silence. Since coming into office our government has fought incredibly hard for Queensland's small businesses. As I said before, we recognise that they are the backbone of our four-pillar economy and we are absolutely committed to ensuring that small business has a stable economy and every possible chance to prosper. After so many years of Labor's incompetence and overwhelming red tape and regulatory requirements, our government is getting out of the way and out of the pockets of Queensland's small businesses so they can get on with what they do best.

Considering the staffing and resources available to the opposition, it would have been nice to have questions regarding small business directed to the minister in order that we could have shown Queenslanders the positive achievements and inroads that have been made for our important small business sector. When it comes to funding for tourism and events, I and no doubt my colleagues are constantly bemused and miffed by the Labor Party's sheer financial incompetence—financial incompetence shown in their inability to understand simple accounting concepts such as budgeting, to meet commitments and the importance of financial statement auditing. Perhaps if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had bothered to show up for the committee rather than relying on third-hand reports, the member would have heard the minister explain how Tourism and Events Queensland budgets for their commitments and how the quantum of funds being deferred will be confirmed once the agency's 2013-14 financial statements have been appropriately audited, which is standard practice.

Let me be clear: tourism is one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, and our government has worked incredibly hard to rectify the neglect that Labor showed this vital industry. Through our strong partnership with industry we have developed a 20-year plan for tourism that charts our collaborative commitment to the long-term success of this industry. Tourism and Events Queensland continues to play a key role in promoting our state as Australia's best tourism destination. The hardworking team at TEQ have a proven track record, and they will continue to play a crucial role in expanding our industry into the future.

I will turn to two aspects of Labor's questioning in the committee hearing. The first was the Give Me Brisbane Any Day marketing campaign. The Labor Party's short-sighted approach that left our state in absolute disarray was shown yet again during the estimates hearing—

(Time expired)

Report adopted.

Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! The question is—

That the report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee be adopted.

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (5.18 pm): It is certainly a pleasure for me to be able to stand here and make my little contribution to this debate, because there are some things that I would like to put before this House that I think are important and some things that we forget. I came into this place because, quite frankly, I think I had had about enough of Labor and their appalling record. I mean that with some sincerity because, quite frankly, I cannot work out for the life of me how the federal and state Labor governments can both have deficits and debt of such mammoth proportions. To have a debt back in 2012 of \$63 billion, we need to take account of what the state is about.

Out of a population of 4.6 million in this state, only about 2.3 million or 2.4 million people are working. The member for Cairns talked about small business. That is a real concern, because it is small business that takes the hit—not the public servants, who get paid their salary and so forth. In fact, as government grows, that discretionary spend disappears out of the pockets of Queenslanders. When that discretionary spend disappears, it does not go into small business or other business. That is the difficulty. At the same time—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BERRY: Of course, the member for Bundamba comes up with this great plan: let's just get more public servants. That is a great plan—a real gem! The difficulty is that the previous government was fallacious in its arguments and had ideas which were vacuous. Why? It is because they were all union officials, staffers, backbenchers, dynastic members. It is an absolute embarrassment to think that we come to this House here today not to talk about substance but about the procedure of the estimates process. Heavens above! The world might fall down! It is an absolute embarrassment to come here to argue about procedure when in fact what we are doing is saying to Hansard, 'You might get home for an early night'—and we had more hours in any event.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BERRY: The member for Bundamba is showing just how vacuous she is in terms of ideas: 'Don't have anything new. It is no good to have anything new because, quite frankly, we did it best of all.'

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BERRY: Yes, you did, too. You wrecked this economy in such a way that it will take us generations to rectify it. Quite frankly, it is an absolute embarrassment. No doubt there is a shift against the member for Bundamba. We have this place called Bundamba and it is sort of empty. There are no ideas coming from them. Quite frankly, the member for Bundamba has had a trying time, even making the front page of the *Courier-Mail*. Well done!

The real difficulty with the economy is what happens if in fact we have a recession. If we have a recession we are in dire straits. There was \$63 billion, and what do we have to show for it? Absolutely nothing. We have spent away, with a vacuous government with vacuous ideas. It is an absolute embarrassment.

Let us look at the federal level. How long did Wayne Swan say to us, 'I am going to deliver a surplus budget'? It is an absolute disgrace. I do not know how these people can call themselves treasurers. We do not call them treasurers; we call them spendthrifts because, quite frankly, they do not know how to organise an economy. The reality of life is that every day in the state men and women make these same decisions. If they see that they have too much debt they make decisions to reduce it. But can we get that from a government? No. Those opposite simply do not understand what happens.

Otherwise the estimates process went pretty well. I did have a conversation with the member for Rockhampton. He asked some good questions. Quite frankly, Bill is always a pleasure to work with. I always have some arguments with Peter Wellington but, by and large, he is not a bad guy. I do not want to miss anyone, so I thank all those members of the government who really did assist.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.23 pm): Frankly, what a shemozzle this estimates process really was. I think the mea culpa from the Premier, in reverting the system to its previous arrangements, hardly makes up for what actually happened on the two hearing days. I think everyone knows the purpose of that and why we had to go through that inane process.

Enormous amounts of time were wasted with Dorothy Dixers from government ministers so that ministers could read their 10-, 15- and 20-minute prepared statements, wrapped around election slogans, that did absolutely nothing to interrogate the substance of the budget. If members are going to sit in these committees and ask questions they should at least make sure they are informed in trying to get to the bottom of something. The opposition was stymied at nearly every point from being allowed to genuinely test the policy and financial metrics established by the government's latest budget.

The 2013-14 budget was a damning indictment of the competence of this government. When I stood in the House and made my speech in response to the first Newman budget I said that it was the foundation of a one-term Premier and a one-term government. I was on the money then and I am on the money now. In my speech in response to the second Newman budget I pointed out that this was a government reaping what it had sown, that this was a government infected with delusional optimism and possessed by a grossly exaggerated sense of its own talent. I reflected on the hubris syndrome, if some would remember. I reflected on the fact that most of the ministers were hugely incompetent or grossly inexperienced. I have repeatedly made the point in three budget cycles and proven through the estimates process that this is an incompetent government.

It is absolutely clear to me and to every sensible Queenslanders that this government has not the slightest idea about delivering products and services in the real world. What do we expect from a government when many of the frontbench spent many years in opposition whingeing and whining. Do members remember their second budget? That was all about enabling. Every single time this government touches something of substance it fails. It fails because the ministers are essentially grossly inexperienced or incompetent. It is patently evident that ministers within this government have little experience and, what is worse, they have failed to learn over three budget cycles.

I can say all of this with supreme confidence, as I tried to get to during estimates, because that is exactly what the Queensland Audit Office report No. 18, *Monitoring and reporting performance*, says in black and white. The Auditor-General has confirmed exactly what I have been saying for three budgets. The audit report looked at 20 core Queensland departments—at how they were measured and monitored and at how they publicly reported on the non-financial performance of those departments. This was an attempt to cut through the government spin and see if the non-financial performance information in the budget papers was in fact outcomes based, whether it was relevant and understood and whether it actually measured what it claimed to measure. One would think that would be an opportunity for a glowing endorsement, an opportunity for self-promotion. It would be, if this were a competent government—especially if this government has ‘a plan’. Despite the best efforts of that audit, it has been revealed that 73 per cent of the 2013-14 budget is unable to be measured in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. The Audit Office made some revealing and very concerning comments. The report states—

Not knowing whether major government services are cost-efficient hampers effective decision making, particularly from the viewpoint of contestable service provision and being able to quantify reliably whether there are any significant potential savings from outsourcing of services.

It also said that ‘the SDS and annual reports of the entire budget cannot serve fully their intended purposes’. I can tell you what: the Auditor-General did not need to write that down for me after three years of this. The Auditor-General said that it was all evidence of a lack of commitment by executive and senior management—that is, ministers—to performance monitoring and reporting. The common missing elements were management commitment and externally imposed reporting imperatives. We all know how the Premier responded to that.

The government is unable to quantify its own performance and is therefore committed to outsourcing and privatisation not because it represents an incredibly precise business practice but because it represents implementation of a failed ideology. Seventy-two per cent of the budget lacks a balanced scoresheet.

From my exact recollections of estimates I have three highlights: (1) the Attorney-General, as the corrections minister, supposedly not knowing how many bikies were in pink jumpsuits—this is just extraordinary; (2) the director-general of Justice throwing the department under a bus very publicly over the boot camp tender process; and (3) the great understanding of ISO 9000 quality management systems by the police minister.

(Time expired)

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.28 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise this evening to speak to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee’s estimates report for 2014. At the outset, in his absence, I acknowledge the great work of our chair, the member for Ipswich, and thank my colleagues on the committee—the deputy chair, the member for Nicklin, and the members for Bulimba, Ipswich West, Toowoomba North and of course the member for Rockhampton. I also place on the record my great appreciation to the secretariat who do a fantastic job and who have been working very hard, particularly in terms of the latest inquiry being held by the committee with regard to strategies to prevent crime. On the record I say thank you very much to Brook, Peter, Kelli, Lucy—who is visiting us for the moment—Greg and of course Gail. Whilst acknowledging the great work that is being done, it is important to make particular mention of the fact that the chair and member for Ipswich was very particular about ensuring that there was equal time for both non-government and government questions. The chair was keen to ensure that at no point in time did the government seem to have any more time whatsoever and on the Thursday, having taken detailed notes, he was clearly able to indicate that both the member for Nicklin and the member for Rockhampton combined had more time to ask questions than government members did.

This government has long been and remains and will be committed to making sure that Queensland is the safest place to raise a family. When we think about the two ministers who are contributing most towards that goal, both the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and the

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services immediately spring to mind. I want to publicly on the record commend them for the great work that they have done over the past 2½ years to ensure that we continue to strive towards this goal of making this great state of ours the safest place to live and raise a family. Of course, we have seen that with so many commitments in terms of increased penalties and an increase in the types of offences and increased funding so that there are more police officers on the beat.

I want to highlight a couple of things that we discussed at this year's estimates hearings. There is of course the funding for the safe night out precincts so that entertainment precincts right across Queensland are not only safe for Queenslanders but ensure that everyone has a great night out. There is the increased funding for the building and construction of new fire stations right across Queensland. There is of course the continued funding for organisations like Neighbourhood Watch and Crimestoppers that are just so integral to making sure that our community is and will be the safest place to live and raise a family. I also want to pay tribute to those departmental officials who attended estimates. Of course there is the Director-General of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Mr John Sosso, and his departmental officials; the two commissioners who are relevant to Minister Dempsey's portfolio, Commissioner Ian Stewart of the Queensland Police Service and Commissioner Lee Johnson of Fire and Emergency Services; and of course the head of the Public Safety Business Agency.

As I said, I thought that the estimates process for the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee ran incredibly well. The chair made significant attempts to ensure that it was a fair process and I am sure that both the member for Rockhampton and the member for Nicklin would acknowledge that the chair, in all of his endeavours when it comes to estimates, has always attempted to be incredibly fair and he certainly always tried to ensure that those members had the opportunity to drill down into certain issues. I also note that the chair made attempts to ensure that there was a little bit of levity when it came to the estimates process and members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee would remember well the questions that were put by the chair to the head of the Prostitution Licensing Authority. If any member is in need of a laugh, I would suggest that it might be worth going and having a look at. I probably would not watch the video—there are probably a few too many members of the committee trying very hard not to giggle—but it is definitely well worth the read as the chair asked the head of the Prostitution Licensing Authority if legal brothels were doing it a little bit hard at the moment. Again, the estimates process ran incredibly well. I want to again thank my colleagues and the secretariat for the great work that they do. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (5.33 pm): I rise to make my contribution and my response to the report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on the 2014-15 estimates hearings and ultimately the Newman government's third budget. I feel privileged to be appointed as a member of this very important committee which has been at the centre of so much of the reform this government has brought forward to make Queensland the safest place in Australia to live, work and, importantly, raise a family. Two years ago the government embarked on a mission of fiscal repair and, just as importantly, to ensure the system of law and order in Queensland was reflective of the expectations and indeed the aspirations of the community. I continue to enjoy my work on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee as, although the workload can be a challenge, it is a way I can contribute to ensuring the areas of law and order and also emergency services and safety—so important to the people in Ipswich West—are provided for with sound and appropriate legislation.

Again this year our estimates hearings saw evidence given by the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and of course the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, as well as the various heads of departments, commissioners, assistant commissioners and other agency heads and advisors. The evidence provided was informative and detailed, giving me a real sense that Queensland is in good hands and under the watch of some very competent and dedicated people indeed. It was good to have the opportunity to have each portfolio area deliver its evidence over a two-day period this year. For me it provided an opportunity to consider the Service Delivery Statements in greater detail rather than having to do so in a marathon session stretching over a single day's schedule. I personally believe this provided better opportunity for considered questioning of ministers and officers.

The Attorney-General and his team gave quality evidence during the hearings and it was certainly very clear to me that he is across his portfolio and is well supported by professional and expert officers, commissioners and other agency heads. The hearings gave me a deeper understanding of the accomplishments of the past 12 months and indeed the projections over the next year. The portfolio includes the agencies of the Queensland Ombudsman, the Electoral

Commission, the Public Trustee, the Crime and Corruption Commission, Legal Aid Queensland and of course several others. I am confident that Queenslanders are getting sound value for money and services through the Attorney-General's portfolio. Similarly, the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services again provided this year very comprehensive evidence throughout the hearings. The minister and his very dedicated team were able to give great insight into the operational and strategic activities of the portfolio. Of course, a lot of these activities are being seen well and truly by people on the street in my electorate and they are very pleased to see a lot of the reductions in crime that we are experiencing at the moment. The statistics given on the decreases in areas of crime as well as the new strategies and reforms gave me a great sense of the work which has resulted in Queensland literally taking back the streets and making this state the safest and most secure place, as I said before, to live, work and to raise a family. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's 2014-15 budget estimates report No. 69 details the outcomes associated with the successes of the areas of government under its review and it certainly paints a very positive outlook.

If I can just digress for a moment, recently I had the pleasure of being joined by the assistant minister, Mr Ted Malone, the member for Mirani, at Prenzlau with our rural fire services. All of the brigades came along and we had a great round table experience and a barbecue together and the assistant minister took the time to explain to them the changes which I have described as taking them closer to executive government, because now these people will be more in line with getting the understanding that they require from that level of government. That is really important to me and I know that residents in my area appreciate that as well, so thank you very much, Assistant Minister Malone. It was much appreciated by all who attended. On a different note, predictably there is the token and shallow statement of reservation from the opposition sniping and carping in usual fashion. However, not one word have we heard about what it would do to keep Queenslanders safe. In fact, based on performances in the House this week, we could expect a repeat of the 'go soft on crime' regime it was famous for the last time it held government. Queenslanders fortunately have a government now committed to the expectations and aspirations of everyday people who want a safe and secure community.

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (5.38 pm): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to participate in responding to the estimates committee report for the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee hearings that were held only a few weeks ago. The records show clearly that Premier Newman has assured all Queenslanders that the estimates committee hearings structure for next year will not be a repeat of the way the government had this year's hearings conducted. My assessment of the amount of time that was allocated between government and non-government members indicated that on our first day of hearings on the Tuesday approximately three hours and 53 minutes was allocated to government question and answer time. With regard to non-government members' question and answer time, the records show that it was approximately two hours and five minutes.

That is my assessment and the advice that I received about how the time was divided between questions asked and answers received by government and non-government members. Clearly, it was not working. Yet we moved on to the hearing on Thursday. After our discussions—and as members we all get along and we try pretty hard—our chairman was able to ensure that the time was more balanced. Clearly, the record shows that for the Thursday hearing the opposition and non-government members had more time allocated for questions. It was not analysed, but it seemed to be pretty close. What I am trying to say is that there was a clear contrast between what happened on Tuesday and what happened on Thursday. That was because, thankfully, our chairman listened to the submissions made by the opposition and the non-government members. So I thank Ian Berry for listening and responding accordingly. I know that he has a difficult task, because he is part of the government.

That brings me to how the Premier has stated that the estimates hearings are not going to be conducted next year the way they were conducted this year. Ladies and gentlemen, we are here talking about the committee hearings. I note that the leader of government business is in the chamber tonight. To date, we have not seen the leader of government business—the Premier's advocate—come in here and move a motion to amend our standing orders to follow through with the assurances that Premier Newman has given. All that the leader of government business needs to do—and he has not done it yet and I invite him to do it tomorrow—is to walk in here and move to amend our standing orders to say that estimates hearings will be held on separate days. The record shows that the government still has not delivered on that. It is the opposition members and the crossbench members who have to hold it to account. So I urge the leader of government business to talk to the Premier, to perhaps talk to some more moderate members of the government and, hopefully, tomorrow we will see a follow-up on the Premier's commitment. Quite frankly, the Premier's track record is not good.

I turn now to an ongoing concern that I have had about the unfortunate apparent politicisation of the leadership team of our Police Service by this government. During the estimates committee hearing I put specific questions to our Police Commissioner. I have no personal disrespect for him. I think he is doing a good job. He has had a hard act to follow. I think that a lot of our police men and women do the best job possible under very challenging circumstances. But my question was very simple. It was about what resources are available to the Police Service to making comment to a parliamentary committee on proposed changes to laws in Queensland that will impact on the Police Service. That question was relevant to the estimates process—what resources are available. That question followed on from the Police Commissioner's assurances that everyone is treated fairly. I thought that applied to government members and non-government members and the crossbench members. The record shows that, after three pages of transcripts—three pages of words and banter—finally, in responding to a question about what resources were made available to the non-government members, or words to that effect, the *Hansard* record shows that Commissioner Stewart said—

The resources would have been available. I would have to look to the government for direction on the decision around whether we participated.

That was in the context of participating in making a submission to a parliamentary committee. That is critical. That is confirmation of the very issue that I have been raising time and time again in this chamber and in the public about my concern about the close connection between the leadership team of the Police Service and this government. It is not healthy and it is not right. I do not believe that our police leadership team under our commissioner should have to get the approval from the government as to whether they are going to participate in a parliamentary committee investigation if the matter that is being investigated is from a non-government member. That is wrong. That is not the democratic way in Queensland.

I invite members to read the *Hansard* record where Commissioner Stewart said—

The resources would have been available. I would have to look to the government for direction on the decision around whether we participated.

That is not healthy. Back to other—

(Time expired)

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise today to speak in support of report No. 69 tabled by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which examined the services to be provided in the 2014-15 budget by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the department of police, fire and emergency services. I recommend that the report be passed without amendment and I will take this opportunity to thank the chair, the member for Ipswich, and all of the other committee members and the secretariat and his team for their work during the estimates hearing process.

It is no secret that ensuring that Queensland is the safest place to live, work and raise a family is a priority for the Newman government. Since day one of office, we have been driven to restore accountability and transparency in government, promote safety in our communities and revitalise front-line services. Two and a half years later, every decision we make as a government is made with those objectives in mind. This is evident in the 2014-15 budget, particularly in the portfolio areas of the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. In my electorate of Bulimba, in the past year we have witnessed a reduction of 11 per cent in assaults, unlawful entry is down a whopping 42 per cent, and the incidence of arson has decreased by 83 per cent since the previous year. These decreases are no coincidence. They are a direct result of the Newman government's election commitment to get tough on crime and we continue to deliver on that front.

Last year, the Attorney-General visited my electorate of Bulimba to announce the introduction of mandatory graffiti removal orders and an increase in the maximum sentencing for vandalism to seven years in prison. Just last weekend, 12 months later, the Attorney-General returned to announce that in just one year alone the graffiti crime rate has been slashed by 25 per cent across the state and 128 offenders have been ordered to perform 1,160 hours worth of clean-ups. These results and improvements across the state are in stark contrast to the former Labor government's record, which was largely inactive on these issues, settling for the slap-on-the-wrist approach.

A survey conducted during June 2014 has found that the percentage of Queenslanders providing strong or very strong support for additional law enforcement measures rose from 57.4 per cent to 64.7 per cent since a similar survey was conducted in December last year. Queenslanders are

welcoming the Newman government's initiatives that are cracking down on crime. That is because they share our vision of a Queensland that is the safest place in Australia and the ideal place to raise our next generation.

With that in mind, I welcome the services that are provided in the 2014-15 budget for the portfolio of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, with highlights such as an investment in ICT for justice and court services to drive cost savings and efficiency in court operations, the continuation of the youth boot camp trial and the finalisation of the Blueprint for the Future of Youth Justice to break the cycle of youth crime, the reduction in the QLeave levy rate, the establishment of a one-stop shop for safety and workers compensation online and the continuation of the Zero Harm At Work initiative.

Following the Carmody inquiry, I welcome the establishment of the Office of the Public Guardian, which will include the installation of child advocacy hubs across the state and the realignment of child visitor functions towards areas of greatest vulnerability. Furthermore, I am excited by the inclusion of \$31.1 million over four years to contribute to the Safe Night Out Strategy to stamp out alcohol and drug related violence, restore responsible behaviour and ensure that all Queenslanders can enjoy a safe night out. This is an issue on which the young demographic of my electorate of Bulimba has actively engaged with me. I am proud to be a member of a government that prefers not to punish the majority for the actions of the minority by winding back lockout and closing times, which those opposite believe is the solution, albeit a bandaid solution. I look forward to the second reading of the Safe Night Out Strategy legislation in parliament and, upon its passing, its implementation later this year.

In relation to the department of fire and emergency services, I note that the 2014-15 budget provides for additional resources for emergency services, including \$20.2 million for replacement or upgraded police and fire and rescue stations across the state, \$60.9 million for new and replacement emergency vehicles and \$3 million for a second helicopter. There is also \$109.4 million for a further 267 police officers in 2014-15 in addition to the 567 who have already been recruited in the past two years to ensure that we are well on track to delivering our commitment of 1,100 additional officers over four years.

I also want to highlight the \$4 million over four years to revitalise Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, because I am a huge advocate for the vital role that the local community plays in crime prevention. I am fortunate to have a number of very active Neighbourhood Watch groups in the Bulimba electorate that do a great job and I am pleased that they have this level of support from the government.

We are a government that has a strong plan for a brighter future. We are a government that has delivered and will continue to deliver on this commitment to Queenslanders. I support report No. 69 and I look forward to continuing to deliver for the people of the Bulimba electorate as their voice as the Newman government delivers for Queensland.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.48 pm): I rise in support of report No. 69 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on our budget estimates hearing. I thank all of the members of the committee, the chair and everybody in the hardworking secretariat. I would also like to thank the two ministers. On the day I thought they answered the questions well and frankly and, despite some time differences that were mentioned by the member for Nicklin on that first day, the questions were actually very well balanced. It can be frustrating sometimes to be one member on a committee when you have a particular question you want to ask. I understand the opposition getting frustrated with that, but I felt everybody was given a fair opportunity.

I wish to speak about the \$44 million over four years that has been allocated for the Safe Night Out Strategy. It goes across the portfolios of both the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police. I think it is a comprehensive strategy. The member for Brisbane Central should be congratulated on the strategy. I have been involved for over 20 years in the liquor industry. In that time I have worked very hard to try to minimise harm. What I have seen from Labor in that time is knee-jerk response after knee-jerk response after knee-jerk response which has cost the industry millions of dollars, cost people time in court and in other places dealing with tickets and caused funding problems for various providers. It is a really good thing to now have a comprehensive strategy with \$44 million being allocated to the various agencies to be able to implement this strategy. It will be looking at society as a whole. We all know that drug and alcohol violence is a problem in our community. We need to make social change. This strategy will see the implementation of banning orders, the implementation of additional technology in conjunction with scanners on front doors and the ability for police to have a

bit more teeth in the application of the legislation surrounding people in and around these 15 declared areas. I was very pleased that the police have got the resources. I was also pleased that there is going to be additional funds made available for a trial in the CBD in Brisbane where people can be taken when they have overindulged and can be dealt with in a different framework. It will keep our hospitals free and keep those people off the street where they might harm themselves or others.

The area that concerns me the most is the growth in drugs. It was interesting for me to hear some of the statistics come back about the reduction in crime that has happened as we have gone about dealing with the criminal motorcycle gangs and other people who have been known for a long time to be both dealing in and profiting from the distribution of drugs and the impact that has actually been having on our society, particularly in some of these Safe Night Out precincts that have been designated. The police having extra resources to deal with this will be a very good thing. It just goes to show that we do have a very strong plan for Queensland. We have a very bright future under an LNP government. The objective is to make it the safest place to live, work and bring up a family. As someone who has four teenagers who are all starting to think about what it might be like to go out and have a drink, I know that having legislation around a coward punch, having police empowered and having the courts empowered to be able to punish people means that if you go out and have a responsible time you will be able to have a good time and if you do not act responsibly you will be held accountable for your actions. I think that is a great outcome. I thank both ministers for allocating resources to it in this budget.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (5.52 pm): I would like to thank the committee chair, the member for Ipswich, for his management of the budget estimates proceedings and the other members of the committee for their questions. The estimates process is an important process and one in which I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to discuss all the achievements and hard work that this government and my portfolio of police, fire and emergency services have undertaken to date and the hard work to be achieved this coming year. The can-do LNP government has invested record amounts in police and emergency services. We are the first government to allocate over half a billion dollars to fire services in this state and a record \$2 billion for our hardworking police officers. These record investments are delivering more police, more fire stations and more emergency vehicles, as well as cutting-edge technology for our front-line staff.

We have seen changes implemented as a result of the Police and Community Safety Review conducted by respected former Australian police commissioner Mick Keelty. The review recommended the establishment of a new public safety portfolio under my new responsibility for police, fire and emergency services. As we are all aware in this House, the Queensland Ambulance Service moved to Queensland Health and Queensland Corrective Services moved to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, a change which makes sense to enhance service delivery. The Public Safety Business Agency was established on 1 November 2013 and the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 commenced on 21 May this year. The resulting portfolio under my responsibility consists of the Public Safety Business Agency, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the newly created Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management. The new structure is designed to support an integrated and collaborative approach to service delivery and to help support our front line in doing what they do best—serve and keep our communities safe.

The new Public Safety Business Agency's 2014-15 budget provides \$610.3 million in operating and \$140.7 million in capital to support our front-line officers by providing better equipment and new technology helping to create safe and resilient communities. The amount of \$20.2 million is provided for replacement or upgraded police and fire stations across the state of Queensland. This will see the delivery of replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at Ingham, Pomona and Pittsworth. Over the next year, the Queensland Police Service will spend \$81.9 million on a range of facilities, information and communication technology and other essential equipment, including \$3.1 million to deliver the replacement police command vessels for Cairns, Whitsundays and Townsville. We already have one of these vessels in the water, with the other two to be delivered by the end of this year. We have upgrades to police stations including Nanango, Laidley, Kingaroy, Chinchilla, Brisbane City and Thursday Island, as well as the Redland Bay Water Police. The amount of \$37.9 million has been provided for new and replacement police vehicles and \$15.7 million for information and communication technology, including mobile services and the public safety network.

This government has been working very hard over the past two years to get Queensland back on track and increase the confidence of the community in our police, fire and emergency services. To date we have delivered well over 800 additional police as part of our commitment of 1,100 additional

officers who are helping to drive crime rates down right across Queensland. We are rolling out over 1,500 iPads and iPhones by November this year—saving officers up to 30 minutes per shift. We also now have both police helicopters in the skies, with *PoIAir 2* commencing just last month. These helicopters are equipped with state-of-the-art technology and are helping to ensure police have an eye in the sky, helping our officers on the ground. Fully funded trucks, equipment, communications and training is being provided for our hardworking rural firefighting volunteers. We have begun development of the \$500 million government wireless network, a great enhancement for emergency communications—an initiative those opposite completely ignored.

Not only have we been providing stations, resources and technology to our front-line police and emergency services but also we have delivered strong laws that help make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. We have delivered Australia's toughest anti-hooning laws, with over 9,500 hoon cars off our streets. The penalty for seriously assaulting a police officer is now doubled to 14 years—a law that those opposite opposed. We have tougher reporting requirements for child sex offenders who are now required to report four times per year instead of once—again, laws which Labor failed to support.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of youth parliamentarians from the electorate of Ipswich.

 **Mrs D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (5.58 pm): I rise to speak on the report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's consideration of the 2014-15 portfolio budget estimates. At the outset, the opposition would like to thank the witnesses who appeared before the committee to assist with its consideration of the appropriations. They answered questions for members of the committee in a forthright and diligent manner that greatly assisted the committee to understand the issues raised. However, the decision of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to change the allocation of time between government and non-government members was disappointing to say the least, and we have heard the member for Nicklin speak about that in this debate tonight. An analysis of the time actually allocated to non-government members for questions and answers indicates that on 15 July 2014 only marginally more than one-third of the time was given to non-government members, the balance being given to government members. Despite being granted leave by the committee to attend one of the sessions, the opposition leader was not allocated any time for questions and the other non-government members were required to forgo their questions and defer to the opposition leader in order for her to be able to ask a single question of the Attorney-General. The Attorney must be feeling under considerable threat when the committee has to go to such lengths to protect a minister from scrutiny by non-government members.

In relation to the CMC, following a reduction in funding for the CMC in the past two budgets, the government has finally decided to increase funding. However, in order to illustrate the effectiveness of the increased funding, the Attorney pointed to crime statistics mentioned by the Police Commissioner in a newspaper article. The Attorney-General's reference to reductions of 10 per cent in crime across all crime in Queensland has since been qualified by the commissioner. As the commissioner has explained, those figures were for reported offences which exclude what are described as 'other offences'. Those have increased by 10.4 per cent. An analysis of Queensland Police Service statistics shows that the crime rate in Queensland across all crime has dropped by only 2.1 per cent in the past financial year, which is part of a decade-long downward trend in crime, except for the past two years which saw increases in crime. In fact, the 2.1 per cent reduction is a small reduction following a similar rise of two per cent the previous financial year under the Newman government. This merely brings Queensland back to virtually the same position it was in, in terms of crime statistics, when the Newman government took office.

The question the opposition asked the Attorney-General in relation to court transcription services showed that there has been a total failure of policy in the outsourcing of this important service. When the Attorney-General announced that Auscript had been selected to provide the service, he also announced that the expected savings for the department were \$6 million per annum. Questions on notice provided information that those savings are not even close to being realised. The actual savings are, in fact, \$2.4 million in its first full year of operation. The Attorney also advised that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General was on track to save a notional \$1.2 million as a result of no longer having to maintain office space. Not only is there a minimal saving to the department but there is also a significantly increased cost to users of the service. The cost of purchasing a transcript for a full day's hearing in a civil matter in the Supreme Court rose from \$1,267.90 to \$2,189.88 in the financial year 2013-14, from when it was provided by the State

Reporting Bureau and when it was provided by Auscript. This means that the cost for litigants has almost doubled under the outsourcing model. The court reporters who were made redundant through this process are still feeling the hurt of having their lives turned upside-down and will take little comfort from the revelations surrounding the Attorney-General in relation to this outsourcing project. The transcription service has been outsourced to a company that donated \$2,000 to the LNP and whose managing director has donated a further \$5,000, as has InteRisk, another company of which the same person is director. That is a web of \$12,000 worth of related donations to the LNP.

Finally, the opposition continued pointing out the problems with the Attorney-General's boot camps. It was revealed that eight out of 10 youths who attended the sentenced youth boot camps had already reoffended. The Attorney-General failed to adequately explain why he overruled his expert panel and awarded the Fraser Coast boot camp to the 10th ranked tenderer, the same organisation that reportedly started building residences before the tender was awarded.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (6.03 pm): I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for considering the budget estimates for 2014-15. I start by acknowledging, of course, the honourable chairman of that particular committee and all the members of the committee. It was a long day, but we all survived. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has continued to deliver on our commitment to revitalising front-line services, making Queensland the safest place to live, work and, of course, raise a family. We do that under the four pillars of the Queensland economy. I am proud to say that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General not only deals with making Queensland the safest place to raise a family but also has a lot of red-tape reduction. I note that in her contribution to the debate, the shadow Attorney-General spoke about some of the estimates proceedings. I think it was a very good day. The questions were answered and the questions raised were legitimate in terms of the operation of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

I wish to talk for a few minutes about the positive impact that the policies of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General are having on the people of Queensland, particularly the mums, dads and families right around our electorates. Because it has been such an issue for the opposition, I will start by talking about the boot camps. Boot camps operate in the Maryborough and Hervey Bay electorates, and I acknowledge the local members in the House tonight. The Lincoln Springs boot camps operate in Cairns and Townsville and another boot camp operates on the Gold Coast. Despite all the rhetoric and the noise that the opposition is making about the boot camps, they cannot grapple with the fact that they are actually working and are achieving success. In fact, recently I read an article in the Rockhampton local newspaper in which the local member for Rockhampton said, 'If only the LNP government did the early intervention camps that the Labor Party proposed to do'. That is the issue: they proposed to do it, but they never did it. That is the difference. We support these issues with real action and people in our communities see it happen. I acknowledge the members from North Queensland and Far North Queensland who have been advocating for boot camps. We are seeing that 60 to 80 to 90 per cent of participants do not reoffend once they have been to a boot camp. They are not going back to detention centres; they are going through the boot camps and they are working.

Mr Dillaway: Even the parents support it.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. This is about rebuilding relationships with families. It is about making sure that we are all working together to rebuild partnerships and relationships within families. Recently, I was in the electorate of Bulimba with the local member. We helped clean graffiti off a wall in a program that makes sure that offenders clean up graffiti. Mr Dillaway is indicating that he had a sore shoulder from the one stroke of paint that he put on a wall. I got paint on my shoes and trousers, but we cleaned the wall. We have had a 25 per cent reduction in graffiti offences right across the state.

I turn to the Safe Night Out Strategy. Alcohol related violence will not be tolerated in Queensland anymore and everyone is responsible for that. I thank the member for Brisbane Central for leading the implementation of the Safe Night Out Strategy. Fifteen safe night precincts will be operating around the state. We want to make sure that when young people go out, they know that a safe night out is a great night out and a great night out is a safe night out.

When talking about criminal gang reforms, I need not mention in this House, because it has been mentioned many times today by the police minister and the Premier, the great results that we are seeing with the dramatic drop in crime right across the state. That did not happen by accident; it happened because the government has the will and the determination to do it, and it has the members who are working in their electorates. We are making sure that we have the laws and the

resources for the police so that all children and families are safe in their homes. I am the father of three beautiful children, Taylor, Madison and Jasper, and I want them to live in a world that is safe. Particularly as many mothers and fathers are away from their children because of work, or for whatever reason, I want to make sure that children live in a world that is safer than the one we inherited from the Labor government two and a half years ago. The police statistics that were released today show that certainly we are living in a safer world, and we support the men and women in blue on the beat.

We are re-empowering victims and giving them a voice in the justice system, which they have never had before. On behalf of all members, I thank the JPs who work in our communities. JPs do a fantastic job as commissioners for declarations. They are doing an amazing job in the trial for the JP QCAT program. We have seen weeks and weeks slashed off time frames. I thank all Department of Justice and Attorney-General staff for making this a great state with better opportunities for all our citizens.

Report adopted.

Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! The question is—

That the report of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee be adopted.

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.09 pm): It is a great privilege to rise and talk about the Appropriation Bill 2014 as it relates to the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to thank the committee staff—Rob and his team—for their work. They work extremely hard and do a great job under quite difficult circumstances. There is quite a lot to examine when it comes to large portfolios like these. These portfolios form part of the LNP government's four pillars of the economy. Agriculture, the environment and mining are extremely important.

The first department that we examined was that of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. Andrew Powell's knowledge of his portfolio and his understanding of the important issues is a great example for other members. There have been changes in terms of reducing the complexity and reducing red tape. This is a great improvement that we have seen over the years we have been in government.

The department is trying to get things into place around offsets and those sorts of things. I am sure that Deputy Speaker Krause realises that the Flinders-Karawatha area could be a great beneficiary of some of these offsets when the legislation is implemented and allocations in the budget are expended. There is always great examination of the number of full-time equivalents and full-time staff. It is great to see that the department is managing to do a lot of work with fewer people. They are continuing on with their good work.

Mr Johnson: They have got used to it, haven't they?

Mr RICKUSS: I think they are enjoying being able to do more, member for Gregory. They can actually achieve something under this government. That is what it is all about.

We then examined the department of Minister Cripps, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. There were great examples of the reduction in red tape implemented by this government. The Natural Resources and Mines portfolio is extremely important to Queensland. The resources industry is another pillar of the economy. Unfortunately there have been some deaths through the year which are terrible. Mine safety and the safety of proponents in the industry is important. The minister takes those issues very seriously as does the department and all members of parliament. I understand that it is an important area that needs to be looked into and looked into properly.

We then examined the department of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. This is also an important part of the Queensland economy. It is probably one of the great drivers of the economy. Unfortunately, at the moment something like 70 per cent of the state is in drought. I am sure the areas of the member for Gregory, the member for Warrego and the member for Charters Towers are under quite a bit of stress at the moment with the drought.

The shining light is the horticulture industry. It is the largest employer when it comes to the agricultural industries. It will be the driver for the industry. There are plenty of opportunities for the industry to improve.

An area of concern to me is biosecurity. There have been major changes to the Biosecurity Act. A number of bills have passed that have changed the act. The fire ant situation around South-East Queensland is concerning. It is one of those things that I think we have to be aware of and keep managing. It is not a short-term fix; it is a long-term fix. We have to encourage the other states to be involved in the process and make sure that we continually work to try to lessen the ramifications fire ants have on the economy.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (6.14 pm): I rise to speak to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee's report on the estimates hearings. I acknowledge the minister's support with regard to drought relief. I think that is very important. Members understand how difficult the situation has been over the last two years. I believe at the moment that we need to ensure that we have molasses stored. I hope we get the rain. At times when it is very dry molasses is beneficial. We are always trying to track it down throughout the country. There is huge demand for molasses. I believe that we need to act on that quickly and be prepared for when we need it.

I know that the government has indicated its desire to double agricultural production. One of the things that I am disappointed about is that I am hearing that there has been an increase in the application permit fee for clearing more than 250,000 hectares from \$5,600 to \$11,000. I think the reason people are making those applications is that they are in drought. They need to grow and expand. They need extra fuel to feed their cattle. To hit them with an extra \$5,400 bill is not right. They do not have the money for that.

I brought to the minister's attention the issue of stocking red claw in the Tinaroo Dam. I commend the minister for accepting my invitation to speak to the people of the Tablelands and have a look at the situation himself. He spelt out quite a few reasons why he will not restock the red claw. One reason is that red claw is not native. The Mitchell River is a native ground for the red claw. When we have massive floods the Barron River and the Mitchell River intertwine. This allows the red claw to move from one river to another.

We were at a forum in Townsville which the Minister for State Development was at. He said, 'What can we do to provide jobs and support for rural and regional Queensland?' Rather than look at the technicalities, let us look at the fact that when DPI scientists stocked that dam it created jobs. The caravan parks were filled with tourists. The bait and tackle shops and the outdoor shops employed people. This is as a result of red claw, but they are looking at the silly technicalities.

There is already a non-native species in that dam—the barramundi. Sleepy cod was put in there as well. They are worried about red claw. The minister indicated that he was greatly concerned about the native crayfish. While there was no red claw, the barramundi and the sleepy cod targeted the native crayfish. By having red claw in there the native crayfish will be sustained. I appreciate that the minister said that he will meet with the scientists and professionals that stock that dam.

The resources industry is part of the Minister for Natural Resources portfolio. One of the things that I am very concerned about is the sale of the Townsville to Mount Isa line, especially given that a profit of \$470 million goes back to the state. This is something that we cannot afford to sell, especially when it gives a return. All that is needed is an upgrade of some of those sidings.

Mr CRIPPS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The potential sale of the Port of Townsville and the Townsville to Mount Isa railway line was not the subject—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): What is your point of order, Minister?

Mr CRIPPS: It is irrelevant to discuss it in the portfolio estimates hearings for natural resources and mines or environment or agriculture.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member for Dalrymple, I would ask you to please keep your comments relevant to the estimates of the portfolio you are talking about.

Mr KNUTH: We want to see the resources industry grow. We are seeing irrigation now expanding in the Flinders River catchment. However, we need a rail line to support the rural industry but also to support the resources industry. When you look at investments, what do they suggest? 'Sell it off. This is a great opportunity for this money to go back to the state.' I put a question to the minister in regard to Ben Lomond—

(Time expired)

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.20 pm): I am delighted to contribute to the debate this evening and in doing so heap some praise on the three ministers of Her Majesty's Queensland government who participated in the estimates hearings last month that were under the umbrella of the parliament's Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

Firstly, the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, despite some grilling from non-government members, I might say, did an outstanding job in answering all the questions thrown at him in relation to expenditure for 2014-15 that falls within his portfolio. I was particularly pleased to hear the minister talk up his much beloved Everyone's Environment grants, because deep down I think we all care for the environment. I can hear the member for South Brisbane, our deputy chair, having a bit of a chuckle there. Well each to their own. I think we all care for the environment. It is just that some of those nutters on the Far Left of the political spectrum have a different idea about the environment than others, particularly us on the government side, putting it ever so mildly.

I also note that the latest funding round for Everyone's Environment is open to 15 August. I encourage all the community groups in my electorate to have a crack. In fact, I spoke to Lauren Ribarich from the Northern Beaches Girl Guides only this week—a very good, earthy, grassroots community organisation. I said to her, 'Have a go at the money, have a slice of the pie, attempt to get some money here,' because they are certainly interested in the environment and good positive environmental outcomes in that growing part in Mackay's northern suburbs.

I also say that to other community minded groups including our service clubs. Our iconic service clubs like Rotary, Lions and Landcare immediately come to mind, and many others. Those groups include the Airlie Beach based Eco Barge Clean Seas. This is a terrific organisation. I know that the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection is acutely aware of the wonderful work that is being done by Libby Edge and her band of willing volunteers over a long period of time. The minister himself was at Boathaven Beach and Airlie Beach last year, alongside the Minister for National Parks, seeing some of the great work that has been done by Libby in recent years in cleaning up the marine debris that sometimes finds its way across the pristine waters of our beloved Whitsundays. It was great to have both ministers there for a funding announcement in relation to Everyone's Environment. It is no surprise that Libby is on a pedestal in our community. The fact that she was on the front page of the local phone book I think says it all.

To the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, a fellow North Queenslander, which makes him pretty special, extra special, I might say, in our part of the world: I say well done also. It was good to hear the minister particularly outline some of his excellent work in the very important area of mine safety—something that our committee chair touched on a moment ago. That is something that the LNP takes very seriously. I commend the work of the minister, his departmental officers and his ministerial staff but in particular the Mines Inspectorate.

Many of my constituents work in the coal-mining sector in the Bowen Basin, whether they live on the northern beaches of Mackay or in Airlie Beach in the northern part of my electorate. The coal industry is fundamental to the economy of our region, the biggest regional economy of the north. Economics is one thing but human life is something else altogether. On that note, I do salute the Mines Inspectorate and the mine safety inspectors for their dedicated work over a long period of time, particularly as we approach the 20th anniversary of the 1994 Moura Mine disaster and, closer to home, later this year the 60th anniversary of the Collinsville Mine disaster of 1954.

Finally, to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, who is no stranger to many parts of regional Queensland including my electorate, where of course we have our sugar industry, our cattle industry and our small crops in the Whitsundays. In the estimates hearing the minister spoke extensively about his important work in addressing various issues impacting on the primary industries sector, particularly on matters pertaining to diseases such as BJD in the cattle industry and red witch weed in the sugar industry. Biosecurity, of course, is paramount. The minister's answers were reassuring to the committee, putting it mildly, that Queensland is very much on the front foot in that area. As I have said before in this place, heaven forbid, an outbreak of foot and mouth would hit this state and this nation for six. But it was great hearing the calming tones of the minister reassuring us that Queensland is the best prepared jurisdiction in the nation.

Finally, well done to my committee colleagues, to our chairman, the member for Lockyer, but also to the secretariat—Rob Hansen, Megan Johns and Rhia Campillo. Thank you for your support. I certainly support the bill.

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (6.25 pm): I appreciate this opportunity to thank the three ministers involved in the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee hearing in the estimates process. These three portfolios are essential to Queensland's future, as they have been in the making of this state and its place in the history of Australia, and in supporting individuals and families with jobs and businesses, and creating the communities we live in. The government has a plan for our four-pillar economy. Two of those pillars—agriculture and mining—were front and centre during estimates, alongside Environment and Heritage Protection.

The hearing process offered the people of Queensland insight into good governance and how it can be scrutinised by the estimates process. I personally believe the new system that was trialled this year gave much more opportunity for that to happen than under the previous system. Part of the problem as I saw it was that the opposition Labor Party members seemed ill-prepared—they tended to flounder and at times ran out of questions. I would have thought that with the resources they have they could have addressed matters in more detail. This, in part, I assume is due to their inability to have alternative answers to the many problems the previous Labor government created.

Before I go any further, I would like to thank the research team, led by Rob Hansen, for yet another year of exceptional support, supplying all committee members with accurate information and ensuring the protocols and standing orders were followed. I also thank our chairman, the member for Lockyer, Ian Rickuss, for his chairmanship of the hearing, ensuring all committee members from both sides of parliament had ample time for questions.

I congratulate Minister John McVeigh for the way he handles his portfolio and also for his knowledge when answering estimates questions. The transcript of proceedings offers a true indication of his knowledge and understanding of his portfolio. Agriculture is a very broad family, but today I will focus briefly on biosecurity and the research and development side of it. The pest management in the livestock industry that this minister has brought to this portfolio is second to none. His handling of the BJD outbreak, which we dealt with somewhat in the hearing, was exceptional. There is also the tick research through UQ; the buffalo fly research; the research into the bovine respiratory disease in feedlots, which is a \$2.4 billion industry; and of course \$3.5 million to James Cook University for research into the feral pig problem that has plagued the state.

I congratulate Minister Cripps in his role as the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines for his understanding of the portfolio and all the complexities it brings with the many stakeholders. In relation to water services, 95,000 megalitres are now able to be allocated from the Gilbert and Flinders rivers, and we have the Rural Water Use Efficiency—Irrigation Futures initiative. In relation to mine safety and health services, mining and petroleum, we have the ResourcesQ 30-year plan, and processing times for coal and mine exploration permits have been slashed from 22 months to less than six months for those without native title—exceptional work from the minister.

Further, in relation to land services, we have the self-assessable vegetation management codes, which we have spoken about before in the House. We also have the new land tenure reform in the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. When we look back in years to come, this will be seen to be history-making legislation that has been brought before the House. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will also be given the option for freehold, and just last week the committee held regional hearings on this bill and heard how excited they are. While there are some nerves, they are really looking forward to this opportunity.

Finally, Minister Andrew Powell has brought the environment portfolio the attention and dignity it deserves in our richly diverse state, instead of the neglect and incompetence we had seen under the Labor-Green governments. He has brought back scientific decisions rather than emotional, extremist reactions. With the crocodile management work that he has done, I think to date up to 62 crocodiles have been removed to make safer our communities in North and Far North Queensland.

With Reef Facts, this minister is providing an open and transparent account of what is happening on the Great Barrier Reef because we believe Queenslanders deserve the truth. For years Labor's incompetence and inability to get basic state reporting right has caused much grief for the reef. Fact 1: the Great Barrier Reef is one of the top World Heritage areas and remains one of the best managed marine ecosystems in the world. Fact 2: storms and cyclones are the major contributors to coral loss, followed by crown-of-thorns starfish and bleaching from ocean warming. Another fact: more than 350 graziers have participated in programs to adopt reef-friendly farming

practices. The Queensland government is committed to help meet Australia's international obligations for the Great Barrier Reef. We have already heard about the Everyone's Environment grants—\$5 million is fantastic for the smaller local programs in our neighbourhoods.

I also would like to briefly touch on the Environmental Offsets Bill, which was brought into this House, which is a complete breakthrough. The old system was prescriptive and difficult to navigate. Proponents had difficulty in delivering on inflexible requirements, and this was causing unnecessary and costly delays.

Madam Speaker, I commend all three ministers, their staff and departmental officers in the way they attributed themselves to the very important role of ensuring better governance in the allocation of the state's Treasury.

Debate, on motion of Mr Cox, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the member for Yeerongpilly has sought a ruling about the application of standing order 87—the same question rule—to his private member's bill, the Child Protection (Offending Reporting) Amendment Bill, as to whether it would still be able to be debated. The ruling also applies to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill, which is the member for Dalrymple's bill. I table the request from the member for Yeerongpilly.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 6 August 2014, from the member for Yeerongpilly, Mr Carl Judge MP, to Madam Speaker regarding the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill [\[5646\]](#).

I rule that the same question rule is not enlivened, and I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of the ruling with the explanation.

Leave granted.

Standing Order 87 provides the general rule of Westminster parliamentary practice that once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session.

Similarly, Standing Order 150 provides for the application of the same question rule in relation to amendments, new clauses or schedules of a Bill. It states that:

"No amendment, new clause or schedule to a Bill shall be at any time moved which is substantially the same as one already negatived by the House, or which is inconsistent with one that has already been agreed to by the House, unless there has been an order of the House to reconsider the Bill."

As previous Speakers and I have noted, the matters do not have to be identical, merely the same in substance as the previous matter. In other words, it is a question of substance, not form.

The Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was passed by the House on 4 June 2014.

I note there are also two private members' bills on the notice paper regarding child protection amendments:

- the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill (the Member for Dalrymple's Bill);
- and the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Amendment Bill (the Member for Yeerongpilly's Bill)

I note that Member for Dalrymple's Bill is primarily proposing to insert new provisions into the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act to disclose information about certain categories of offenders to the community.

The Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill which was passed by the House did not deal with such issues.

Therefore, the same question rule would not be enlivened at the second reading of the Member for Dalrymple's Bill.

The Member for Yeerongpilly's Bill deals with entry of a reportable offender's residence by amending the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act.

The Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill deals with entry of a reportable offender's residence but it did so in a different way by amending the Police Powers & Responsibilities Act.

Therefore, the same question rule would also not be enlivened at the second reading of the Member for Yeerongpilly's bill.

Sitting suspended from 6.32 pm to 7.30 pm.

CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING) AMENDMENT BILL**Order Discharged**

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—PUP) (7.30 pm), by leave, without notice: With the consent of the member for Yeerongpilly I move—

That general business order of the day No. 2, Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Amendment Bill, be discharged from the *Notice Paper*.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Withdrawal

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—PUP) (7.30 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the bill be withdrawn.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING—PUBLICATION OF
INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL**

Resumed from 12 September 2013 (see p. 3064).

Second Reading

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (7.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

It is a great honour for me to speak to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill. The primary objectives of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill 2013 are to create a means by which the information may be disclosed to the community concerning certain categories of reportable offenders, dangerous sexual offenders and other persons considered to be a risk to the lives or sexual safety of other persons. The bill amends the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 and the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003. These amendments will give the Queensland Police Commissioner the power to publish information on Queensland's most dangerous and high-risk sex offenders. I repeat that again—these amendments will give the Queensland Police Commissioner the power to publish information on Queensland's most dangerous and high-risk sex offenders.

Concerned members of the community will have access to critical information, enabling them to identify reportable offenders in their neighbourhood or who otherwise have access to children in their care. A 'reportable offender' describes a person whom a court sentences for a reportable offence. A reportable offence is an offence which comprises a sexual or serious element involving a child or an incapable person as listed in schedules 1 and 2 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978. A reportable offender can also include offenders who come to reside in Queensland from other jurisdictions and persons whom the court has ordered to comply with the act. As well as reportable offenders, the bill will apply to dangerous sexual offenders and other offenders upon the authorisation of the Minister for Police.

Growing community outrage at the number of sexual assaults on children committed by known offenders has resulted in increased sentencing. I commend the Attorney for acknowledging this. However, it has been widely acknowledged that monitoring and supervision of offenders post release are inadequate and addressing monitoring deficiencies is costly. This has led to the introduction of registration schemes in many jurisdictions. The effectiveness of offender registration schemes will be strengthened by making information on certain offenders available to the community and empowering community members to assist the parole services and the Police Service to monitor sexual offenders post release. I am aware that the Attorney-General in some ways commended me for taking this initiative. He has introduced legislation going hard on sexual offenders, but this is a little different. This is about sexual offenders whom when released from jail are very difficult to report on in terms of knowing their whereabouts or what they are doing. As we have seen in the past, many of these

sexual offenders get involved with kindies. They get involved where children are, but this gives us the tool for concerned parents to gain an understanding of whether the person who is caring for their child is a serious sex offender. This has already been put in place by the Western Australian government and has proven to be very successful. It was also implemented by the Clinton government when it acknowledged there was a big problem in the United States of America.

The community expects us to do everything in our power to make sure offenders are never given the opportunity to destroy another young life. We owe it to the victims of sexual abuse to rise to that expectation. I will continue with the last part of my speech later.

 **Mr HOPPER** (Condamine—KAP) (7.36 pm): I start by congratulating the member for Dalrymple for bringing this legislation before the House tonight. May the LNP members hang their heads in shame because they have had the opportunity to do this. They introduced tougher laws once this legislation hit the floor of this place, thanks to the member for Dalrymple. So my entire congratulations go to this man. When you breach a child's trust you forgo the right to privacy and you forgo your rights in the community. It is as simple as that. That is what this bill is about.

We do not want our children's lives put at risk, because that is exactly what happens. It is their lives that are being put at risk. This bill gives the Police Commissioner the power to name an offending person if someone is worried. It is not a list that you can download from the internet to find out who lives where. There is a protection mechanism in place here. But, if someone is suspicious, as has happened to so many families who have had their children sexually abused—they have been suspicious but they have had nowhere to go; it might be a relative or a close friend—this bill enables that family to contact the Police Commissioner or the deputy commissioner and find out if that person is an actual threat. That is why I congratulate the member for Dalrymple.

He said in his speech that the United States has taken this on and it works. He said that the New South Wales government has taken this on and it works. I challenge the Minister for Police tonight to support the member for Dalrymple, but there is no doubt he will not because the LNP cannot give credit to a minor party for bringing in better legislation than it has put in place. They are in government. The people of Queensland want this exact thing to happen in this chamber. This is the Legislative Assembly of Queensland. This is where laws are written and laws are made. It is a democracy in Queensland. We go to the people of Queensland and we ask them to vote us into parliament. They trust us to be part of making the laws. We do not want to see a government that makes promises and then breaks them one after the other and a government that does not have the guts to support good legislation that has been put before this House.

This bill only affects the concerned members of the community and that is the beauty of it. We all saw that horrific paedophile who has since taken his life come and live in Dalby where my office is, in the middle of my electorate, and he sexually abused two children. God forgive us for ever letting him out of prison. That is the sort of thing that happens. These people are sick and we have a duty of care—not only as parents but as a government, opposition, Independents and small parties—to do all we can in this institution to stop this happening to even one child. That is the sort of thing that the legislation that is before the House will do.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is an emotional subject, I can tell you right now. Children must be at the top of the hierarchy; there is no doubt about that. We must protect the innocence of a child. My wife spent last night with her daughter, and she rang me this morning because her grandson was knocking the door down to come and hop into bed with her. That is the sort of thing we have got to protect—the innocence of a child. That is exactly what this legislation is about, and if this government does not support it I say they are gutless. They are a gutless government if they do not support this legislation tonight. It is as simple as that. This legislation works. It has been proven to work in the United States and in New South Wales. Communities need the confidence of a government in power; that is what communities are calling out for.

I congratulate once again the member for Dalrymple for putting this legislation forward. This is the crime of all crimes. As the member for Dalrymple said in his speech, these people always surround themselves with children—always. They get into groups where there are kids about, whether it is scouts, kindergartens or whatever it is. People have always been suspicious of these people, and this provides a mechanism whereby people can make a phone call, drop an email or write a letter and find out, and then things can be done. This will be totally policed. It is good legislation. This bill should force the government to act. It really upsets me to see such a massive government not supporting such decent legislation.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (7.42 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this debate on the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill. I have listened carefully to the previous speakers, but from the outset I have to say that I cannot support this bill. I will start with a bit of history. On 12 September 2013 the member for Dalrymple introduced the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill into the parliament. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for consideration, and on 12 March 2014 the committee tabled its report in parliament recommending that the bill not be passed through the Legislative Assembly. The government agrees with the committee's recommendation that the bill not be passed.

The Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill mirrors part 5A of the Community Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 by allowing the Police Commissioner to disclose personal information and a photograph of a reportable offender in circumstances where the offender is unable to be located by police, has contravened a reporting obligation under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 or has provided false or misleading information under sections 50 and 51 of the CPORA. The bill also allows the Police Commissioner to disclose information, upon application, to a parent or guardian regarding the reporting status of a person who has unsupervised contact with the applicant's child. The Police Commissioner is already authorised under sections 69 and 70 of the CPORA to disclose information, including a photograph and last known location in the circumstances provided in this bill.

This government has taken the approach of introducing a whole range of practical solutions that make not only children and young people safe but the whole community safe, and I would like to take the opportunity to remind members of this House of what this government has actually implemented. We have introduced the two-strike policy for repeat child sex offenders. I think it is very important to note at this time what Hetty Johnston, the founding member of Bravehearts, recently said in regard to the offender register. She said that, at the end of the day, if the people are so dangerous then they should remain in prison. The other concern is that if we went down the path that the member for Dalrymple wishes we would have a mentality of vigilantism or of paedophiles going further underground. We should also look at the current blue card scheme in Queensland. It prevents reportable offenders indefinitely from being eligible for a blue card to work with or actively engage with children in the community.

The Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services has previously stated that this government is waiting for the Western Australian model to be reviewed and considered by the Western Australian Attorney-General's department. A review of the Western Australian register by their government is not due to commence until 2015.

As I said, this government has already strengthened our child protection laws. We have introduced the two-strike policy for repeat child sex offenders, we have increased the reporting of child sex offenders to four times a year instead of annually, we have introduced a new offence for grooming a child under 16 years, and we have increased maximum sentences for procurement of a child from five years to up to 14 years imprisonment. We only have to look at our child safety area to know that there is no other government that is more committed to the children and young people of this state. We are investing a record \$406 million to ensure we can have a child protection system that works.

This government gave a commitment at the election that we would implement a commission of inquiry into our whole child protection system. Commissioner Carmody led that inquiry and there were 121 recommendations in that report. The commission gave us a range of reforms that will reduce the demand on the tertiary end of the system by getting supports to families in need before they reach crisis point, revitalise services and refocus the system. A child protection system under the Newman government will see parents receiving support they need early so wherever possible children can stay at home. This government is determined to make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. With all of our solutions coming from a range of government departments, we are achieving a well-considered and a well-balanced approach to ensure that children grow up safely here in Queensland.

This government recently passed laws which will enable more stringent monitoring and reporting for child sex offenders. The Newman government reforms are aimed at tougher offender reporting conditions for the benefit of victims and the community. Like I said before, I believe this government takes a balanced approach by ensuring we are tough on offenders and perpetrators who are found guilty. We cannot discount the comments from Hetty Johnston, founder of Bravehearts,

when she said that these guys are dangerous and they should not be released and that continued detention is the answer, not registers. This is a very emotional subject and I have stood up in here many, many times before saying that I support any laws this government has introduced to make children safer. The range of options and the practical solutions that this government is already implementing are really working, and that is why I cannot support this bill.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (7.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill. I echo the calls made by the member for Condamine in complimenting the member for Dalrymple for bringing this bill before parliament. It strikes at the heart of how a good political system can work when a minor party can contribute to the ideas that come into the House. I do not think Liberal, Labor or anyone else has the mortgage on good ideas and I think it is arrogant to suggest otherwise. We are presenting a bill that makes a lot of sense. Everyone agrees with its principle, but we are going to see opposition to it on a political basis. That is a damn shame and it reflects very poorly on this government.

This bill will make available a register for people who are concerned about dangerous sex offenders in the community. It will not inadvertently capture anyone who has not been convicted of these types of crimes. It will only capture dangerous sex offenders. It enhances the rights of those children who are at risk over the rights of those criminals who have been classed as dangerous sex offenders. I think that is a very reasonable proposition. If the government has any other concerns relating to technicalities in the bill, they should make an amendment so we can pass it and keep kids safe.

One of the arguments we just heard is that the police already have powers. So why not enhance them? If members agree with the principle of police having powers, why not enhance them? On the notion that we should have access to this type of register, that we should be able to see if there are dangerous sexual predators in our neighbourhood, why not enhance that ability? What is wrong with that? While I am happy to acknowledge the existence of the blue card system, it falls hopelessly short of delivering on this issue. The government has already strengthened provisions; I will acknowledge that. I did say that no-one has the mortgage on good ideas. We vote for government bills if they have merit all the time.

The government has strengthened the back-end processes for these offenders. Yes, punitive measures can be instituted, but that does not resolve the preventive measure that we are introducing tonight. We are putting in the safeguards. That latitude is there with the commission. However, not everyone has access to that. This is a good, effective system. It has been implemented in the US and other parts of the world and there is a dire need for it here. Yes, it is a very emotional subject. It is something we can deliver on. All it will take is for people to bury their pride and arrogance and vote for a bill that has been presented by a minor party. I think it will reflect very poorly on this parliament if we cannot get this legislation through tonight.

I might add that this does highlight the effectiveness of having some balance in the parliament. I listen daily to people saying that Independents, minor parties and crossbenchers are irrelevant and asking what we do. Guess what? Shane Knuth put forward a bill relating to flying foxes and miraculously we saw a change to the policy on flying foxes. We put forward this bill and miraculously we started seeing some action on child protection. I think that is a good thing. I think it is a good thing we are talking about it and we are debating it. It forces some change in the policy. That is good. It is a good thing we are doing for the parliament. Everyone can visit their own conscience before they vote on this tonight. I believe in protecting those kids and enhancing their rights over the rights of dangerous sex offenders.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (7.53 pm): Tonight, on behalf of the member for Yeerongpilly, I have withdrawn his private member's bill not because the cognate bill that we are now debating is incorrect and not because our bill was incorrect but because this matter has now been addressed in part by the legislative amendments made by the Minister for Police several months ago. The Minister for Police did that after the private member's bill introduced by the member for Yeerongpilly had sat waiting for debate for a considerable length of time. There is nothing really secretive or mysterious on our side of the political fence. We in the PUP had a legislative step that dealt with the entry of a reportable offender's residence by amending the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act. A position has been taken by the Clerk, which is reasonable, and that is what has led to our position tonight.

The critical issue here is that the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill dealt with the entry of a reportable offender's residence but did so in a different way—by amending the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. We do accept that. This could be one

of those questions of semantics. We are withdrawing our legislative step because the principle should be, as precedent would show, that matters do not have to be identical but merely the same in substance as previous matters. It is, therefore, a question of substance and not form. This is an acknowledged Westminster principle.

That said, the matter tonight is addressed both within the legislative step now being debated and by amendments that have already been made. Mr Judge, the member for Yeerongpilly, still has not recovered from surgery as well as he would have liked to be here tonight. He apologises to the parliament for that and he has clearly made those statements to the Speaker and to the Clerk. I am making some of these statements on his behalf and I ask that you allow me to speak on his behalf.

The content of the proposal made by the member for Dalrymple has in part already been addressed. There have been issues raised here tonight by the members of the KAP and public statements have been made by the government during this week with regard to the amendments that have already been made. It has followed on from comparable overseas legislation, in particular, in the United States. It will be interesting to see how the existing changes that have already been made will work in the public domain. I shall be watching their progress carefully as will, I imagine, the majority of people.

This legislation we are debating tonight is an improvement on that and is deserving of support from the government. It appears that they are not doing that. Certainly it makes their claims about being very strong on real child protection very hollow indeed and probably weak. Their supporters, if they are silent, would similarly deserve the same treatment: if they do not stand up and say that these sorts of child protection changes are the appropriate step, then they are out of step with what is current best practice in the world.

I would say to all members here tonight that they need to listen to this debate. This is replicated in other legislatures throughout the world that are actually forward in this area. They need to consider that this type of legislation is that which is appropriate in a modern world.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (7.57 pm): I rise to speak on the bill introduced by the member for Dalrymple. This government is determined to make Queensland the safest place to live and raise a family. The protection of our children and our community is of vital importance. That is why this can-do government passed laws on 4 June 2014 which provide tougher reporting conditions for child sex offenders, meaning they will have to report four times a year instead of annually. This meets our election commitment and puts the rights and the safety of the victims and our most vulnerable children first.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the member for Dalrymple for supporting the government's commitment and voting for the government bill, unlike Labor, to ensure that our children in Queensland live and grow in a safe state. The member for Dalrymple has introduced a bill to establish a public child offender register in Queensland. The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state that the bill will create a means by which information may be disclosed to the community concerning certain categories of reportable offenders, dangerous sexual offenders and other persons considered to be a risk to the lives or sexual safety of other persons.

I do not support the bill before the House. This is consistent with the recommendations provided by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, and I thank the committee for their scrutiny of the bill. The Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 in its current form already allows the Police Commissioner to release information regarding child sex offenders in the manner described in the private member's bill. The fact that the Police Commissioner chooses not to release information as a matter of course is testimony to the work that is undertaken by our hardworking and dedicated police officers to maintain the safety of children in our communities.

I have previously stated that I will closely monitor the Western Australia public child sex offender register until such time as the register has been assessed, and I am committed to that decision. I await the outcome of the review that will be conducted by the Western Australia Attorney-General's department. At this stage I understand there is no intention for a review of the Western Australia register to be undertaken by that government prior to June 2015. Waiting for clear evidence and research is something that was highlighted in the committee's report, which states on page 2—

The Committee considers that further research into the issues being dealt with by the Bill must occur before the Bill is considered by the Parliament.

The report goes on to mention that an entire review should be conducted ‘... to ensure that evidence based policy is brought forward that deals with this matter in an holistic approach and not in a piecemeal manner.’ It is important for a fulsome review to be conducted, and that is why I look forward to hearing the results of the evaluation of the Western Australia model.

I would like to take this opportunity now to remind the people of Queensland that this government has introduced the toughest child sex offender reporting legislation in Australia. Providing front-line police with the fundamental tools required to investigate child sex offending has been, and continues to be, a priority for this government. I would like to thank the officers of the Queensland Police Service for their tireless work to keep our community and our children safe.

The recent amendments to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 require reportable offenders to report their details to police a minimum of four times each year. This government has provided police with the tools they need to ensure that reportable offenders comply with their reporting obligations. Police will have the power to enter the residence of a reportable offender without a warrant to verify personal information that is required to be reported. Furthermore, police will no longer be required to destroy DNA taken under the provisions of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004. Rather, this information will be held indefinitely, giving police the tools they need to investigate further child sex offending.

This government’s new legislation reinforces its commitment to make Queensland the safest place to raise a child. But that is not all, as my cabinet colleague the Attorney-General has commenced a review of the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003. This complements a range of strong policies and laws already implemented by this government which puts the rights of victims first and makes our communities even safer. This is in addition to the raft of other changes already implemented, including: the introduction of the two-strike policy for repeat child sex offenders; the introduction of a new offence for grooming a child under 16 that carries a maximum sentence of 10 years; increasing the maximum sentence for offences against children with a mental impairment from 14 years to life imprisonment; increasing the maximum sentence for child exploitation material offences from five years to 14 years; and increasing the maximum sentence for procurement of a child from five years to 14 years imprisonment.

The government makes no apologies for putting the rights of children and families first. With stronger laws and more than 800 extra police on the beat helping to make our communities even safer, Queensland will be the safest place to work, live and raise a family.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (8.03 pm), in reply: The Child Protection (Offending Reporting—Publication of Information) Amendment Bill 2013 has drawn criticism here tonight because of the possibility of publication of incorrect information and the invasion of offenders’ privacy. The Attorney talks about locking the door and throwing away the key, but nothing has been said about the serious offenders who have been released and who are yet to be released. As with all legislation dealing with such sensitive matters, it is important to strike the right balance between the protection of an individual’s privacy and the protection of society. We have to protect the rights of individuals, but we have to balance those rights with the protection of families and children in the community as a priority.

A society is judged by how we treat the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. This bill unapologetically places a higher priority on the protection of children and places all other considerations secondary. The intent of this bill is not to increase punishment which, as the minister said before, has not always proven to be an effective deterrent, and it is not to increase reporting requirements for offenders. The sole objective of this legislation is to give parents, carers, employers and police an effective, practical tool to protect our children from being victims of horrific crimes. By introducing a public register we are saying to Queenslanders, ‘We trust you to do the right thing with this information.’ There is nothing more serious than the protection of children from sexual abuse, but the statistics show that we as a society are failing that responsibility. Parents, guardians and employers need access to information that will help them protect the children in their care.

Studies of public registers in other jurisdictions demonstrate that public registers are an acceptable law enforcement tool in tracking possible offenders in unsolved abuse cases. These studies also show that public registers are an excellent deterrent against reoffending. Paedophiles generally gain access to children by befriending the family or gaining the trust of the intended victim. These paedophiles are serious offenders that have been released from prison. The Attorney has

introduced greater punishments which he feels are the be-all and end-all, but what we are talking about here is something that is effective. This is what society is calling for, and that is why I have put this bill forward. If the Attorney-General in Queensland adopted this bill, the LNP backbench would start to like him again. They would give him a standing ovation because they could see that he is coming to his senses, and the member for Mount Ommaney said that she would do anything. Because this is not an LNP bill, the LNP must embrace party policy and oppose it by whatever means necessary. People want good governance.

I commend the members of the Katter party who have put forward five bills in the last two years. When the LNP were in opposition they introduced four bills and they had a staff of 21. We did this with no staff because in the last five minutes before the Christmas recess the LNP government removed our party's funding. But we have soldiered on because we want to do what is in the best interests of Queensland. That is why we put forward the Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill, which the LNP opposed, but which copped the wrath of the Queensland Dairy Organisation. We introduced the flying fox control bill, and I thank the environment minister for seeing the light. He gave councils the same powers that we had proposed in that bill.

We put forward the billboards legislation too. The Attorney had indicated that he would take a tough stance on rogues who put up indecent billboards in front of schools, but they still did not have the intestinal fortitude to regulate it. The reason they did not have the intestinal fortitude to regulate it is that they were in bed with the big corporates. They believe in deregulation. That is why I put this bill forward, and I commend the member for Condamine here for putting forward legislation to protect prime agricultural land because he cares for the people and the farmers, not the big corporates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order! Member for Dalrymple, it would be great if you could stay relevant to the bill that is in front of you.

Mr KNUTH: Derryn Hinch met with the Attorney in his quest to have a sex offender register established. That is exactly what we put forward. We put forward a very comprehensive package. We worked very hard on this, having regard to the Western Australia model and the American model. We also referred to information provided to us by Derryn Hinch.

A government member interjected.

Mr KNUTH: You might be from Victoria or somewhere—I am not sure—but I am from North Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask members in the chamber to direct their comments through the chair. That includes you, member for Dalrymple.

Mr KNUTH: Derryn Hinch said that he would continue to campaign for this register. We have it in front of us.

When I tabled this bill the Attorney was contemplating doing the same thing. That is why I said that if he had done the same thing government members would be giving him a standing ovation, but all I hear is murmuring in the background because government members know that this is good legislation. The government has already taken a strong, tough stance on sex offenders, but it is the ones who have been released and the ones who are about to be released that people want to know about. They want to know where they are and if they are living in their neighbourhoods. Is that too hard? People want to know whether dangerous sex offenders are working in their kindies or their schools or are involved in the BMX club. Is that too hard? It is quite simple. We have introduced this legislation to fill the gap that exists. It is important that we address this gap because if we do not then the lives of children and parents can be ruined and communities can be affected. That is why we have brought forward this legislation. We are not mucking around here. We do not propose this bill as a stunt. We have brought it forward because this is what Queensland wants.

This bill will give clarity where clarity currently does not exist. It seeks to put in place safeguards to prevent the publication of the wrong person's details, which some members said they were very concerned about. It makes the register accessible by the public. It identifies dangerous sex offenders, who are a threat to our society. It adds layers of protection for children and it gives parents a tool to access accurate information in order to protect their children. We have proposed this bill because the community wants this. Queenslanders want it. Queenslanders need it. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 6:

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 1—Douglas.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

NOES, 72:

LNP, 64—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Symes, Trout, Walker, Woodforth, Young.

ALP, 8—Byrne, D'Ath, Lynham, Miller, Mulherin, Pitt, Scott, Trad.

Resolved in the negative.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Report

Resumed from p. 2496.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (8.19 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the adoption of the report of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee's inquiry into the 2013-14 budget. First of all I want to once again raise my objection, as I know my colleagues in this House have, to the Premier's arrogant decision to compress this year's estimates hearings down to just two days. Despite this chaotic scheduling of estimates committees, I have to say that the AREC secretariat, all parliamentary staff and the Clerk of the Parliament all need to be commended for doing an admirable job during quite a condensed, compressed and chaotic estimates hearing process.

Because of this, I was actually unable to attend the hearing for the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection as the relevant shadow minister because it clashed with the hearing for the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, of whom I am also the shadow minister. It is interesting that it took a 19 per cent swing in the Stafford by-election for the Premier to backflip on this decision, despite being warned months ago about the consequences of his changes. I do note that the member for Nicklin has raised the fact that no changes to the standing orders have yet been introduced into this House to correct this mistake.

I was also disappointed that non-government MPs were afforded significantly less time to ask questions during the hearing than government MPs. On the first day of the hearing government MPs had more than four hours of questioning while non-government MPs had less than two. After looking over the transcripts of the examination of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, there are a number of failures that should be brought to the attention of the House. After much dissembling and trickery, the minister admitted that the Queensland government's contribution to the reef has not increased from the \$35 million a year committed by the previous Labor government. This constitutes a fall in funding in real terms despite growing concerns for the reef's health. Labor first committed to spend \$175 million over five years, or \$35 million annually, in 2009. If the government had kept spending in pace with inflation, the 2014 contribution would be approximately \$39 million. I also wish to express my continued concern at the \$1.01 million allocated across the 2013-14 and 2014-15 budgets to fund the Reef Facts website and associated advertising campaign. As the CEO for the Australian Institute for Marine Science stated in his recent submission to the Senate inquiry on the Great Barrier Reef—

Almost all of the 'bad news' regarding status and trend is contained somewhere within the chapters of the document, however the summaries of chapters tend to either downplay or leave the bad news until the end of the sections.

This government is persisting in downplaying the dangers facing the Great Barrier Reef, and nowhere is that concern more valid than on the LNP's Reef Facts website which blatantly seeks to hide the real state of the reef's health and only serves to bolster the interests of big mining companies. Once again the Newman government is arrogantly showing complete disdain for science and evidence and is seeking to hide the truth from Queenslanders.

It was also disappointing that the opposition was denied the opportunity to question the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines in any detail over the changes to legislation concerning Karreman Quarries. I do note that government members were allowed to ask the minister questions in relation to Karreman Quarries but opposition members had their questions ruled out of order. There are still serious questions which have not been addressed by the minister or the Deputy Premier—chiefly, how the Deputy Premier was made aware of the issue, when the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines was made aware of the issue and if the minister instructed his department to draft amendments concerning ambulatory boundaries. These questions remain outstanding, and it would serve the minister and this government well to back up their rhetoric around open and transparent governance by responding to these questions.

The mines minister has also failed to once again detail the amount of land which has lost protections under the Vegetation Management Act under the Newman government's vegetation management changes. This budget fundamentally fails to address the significant issues facing the Great Barrier Reef and hides the true impact of the LNP's slash-and-burn agenda on our natural assets. I am pleased that the estimates process will be returning to their original format to give Queenslanders a better understanding of what is happening in terms of their money.

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (8.24 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to debate on the Appropriation Bill. I have been privileged to be part of the estimates process which relates to the portfolios of the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. I thank the ministers, committee members and staff, both departmental and parliamentary, for their work. The areas of scrutiny in each of the portfolios were extensive and, given time constraints, I will focus on some of the areas which have particular relevance to my constituents.

Agriculture is a key economic focus for the Maryborough electorate and a key focus of the LNP government as one of the four pillars for growing the economy. Under the changes to various acts, including the Vegetation Management Act, landholders can manage things such as woody weeds on their property through self-assessable codes and by notification to the department. Land management authorities now last for the term of the ownership of the landholding. Scrutiny of these land management processes showed that the department was regularly carrying out audits to ensure compliance, and it was noted that there was very little noncompliance identified by the audit process.

Some \$55 million has been allocated to funding and supporting natural resource management groups in Queensland, including the Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management. These grants assist in the control of pests and weeds, improved water quality and promote sustainable agriculture, and the value of the grants is multiplied by the work of volunteers. The minister advised that phase 1 of the national e-conveyancing system has been implemented—a red-tape reduction, cost-saving measure and one which will ultimately reduce the aggravation levels of those involved in conveyancing.

Under the portfolio of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, advice was received on the extensive work being done in the area of research and development over a broad range of agricultural industries, honouring the government's election commitment to growing agriculture, and I particularly note the area of sugar research and development relevant to my area. On the administrative side of the department, scrutiny revealed that for the first time ever targets were set for the processing of applications for drought assistance—in this instance, 21 days—and, when it became obvious that there were insufficient staff to manage these applications for what is a historically widespread drought, immediate action was taken to redeploy staff to fill that need. On behalf of drought affected landholders, I thank the minister and departmental staff for their support and also the support they provided on the ground at drought meetings and forums in terms of practical advice given to landholders on how to fill out drought declaration forms, financial advice and mental health support mechanisms. The minister advised that all funds generated through the sale of obsolete research properties owned by the department were being reinvested into the research and development area and, in line with the direction from Queenslanders in the Queensland Plan, 70 per cent of all departmental staff are located out of the Brisbane CBD.

In the portfolio of Environment and Heritage Protection, the committee was advised of the quite extensive work which has been carried out under the Everyone's Environment grants program and, again, the increased value achieved of that program by working with volunteers. The Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection advised that funds available to purchase properties for such things as koala habitat had been held over on the basis that it was more sensible to take the time to determine which properties will best fit the requirements rather than just purchasing anything that becomes available. As anyone who has worked in the property industry will tell you, the best properties or even the second best properties for a particular purpose are not always available or may only become available over a period of time. Members of our community are actively working to save koalas and the program to buy koala habitat but also the funding for care and support and research into this endangered species is appreciated.

It became clear during the estimates process that all three ministers had an extensive understanding of their portfolio and were able to readily answer questions and, when necessary, departmental staff were able to efficiently provide information which needed to be taken on notice. In these portfolios taxpayer funds are being allocated and used appropriately and I commend the work of the ministers and their departmental staff to the House.

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (8.29 pm): As a member of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee, I am enthused and motivated by the strategic direction outlined by the departments during the recent estimates hearings. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry contributes to the government's objectives for the community of growing a four-pillar economy by strengthening the economic growth and resilience of Queensland's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries. The department advocates across government to ensure that the sector's needs are reflected in planning and infrastructure decisions and through the streamlining of regulations that enable competitive business. It partners with other government departments, industry and research bodies to make front-line services customer focused, accessible and efficient.

The immediate challenge faced by the sector and the department is that the majority of the state is drought declared. This is the most widespread drought on record. The Queensland government has responded with a multiagency assistance package, including water and freight rebates, land rent relief, financial counselling, and community and mental health support for producers and communities impacted by drought. DAFF allocated \$20 million in 2013-14 and \$18.7 million in 2014-15 for the Drought Relief Assistant Scheme. The Australian government contributed a further \$4 million in 2013-14 and \$9 million in 2014-15 specifically for emergency water infrastructure rebates.

DAFF's service renewal strategy is well progressed and is supported by a new financial management framework. Once fully implemented, this strategy will enable a better evaluation of service effectiveness and efficiency, helping the department to focus resources on areas and service delivery models that support, develop and grow Queensland's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries. Modernising service delivery is also supported by capital purchases in 2014-15, which focus on developing and upgrading research facilities and software systems worth \$18.2 million.

The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection aims to be the most respected and responsive environment and heritage protection agency in Australia. The department is responsible for managing the health of the environment to protect Queensland's unique ecosystems including its landscape, its waterways and the Great Barrier Reef, as well as its native plants and animals and biodiversity, and acting as a strong environmental regulator by supporting sustainable, long-term economic development and identifying and conserving the state's built heritage places.

The department will deliver on this government's commitments and objectives for the community to grow a four-pillar economy by reducing the complexity of legislation and cutting green tape, continuing to streamline assessment and approval processes to facilitate efficient and timely environmental decisions, supporting the sustainability and productivity of the resources sector and agriculture industries and promoting tourism opportunities related to Queensland's natural environment and built heritage. The department is committed to lowering the cost of living by providing more efficient and effective environmental regulation and service delivery through the use of technological and other innovations and decreasing government imposed costs on industry and the community.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines is an economic development agency that enables the productive and responsible use of our natural resources—water, land, mineral and energy resources—to generate wealth and prosperity for current and future generations of Queenslanders. On 2 April 2014 the department launched a blueprint that put forward the three priorities that will enable the productive use of our natural resources over the next three to five years, which are to power up regional Queensland and the economy through enabling economic growth and prosperity, growing our resource and agricultural sectors, strategic water reform and strategic land reform; implement customer focused design and delivery of services through engagement with customers, a customer service delivery focus and delivery of services; and to be the best natural resources agency in Australia through integrated natural resource agency, improved regional service model, a comprehensive focus on continuous improvement, building stakeholder partnerships and collaboration and maintaining the best safety in the resource industry. The department is modernising its regulatory framework, enhancing its business systems and developing its people. The department is building on a strong base of natural resources management and making sure that it is doing the best it can for its customers.

The three ministers in charge of the portfolios of agriculture, environment and natural resources are a credit to our government. I am honoured to be a member of this committee and I am delighted with the commitment and great work of these departments. It is pleasing to be part of a strong team with a strong plan for this state that will take Queensland forward.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (8.34 pm): Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this year's estimates hearing for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines because of the farcical process established by this government to compress the estimate hearings into just two days. However, I must place on record that I am very pleased that this Premier, Campbell Newman, has seen the light and has adopted the opposition's policy of reversing this practice back to the way it was, which is for the estimate committee hearings to be held over two weeks. You always know when a government is in trouble when they nick the policies of the opposition. I must say that we got it right and now the government is following our policy.

The hearings were a major disappointment with lines of questioning from non-government members being shut down while identical lines of questioning from government members were permitted—a bit hypocritical! The issue of legislative changes to make Karreman Quarries' operations at Harlin retrospectively legal is a case in point. The minister advised the committee that he had met with the Deputy Premier on 8 April this year to discuss amendments that were later moved in consideration in detail on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 that financially benefited Karreman Quarries. Questions remain in relation to this matter—for example, how did the Deputy Premier and the minister become aware of the issue with Karreman's operations at Harlin? The Deputy Premier claims that he never met Mr Karreman about the issue. The next question is: when did they first become aware of this issue? Another question is: why did these amendments to the Water Act 2000 precede the Newman government's Water Act review? Another question is: why were these amendments made publicly available only during consideration in detail on unrelated legislation over a month later?

People have said to me that they believe that Karreman appears to get special treatment and that one farmer has lost about 20 acres of lucerne fields due to erosion from Karreman's works. Some people think that there is a stench around Karreman and they simply want open and transparent answers to their questions. And so do we in the opposition.

At the hearing the minister refused to advise if he had instructed his department on the following day to draft the amendments at a meeting between the minister, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and his ministerial staff also disclosed as being about the Water Act review. The minister was asked why there was no mention of Karreman Quarries in the explanatory notes accompanying the amendments, which instead merely claimed to be fixing 'inadequate transitional arrangements'. The minister's response was—

That is the opinion of the government and was explained in the explanatory notes.

It is not appropriate for explanatory notes to be expressing the opinion of the government. The explanatory notes should clearly articulate the implications and the reasons for the legislative amendment. The minister failed to do this with the amendments moved in consideration in detail on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

The minister advised at the hearing that no applications had yet been received for uranium mining leases despite the process for applications opening two weeks prior to the hearing. Of course, since then we have seen the government trying to make everyone aware that they can apply for a uranium mining lease. Back when the Newman government first made its rushed announcement to break its own election promise on uranium mining, it was claimed that it is going to be a job bonanza. It is not. And do members know why? Because the spot price is \$28.50 and that is why it will not go ahead.

 **Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (8.39 pm): The Newman government has a strong plan for agriculture. It is investing in the future of our farmers and in regional Queensland. Since I have become minister we have reformed a dedicated Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry that is focused on customer service, supporting efficient, innovative, resilient and profitable industries across our great state.

Our plan is to double agriculture production by 2040. It is a vision we share with agricultural industry representatives right across the state, right across the supply chain, and it is a vision being pursued through the Queensland Agriculture Strategy as outlined at the inaugural Queensland Agriculture Conference I hosted just a few weeks ago here in Brisbane. It confirms that we are taking very positive steps towards cutting red tape and compliance costs. It refers to the recently passed Biosecurity Act, for example, which rolls multiple acts, some dating back decades, into one streamlined act. We are undertaking a foot and mouth disease review to bolster Queensland's capacity to respond to an outbreak of FMD to make us the most prepared state in the nation—again all referred to in that strategy.

In Fisheries we have begun a major review of our entire approach to fisheries management in Queensland. We do not need, we believe, 1,500 pages of legislation for just 900 commercial fishers. We believe a fisheries management system that is based on science is what is required by the industry. Can I state that I am very puzzled by the member for Dalrymple when he makes comments that such an approach is silly and technical. It is science based and that is what an industry interested in its sustainable future is calling for.

In Forestry we have reached a milestone with the government endorsing the Queensland Forest and Timber Industry Plan, which we worked on with industry upon election, which includes funding for a new research and development program and opening up resources for the important timber industry that supports so much of regional Queensland and that was doing it tough under the former government.

We have introduced the Agricultural College Amendment Bill to return our agricultural colleges to the highly respected institutions they should be and they once were. It has been a tough year in agriculture. Queensland remains in the grip of a very serious and persistent drought. Almost 75 per cent of our state is affected. I explained that we set ourselves a target in my department of meeting the goal of 90 per cent of applications being processed in 21 days for our drought relief scheme. I am very interested in the fact that the deputy chair of the committee said that that was a disappointing result and queried myself and some of those details. I explained very clearly that the former government had no such measure and did not want to step up and be accountable. I note that, despite the statement of reservation, the deputy chair, as reflected in *Hansard*, said she was not condemning that—a puzzling position indeed.

The budget includes a significant, strong and focused capital expenditure program of almost \$20 million and a \$55 million investment in agricultural research, development and extension. That is the sort of investment that we need to underline the productivity, profitability and international competitiveness of Queensland's agricultural industries that industry and myself considered at great length at the recent inaugural Queensland Agriculture Conference.

We have recently announced, for example, the 'small tree-high productivity' initiative, one of the biggest research projects in horticulture in many years; just over \$4 million to Sugar Research Australia, similarly through our partnerships for other industries with various universities around the state; and we have set aside \$15 million over five years in partnership with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to protect reefs through our farmer programs. Again I note that significant progress has been made there, despite the comments of some of those on the committee with dissenting views.

The sugar review will once and for all look at sugar marketing in this state in a way that will bring farmers and millers together for the benefit of the whole state. We are investing in opportunities for extending agriculture in various parts of the state. We have an exciting future. I thank the chair and the members of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee and all of those involved in the estimates hearing for the opportunity to explain this very comprehensive approach.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (8.44 pm): Can I pick up where the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry left off and also add my thanks to the chair of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee and to the members who participated in this year's committee. The Newman government's third budget continues our commitment to protecting Queensland's environment and heritage places. It is a budget that delivers a strong plan for a brighter future for the environment while growing a four-pillar economy and job opportunities. Over the past two years we have delivered a significant number of conservation and sustainability programs, we have introduced important regulatory reforms to cut through red and green tape, and we have enhanced environmental management processes and continued to conserve Queensland's built heritage. This year, with a commitment of over \$78 million, almost half of EHP's total budget for the department's conservation programs, we will ensure that Queensland remains one of the most biodiverse places on earth.

The Newman government is delivering practical environmentalism. Unlike Labor, we are focused on delivering green outcomes, not green preferences. I would like to take this opportunity to correct the record and dispel some of the myths propagated by the part-time shadow environment minister, the same part-time shadow minister who claims the environment has been sidelined by this government. False! Had she been across her brief she would know that the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has received more funding this year—\$8.4 million more funding to be precise—an increase in funding that demonstrates this government's full support for the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and the important role it plays in Queensland.

To be honest, amongst her negativity I found just one thing the member for South Brisbane and I can agree on, and that is the importance of the Great Barrier Reef. However, that is where the agreement stops. The member for South Brisbane incorrectly asserts that the Newman government has not directed any additional money to the Great Barrier Reef than former Labor governments. False! On top of maintaining the existing \$35 million commitment, the member is not taking into account a number of programs. Let me just mention two: the significant investment that comes through the \$12 million Everyone's Environment grants program that includes many projects that impact on the reef catchment or the reef itself; and the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership, something that the previous government could not do. To be frank, if the member truly sees the Great Barrier Reef as the greatest environmental issue, I would have thought she would have found the time to attend the estimates committee hearing. Some of her colleagues made it to multiple hearings, including the opposition leader. The member for South Brisbane will need to do better.

Ms TRAD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Could you please address me as the deputy speaker.

Ms TRAD: Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, what is your point of order?

Ms TRAD: My point of order is that the minister is reflecting on a member's absence from a parliamentary committee. My understanding is that such references are not in keeping with the tradition and customs of the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is overruled. I call the minister.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, many others were able to make it to more than one and I would suggest the member for South Brisbane needs to show some interest.

Ms TRAD: Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane?

Ms TRAD: The minister has made a reflection which is inconsistent with the standing orders and the customs and tradition of this House. I ask that you make a ruling on it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have made a ruling. Are you questioning my ruling?

Ms TRAD: What is your ruling?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I said you are overruled.

Ms TRAD: I am overruled?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am dismissing your objection. Are you questioning that ruling?

Ms TRAD: I am not questioning it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then please resume your seat. I call the minister?

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, if I can continue, the member for South Brisbane then had the audacity to criticise a modest advertising spend on our Reef Facts campaign. The spending on our advertising is significantly less than the former government. Frankly, I am gobsmacked by the hypocrisy of those members opposite. I will not be lectured about the appropriate use of resources by people who saw fit to spend a whopping \$2.8 million on advertising for costly green schemes when they were in government.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr POWELL: By contrast, this government is committed to being accountable to Queenslanders and I make no apologies for telling people the truth.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr POWELL: We have an obligation to inform people across Queensland and around the world—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! Minister, please hold on for a second. There will be no more interjections.

Mr POWELL: Can we pause the clock, please, Mr Deputy Speaker?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, please continue. I am warning the member for South Brisbane: no more interjections.

Mr POWELL: We have an obligation to inform people across Queensland and around the world of our efforts to manage the reef and we will continue to do so. When it comes to the World Heritage Committee meeting that I was questioned about, I can assure the member for South Brisbane and others opposite that the money spent on my trip to Doha does not come close to the \$100,000 that the former minister for the environment, Kate Jones, and her two advisers racked up attending the unproductive Copenhagen climate talkfest in 2010. That is right: \$100,000 and two advisers.

In summary, the dissenting report from the member for South Brisbane is nothing more than the fanciful hysteria of a part-time opposition spokesperson. It is nothing more than the irritating background noise that you make when you have no policies of substance to talk about. This is further proof that Labor does not have anything positive to contribute for the future of this great state or for its environment. On the other hand, we have a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland's environment and we are getting on with delivering it.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (8.50 pm): During this year's estimates proceedings, I was very pleased to have the opportunity to outline the tremendous work undertaken by this government through the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to support and grow the Queensland economy and to create jobs and opportunities for all Queenslanders, particularly regional communities. I do find it unfortunate, though, that non-government members of this committee still fail to grasp precisely what my department does and fail to recognise the work that we are doing to rebuild this state after years of neglect by the Labor Party. To that end, I take this opportunity to specifically address a number of points raised by non-government members.

A number of important historical facts need to be placed on the record in relation to Karreman Quarries' Harlin operations, which the opposition has chosen to ignore. The reality is that this government addressed what was a problem created by the former government when it made amendments to the definition of a watercourse under the Water Act. For many years, Karreman Quarries has been operating under a valid development approval to operate to remove quarry material. This development approval is still current. In 2010, it was Labor that changed legislation that impacted on the legal right of this business to operate. Put simply, Labor changed the definition of a watercourse and those changes put at risk the operation of the likes of quarries that had, up until that time, legitimate rights to quarry in certain places. This government simply restored those pre-existing rights and it is as simple as that.

Last week I visited the Cloncurry shire where I announced the release of the Newman government's uranium framework. This framework is both modern and robust, and it ensures Queensland's resources industry is open for business when the opportunity presents itself to recommence uranium mining. Labor's ban on uranium mining was purely ideological, but we have taken steps to ensure that this valuable resource is unlocked for the benefit of all Queenslanders. In developing this framework, we underwent a very rigorous process from the outset. Now it is up to industry to decide when to lodge exploration and mining applications for uranium and those decisions will no doubt be influenced by a number of factors, including global commodity prices, market supply and demand, and costs. Unlike our predecessors, the government understands the importance of developing a best practice framework for the likes of uranium mining and we have ensured we have very strict environmental, health and safety standards before any possible mining takes place.

Once again, I am sad to report that the opposition either still does not understand the importance of this government's changes to the vegetation management framework or simply does not care about the needs of regional Queenslanders. For the past two years the member for South Brisbane has persisted in an attempt to obtain predictions on how many people will apply to manage native vegetation in Queensland. As I have repeatedly stated, the system is an application based one and from period to period neither I nor my departmental officers are going to be able to forecast what applications are going to come forward. Contrary to the assertions made by the member for South Brisbane, the CSIRO report released as part of the Northern Irrigated Agriculture Strategy does not make specific mention of Strathmore Station at all. However, it does indicate that there are significant opportunities for the expansion of agriculture, including irrigated agriculture, in the Flinders and Gilbert river catchments.

In relation to the IFED project, I reiterate that the Office of the Coordinator-General is liaising with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to ensure the significant water requirements for that project and their impacts are appropriately considered during the environmental impact assessment process. My department has not provided any advice to any agency of the Queensland government that says that the volume of the water currently proposed to be used on average by the IFED project is unobtainable or unsustainable.

Finally, I was disappointed but not surprised that the Labor opposition pursued a line of ill-informed questioning on the issue of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority submission to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, particularly given that it is unable to grasp the significance of the changes that my department has delivered so far for the rural industry in regional communities. The member for South Brisbane demonstrated a basic lack of understanding about the differences between different statutory instruments under different acts that I administer. The removal of the need to develop a land and water management plan under the Water Act in order to use a water entitlement is an entirely different statutory instrument from the land management agreements under the Land Act referred to by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The changes to the land management provisions in the Land Act will, in fact, enable this government to better direct its resources to the long-term health of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area and other areas of environmental concern. It is also unfortunate that, after three years, the member for Dalrymple still has not ascertained which issues pertain to my portfolio.

Report adopted.

Education and Innovation Committee

Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): The question is—

That the report of the Education and Innovation Committee be adopted.

 **Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (8.56 pm): I rise to speak on report No. 35, the 2014-15 budget estimates report, of the Education and Innovation Committee. The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2014 for the portfolios of Education, Training and Employment; and Science, Innovation, Information Technology and the Arts be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

This year saw the trial of a new timetable for estimates. For two days the committee questioned the Minister for Education, Training and Employment and the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. The first day was devoted exclusively to the DETE portfolio and the second to DSITIA. In particular, I wish to thank both Minister Langbroek and Minister Walker for

the depth of their responses and the breadth of knowledge of their portfolios in providing fulsome answers to all questions. I also wish to express the appreciation of the committee towards the ministerial staff and the department staff for their efforts and their involvements. Estimates is a very important process in that it does provide government members with the opportunity to unwrap the budget items to provide the finer detail, as well as giving the opposition the opportunity to question in depth the ministers. I believe that outcome was achieved quite successfully on both days.

It was very pleasing to note that the appropriations for both portfolios showed a decided increase in funding, as well as many new initiatives from this government. To outline but a few of the budget highlights from DETE, we saw \$4.89 million in additional funding to increase kindergarten participation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as well as more than \$300 million towards early childhood programs and \$7.7 million to commence refurbishment of existing early childhood education and care facilities.

I am quite excited to see \$64 million as part of the semester 2 instalments of the \$131 million Great Results Guarantee initiative to improve student performance. That is a tremendous initiative and it has been greeted with genuine enthusiasm by principals right across my electorate. In line with giving principals more autonomy, this initiative has allowed principals the opportunity to actually provide extra resources where they can see the need within their schools to improve student education. That, as well as the \$6.5 million in Queensland schools as part of \$26 million over four years in Getting the Basics Right—Literacy and Numeracy grants and the rollout of further teacher aide hours, shows our government's genuine commitment towards improving educational outcomes across Queensland.

The formation of the new entity TAFE Queensland, after 1 July this year, putting TAFE into the competitive market, will bring a new dimension into vocational training in Queensland. Queensland's first dual sector university entity, through the merger of the CQ TAFE institute and the Central Queensland University, has been awaited with much anticipation.

The full day's questioning of Minister Walker across the DSITIA portfolio made for a really interesting day, particularly in the morning as he outlined the very exciting advances in science and the research projects being undertaken. It is disappointing that the amount of time that was able to be allotted to this portfolio will not be available next year when the estimates sitting times revert back.

The committee noted that \$2.6 million has been allocated for the procurement and replacement of essential scientific equipment used for environmental and natural resource projects and \$1.7 million for the Library Board of Queensland for the purchase of heritage and infrastructure collections and other assets.

It was great to see the implementation of the one-stop shop plan. This is the addition of 100 new online transactions to establish the first service outlet pilot in the Lockyer Valley-Scenic Rim region, as well as rolling out and assessing the pilots for social media and click to chat capabilities on the government website. This is an exciting innovation.

As a regional member, I certainly support the implementation of the Arts for all Queenslanders strategy, bringing music and the arts to all of Queensland. Of course, the commencement of the construction of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine, delivering on another election promise, will be well received in Townsville.

I particularly wish to thank the research staff of the Education and Innovation Committee for their professionalism, hard work and support—Bernice Watson, Melissa Salisbury and Carolyn Heffernan, thank you. I also wish to thank the members of the committee—the government members and the non-government members—for their participation and generally their ability to work together in a bipartisan atmosphere.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! I would like to acknowledge the presence of the young leaders group from Southport. Welcome to parliament. I understand you are here at the behest of the member for Southport. I think I may have met you on the riverside terrace.

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (9.01 pm): I rise to speak on the report of the Education and Innovation Committee's consideration of the 2014-15 portfolio budget estimates. The opposition sought to question Minister Langbroek on a range of issues that have a deep connection with Queenslanders. Education is the cornerstone of our society and it is important that appropriate investments are put in place now to ensure that our kids can strive tomorrow.

With regard to early childhood education, the minister failed to provide any confidence that planning is being done to provide a well-funded, early childhood education program beyond what has already been planned to December 2014. This was clearly evident with the minister actively avoiding the subject of Commonwealth funding until a specific question was put to him by the opposition.

It is widely known that the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, which guarantees each child 15 hours a week of early education in the year before compulsory schooling, is due to expire at the end of 2014. But when asked, the minister refused to guarantee, as other states have, that the Queensland government would step in and provide a minimum number of hours to early childhood education. This creates great uncertainty for the child-care industry and for families across Queensland.

We are all aware of the slash and burn budget delivered by Tony Abbott and the federal coalition recently, which will see dramatic budget cuts in education funding from the federal government from 2018. This will have a dramatic impact on how our state delivers education into the future. All the minister could say when asked about contingency plans was, 'No, because it was not in the forward estimates being discussed at that estimates hearing.'

The fact is that 1 January 2018 is fast approaching. Government and non-government schools need certainty. I call on the minister today to step up and outline what he is doing to ensure our state is not left in the lurch. It is concerning to note that of the 1,300 new junior secondary teachers required for the year 7 transition, at this stage fewer than 20 per cent have either taken or scheduled to take the department's professional development course for the year 7 transition. The opposition is concerned that the government is quickly running out of time to ensure that our educators are adequately upskilled to meet the demands.

On the issue of the planning for the Cairns Special School, from the evidence of the minister it appears that the \$500,000 allocation in the 2013-14 budget to undertake the planning has been expended, that the plan has not been completed and that no new funding has been allocated in the 2014-15 budget. So while the minister states that no funding has been brought over from 2013-14, and no new funding exists, it is hard to believe that the assessment and planning will be completed by the end of this year.

While on the topic of special schools, it was concerning to note that neither the government nor the Queensland Schools Planning Commission have undertaken an analysis of the need for special assistance schools or schools providing special education. We believe that the minister needs to increase his focus on this area to ensure that proper planning for special schools is undertaken in an open, public and transparent way.

In relation to training, the opposition was disappointed with the responses provided by the minister during the committee's questioning on TAFE and training. There have been significant changes made to TAFE and training over the past 12 months. With the limited time allocated to questioning on this area of the minister's portfolio, it was disappointing that the minister took every opportunity to quote facts and figures that can be found on the department's website and that the minister was deflectionary in his answers. The minister refused outright to provide the expenditure on outsourcing legal representation in the education staff TAFE certified agreement arbitration before the QIRC, despite legitimate questions being posed which were directly relevant to expenditure in this year's budget.

While the minister spruiked his favourite number of \$615 million being put into training, we only have to look at previous budget papers to know that there have been cuts in training and employment since those opposite came to government. Overall the process for this year's estimates was a flawed process, with delayed transcripts and limited transparency of the hearing for the public. The opposition welcomes the fact that the Premier has acknowledged the process was flawed and has agreed to return to the previous practice of scheduling estimates.

 **Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (9.07 pm): Tonight I rise to speak on report No. 35 of the Education and Innovation Committee. Can I begin by thanking all those involved in the process, not the least of which madam chair, Rosemary Menkens, the member for Burdekin, and all of the parliamentary support staff. I also extend my gratitude to the two ministers whose portfolio estimates were scrutinised by the committee—the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, and the Hon. Ian Walker, the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. At the outset, I point out that I am proud to be a part of this government and pleased to be supporting this recommendation when it is finally put.

For my community this estimates committee ticks all the boxes. It examines early childhood education and care, school education from prep to 12 and training, tertiary education and employment. When we start to go through that whole process and scrutinise that part of the budget we find it is a wonderful time to be involved in education. Again, I commend the minister, John-Paul Langbroek, for his efforts in this space.

We have the Great Results Guarantee that targets literacy and numeracy. We have engaged in a maintenance program in our schools. Certainly that is the case in my community. That is continuing. Of course, next year we have the year 7 transition into high school. The minister has done the hard yards right across the Education, Training and Employment portfolio. Later this year we can look forward to the Education Accord, which will actually build on that process. So far I have engaged with a number of teachers, parents, principals and students, and they are really looking forward to this.

Then we look to Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts setting Queensland on a path to prosperity through research, science and the arts. I think the synchronisation of these areas of responsibility of ministry is just sensational. Redlands, my community, is rich in culture and the arts and that is well documented. What is not quite so well known is that my community has a rich pedigree in research and innovation, leading the world in best practice for products, medicines, crops and areas of manufacturing. We have a number of niche industries. We have horticultural excellence. We have marine studies. We have environment and wildlife.

The Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, the Hon. Ian Walker, was able to talk at length and in detail about some of the wonderful innovative opportunities. I certainly look forward to those rolling out right across my community. As I say, we are well documented for our arts and cultural pursuits, but we are not quite so well known for our innovation, technology and science. We have companies working out of Redlands that are doing cutting edge things. We have the TAFE college. In working with my two colleagues, the member for Capalaba and the member for Cleveland, we will be looking at every opportunity we can to get our community employment ready through the TAFE college at Alexandra Hills and working with the sciences, IT and the education department to really set our community up for a prosperous future.

I will divert for just a moment to talk about the Future Leaders Forum that we held here in Parliament House this week. I would like to commend the students from the schools that attended. When you look at the knowledge, the breadth of experience, the understanding of these young minds and the leadership that they already display, I think there is hope for the future. If we can get all of our ducks in a row in the education, IT and science sectors, we really will be setting up our community for a bright and prosperous future.

In conclusion, I again thank Rosemary, the member for Burdekin, for her leadership as madam chair; the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek; and the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, the Hon. Ian Walker.

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.11 pm): May I begin by thanking the members of the Education and Innovation Committee for their work, especially the chair, Rosemary Menkens, the member for Burdekin, and other members as well. It was a conscientious way in which the committee was carried out, where the majority of the committee approached their work with a quiet and thorough examination of the Department of Education, Training and Employment Service Delivery Statement.

We have a relentless focus on outcomes for children—from crayon to career—in this portfolio. I am honoured to serve in a portfolio that looks after the education, training and employment of Queensland students. We just heard the member for Redlands expressing the importance of this portfolio, and it is something that I never forget.

I was disappointed, though, to hear and read another ill-conceived statement of reservation from the member for Redcliffe, who I note is no longer the opposition spokesperson and who never asked me a question in this place as the opposition spokesperson. I want to deal with some of the observations that she made in her statement of reservation about early childhood—this notion that I would not commit to 15 hours a week for students under the national partnership that concludes at the end of the year. It is fairly obvious—it is in the transcript—that we have made a commitment because of our careful savings and prudent savings.

Given that the former federal Labor minister Kate Ellis gave us an 18-month negotiated agreement that expires at the end of December, it is a bit rich to then say that we should be making sure that we are continuing this program without any reassurance from the former federal government who said it is going to end at the end of December 2014. It is in the transcript. We have said we will

continue this program in 2015 because we have been careful, but we want to make sure as well that we negotiate a new agreement with the federal ministers. I think Australians should be very afraid of Kate Ellis. When she was the minister for early childhood she suggested that the main problems that Australians had with early childhood education and care were about planning, not affordability. It is obvious that affordability is a significant issue for a lot of Australians. We want to make sure we negotiate a new agreement.

I was also concerned to hear from those opposite in their statement of reservation that they cannot read releases about the VET Investment Plan, which is about \$615 million. It is very clear that we want to make sure training is leading to real jobs and not just qualifications for qualifications sake. As for the comment that January 2018 is fast approaching and that I was not prepared to speak beyond the forward estimates, how rich that is coming from a government where former ministers Shorten and Garrett could not even give us certainty for 2014! That was not the forward estimates; that was for this year. It was only because of negotiations with the federal government, with Christopher Pyne and Tony Abbott, that we received \$131 million that we put straight into our schools without taking anything off the top. That was unprecedented, because under the Labor Party we would have received nothing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can you stop the clock, please?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, there are no interjections. I will be naming members if they persist. I call the minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: More kindergarten places than ever before will be available in 2014-15. Nineteen new or extended services opening across the state will provide an extra 700 places. We are spending \$11.8 billion in 2014-15 in education. That is an increase of 7.1 per cent across the portfolio on last year. I have mentioned that we have passed on \$131 million straight to schools, not a dollar taken by central or regional offices. Under Labor we would have received nothing.

We are also spending \$535 million over the next five years under our Great Teachers = Great Results program. That is all about teacher quality, autonomy and discipline measures. Year 7 transition continues, with millions of dollars going into that, and we are preparing the biggest intake of teachers that we have had since the prep year. We have been running 20 pilot programs throughout the state about prep year. The feedback has been fantastic. Everyone is ready for that.

In relation to the Schools Planning Commission, it is interesting to hear that we have done something that has never been done before, to bring all sectors together and to bring all government agencies together to actually plan for schools. Because of the former Labor government, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will tell you how many state schools we built this year—not one. Not one state school has been opened by the government in 2014 because school planning takes some time. We will be opening 10 new schools from 2015, but, under the former government, planning was a sham. So we are working together to plan for growth.

We want to also make sure that information is available to Queenslanders whether they are in state or non-state schooling. We are absolutely committed to making sure that the landmark reforms in TAFE and training that have established TAFE as an independent statutory body under the direction of a commercially focused board are going to lead to better outcomes for students. That is what we are doing in education.

(Time expired)

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (9.17 pm): Well that was the most pathetic and misleading contribution to a debate around education in this state imaginable from a minister. Absolutely—

Government members interjected.

Ms TRAD: Deputy Speaker, I thought we were not taking interjections.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for South Brisbane, would you please take your seat for a moment? Honourable members, let this be painless—please, no interjections. I would like to hear the member for South Brisbane. I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: Again, that was the most pathetic and misleading contribution on the state of education, particularly on the contribution made by the previous Labor government. I am proud to stand in this place and talk about all of the Labor achievements in the area of education at both a federal and a state level and everything—

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms TRAD: The member for Mudgeeraba squawks from the back rows over there where you belong. You do not even belong in this House, member for Mudgeeraba, so outrageous and pathetic has been your contribution in this place.

Ms BATES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, could you please direct your comments through me.

Ms TRAD: I was taking an interjection.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. You direct your comments through me. That way we can just get through the night without too much angst.

Ms BATES: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, member for Mudgeeraba?

Ms BATES: I find the member for South Brisbane offensive and her comments and I ask her to withdraw them unequivocally.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you withdraw them?

Ms TRAD: That she belongs on the back bench? Which ones?

Ms BATES: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker—

Ms TRAD: I am just asking.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. If you cannot—

Ms BATES: All of your comments I find absolutely offensive.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, just give me a moment. She has found offensive the words that you said. Do you remember—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am going to warn you under standing order 253A. I am trying to get to the bottom of this. Are you going to withdraw?

Ms TRAD: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Just before you go on, honourable members, please, no interjections. I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Despite the minister's unedifying and embarrassing contribution to this debate, I will confine my comments to the arts section of the portfolio. While we are talking about arts and the member for Mudgeeraba, I can place on record in this House something that has been out there in the public domain and repeated ad nauseam about how offensive the arts sector found the member for Mudgeeraba when she presided over the arts sector.

Ms BATES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again, I find the member for South Brisbane absolutely offensive and her comments, and I ask that she withdraw them unequivocally.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, but you have directed those comments about her personally and she is entitled to ask for those matters to be withdrawn. Do you withdraw?

Ms TRAD: Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am confused. She said she finds me offensive or my comments offensive? Because if she is saying she finds me offensive then I take offence at her.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, please. She found your comments offensive and would like for you to withdraw those comments because they were personal to her.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, let us proceed calmly and quietly. I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: What is clear is that whatever shade the Minister for Arts under the LNP is, whatever their seat, the arts sector find the way in which the LNP government and the LNP minister of the day preside over the arts sector a complete and utter embarrassment.

Let us start with what the shadow arts minister said on 18 March 2012. The shadow minister, who was Scott Emerson, who did pip the member for Gregory to the post to be the transport minister in this government, said this on 18 March 2012—

Our commitment is not to cut funding for the arts at all. We're committed to maintaining the funding for the arts.

That belongs in the same category as 'public servants have nothing to fear from us'. That belongs in the same category as the opposition leader of the day saying, 'We won't reduce any statutory protection for vegetation management in this state.' Every single promise that this government makes it does not meet. This government is a complete and utter disgrace, and nowhere is that more prevalent than in the arts sector.

We have had \$12.4 million gutted from the arts sector. There are community arts programs that have served Queensland for a quarter of a century that have closed their doors because this government has ripped the guts out of community arts grants in this state, and for that this government should hang its head in shame.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for South Brisbane, I am not entirely sure whether 'ripped the guts' is parliamentary. What do you say about that? I would prefer you not to use those words, if you would not mind. Could you please continue?

Ms TRAD: This government has axed \$12.4 million out of the community arts grants sector and has ripped a hole in the soul of the community arts sector in Queensland. People know that and the arts sector knows that despite all of your hollow promises. The ACCELERATE program, a program sponsored by the British Council, a program where Queensland Indigenous artists of calibre go on the international stage and showcase their talent and skills, has been cancelled by this government. Queensland, a state with the second highest population of Indigenous people, a state that can proudly showcase the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair—another Labor achievement—does not contribute to the ACCELERATE program, and that is a disgrace.

In the short time that I have left, can I say that the Queensland public is eagerly awaiting this government's cultural precinct master plan. It is a plan that has caused significant concern in my community particularly because it is in South Bank. It is a plan that I believe the government has not been forthcoming about in terms of costings and detail. I look forward to the government releasing more details. The minister was not able to release details at the estimates regarding the cost and any future planning, but I do look forward to more information coming to hand, as do many members in my electorate.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (9.25 pm): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill 2014 and the Education and Innovation Committee report. Firstly, I would thank the committee staff—Bernice Watson, the research director; Melissa Salisbury, the principal research officer; Carolyn Heffernan, the executive assistant—the committee chair, Rosemary Menkens, and my fellow committee members, Michael Latter, Neil Symes, Steve Bennett, Ray Hopper and Yvette D'Ath. Most importantly, I would like to thank the ministers—the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek and the Hon. Ian Walker—for their comprehensive answers and foresight in taking their departments from strength to strength.

Over the last two years this government has undertaken a revolution in education to meet the challenges of the 21st century through the Great Teachers = Great Results, the Independent Public Schools initiative and the Great Results Guarantee. The 2014-15 budget has seen a seven per cent increase in the education budget to a total of \$11.8 billion, which further highlights this government's focus on the importance of education. In this budget the government has committed to an extra 2,250 extra prep teacher aide hours. This means an additional 20.8 hours per week for Mount Warren Park State School, 39.4 extra hours for Windaroo State School and 25.4 extra hours at the Upper Coomera State College just to name a few. This will give the early years of education an additional boost and our children the best possible start.

I have personally had parents and teachers expressing their delight at these additional hours. This is certainly most welcomed by our school communities. On top of these additional hours the government has funded an additional 761 new teachers and teacher aide positions. The Great Results Guarantee funding has also been very warmly welcomed at my local schools. Some

\$131 million went to our schools to boost student literacy and numeracy outcomes. The Albert electorate received its lion's share of \$2.1 million of this crucial funding. This funding empowers our school leaders, our principals and their teaching staff with the support of our P&C communities to allocate much needed funds which are not tied up in bureaucracy, making it possible to spend the money where it is most needed—on our children's education.

A couple of months ago at one of my local schools a parent informed me how important this funding is and how much of a real difference it is making for her son. Her son has a renewed vigour when it comes to education. He comes home and speaks about the reading he has done at school. He is even practising with his parents. He is showing his new-found skills which he is proud of it, and this should be nurtured. These types of stories are across-the-board.

This funding allows the continuation of the fantastic work undertaken by our local principals such as Colin Torr, Phillip Carlton, Martine Gill and Andrew Cummings, just to name a couple. It empowers them to make a real difference and spend the money where it is desperately needed. The maintenance backlog funding has also made a massive difference to our local schools. It has reinvigorised them. A fresh coat of paint is bringing back a whole new pride to our local schools.

I would like to say in the last few seconds I have got left that it is certainly a credit to the Minister for Science, Ian Walker, that although his target was to have 100 new online services by the end of this year he has already got 132 new services online as part of this e-government. That is an absolutely fantastic effort. Well done to the ministers. That is great work.

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (9.29 pm): I rise to provide a small contribution to this evening's debate. I begin by acknowledging my colleagues on the Education and Innovation Committee—the chair, Rosemary Menkens, member for Burdekin; the deputy chair, Ray Hopper, the member for Condamine; and the honourable members for Albert, Burnett, Lytton and Redcliffe—Mark Boothman, Steve Bennett, Neil Symes and Yvette D'Ath. I also acknowledge the other members who attended—the members for Logan, Redlands and South Brisbane—for their contribution to the estimates hearing. I thank and acknowledge the committee research officers—Ms Bernice Watson, Ms Melissa Salisbury, Mr Peter Wieland and Ms Carolyn Heffernan—and I of course thank the Hansard team. I recognise of course the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, his director-general, Dr Watterston, his assistant directors-general and deputy directors-general, the CEO of TAFE Queensland and the staff who made themselves available for the committee's inquiry. I certainly mirror the sentiment expressed this evening by my colleagues on the committee, in particular the member for Redlands who provided a very good summation of the committee's hearings. I thank him for his part in that.

There is \$7.7 million to commence refurbishment of existing childhood education and care facilities, and this is a great initiative in the budget, especially given that child-care facilities in Waterford have benefited from the government's support in this space. There is up to \$13 million over three years in the school to trade pathway and the group training organisation additional apprentice bonus initiatives, which again form a very important part of the needs of my community. There is \$64 million as part of the semester 2 instalment of the \$131 million Great Results Guarantee initiative to improve student performance in Queensland state schools. The Great Results Guarantee initiative comes as a very welcome relief on the back of the cessation of national partnership funding. There is \$6.5 million in Queensland schools as part of the \$26 million over four years to get the basics right in literacy and numeracy. I know that schools in my electorate are working very hard to improve and/or meet their achievement requirements in that space.

The member for Albert spoke about the \$100 million to meet the maintenance backlog in Queensland schools and what that is achieving across-the-board. I like the continuation of the third tranche of the four-year program to roll out the equivalent of a full-time teacher aide to an additional 150 prep classes each year in areas of greatest need. This will provide up to 9,000 extra teacher aide hours per week. Five of my schools will benefit from this outcome, including but not limited to Edens Landing, which the minister so graciously came to visit relatively recently, and Waterford State School. I commend the great work that is going on in both of those schools, just as it is in the rest of my schools.

I will move very quickly to acknowledge Minister Walker, the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. I acknowledge his director-general, deputy director-general, assistant directors-general, chief financial officer and Queensland's Chief Scientist. I again extend an

acknowledgement to the executive directors and CEOs in attendance from the Queensland Art Gallery, the Gallery of Modern Art, the Queensland Museum, the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, the Queensland Theatre Company, Screen Queensland and the State Library, and I acknowledge the work that is going on in their space as well.

Other members of the committee and those who joined the committee have highlighted some of the challenges the department faces in terms of our inability to continue to fund as much as we might like to in that space, but I take the opportunity to remind the House that we are faced with that challenge because of one reason—that is, the \$80 billion worth of debt and the \$450,000 in interest that is accruing every hour of every day. Those are the core reasons we as a government are having to face strong choices and confront what is an unpopular campaign but a campaign that is necessary for very, very real reasons. I commend the minister and his department for the work they are doing, the research they are investing in and the partnerships they are growing and building which we will ultimately benefit from.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (9.34 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to discuss the work of the parliamentary Education and Innovation Committee. From the outset, I must thank the research team and the staff of the committee as well as my parliamentary colleagues. The 2014-15 budget saw a seven per cent funding increase for education from the previous year to a total of \$11.8 billion this financial year. It is not just the funding allocations but the initiatives and policies that have seen education in Queensland improving, especially as we must assist young people by providing them with the tools to get the fundamentals right, such as literacy and numeracy.

One of the flagship announcements by the education minister, the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, in the estimates this year was the LNP government's five-year Great Teachers = Great Results action plan. In this year's budget, the minister outlined an additional 761 new teachers and teacher aide hours, and schools in the Lytton electorate, including Wondall Heights, Wynnum West and Wynnum state schools, will benefit from the fruits of this announcement. I look forward to talking to their P&Cs about it in the future.

VET training and apprenticeships is another important aspect which will help to build a four-pillar economy in this great state and provide job growth. It is welcoming to see a government and a minister so committed to the investment plan. There is over \$600 million to invest in training which will lead to productive and sustainable jobs into the future, as well as \$13 million for the school to trade pathway and the group training organisation additional apprentice bonus initiatives. This will assist to honour the Newman government's election commitment of creating 10,000 apprenticeships over a six-year period.

I will move on to the arts and innovation aspect of the committee's responsibilities and touch on the positive work the minister is doing in his portfolio. ICT was a very controversial and highly publicised aspect of the Queensland government under the former Labor regime. We all know about the bungled Health payroll debacle, which wasted over a billion dollars of taxpayers' money on a failed system which did not correctly pay public servants, especially nurses and doctors. Minister Walker outlined to the committee that the 2013-2017 ICT strategy establishes the need for information to be accessible easier, more visible and available to be re-used by the public in an efficient manner.

The LNP government's open data revolution provides residents with access to go online and see what is happening in all of the big ICT investments. One such investment is the use of cloud technology which is helping us to modernise government services and achieve milestones, such as being the first Australian government jurisdiction to go cloud first, saving taxpayers millions of dollars into the future. The success of our ICT renewal is helping us revitalise front-line services for families. Under the one-stop shop plan, we promised to deliver 100 new services online by the end of this year. We have actually greatly exceeded that target, as was outlined in the committee's estimates process, with 132 new services now available online. In this coming financial year, we will see the investment of \$8.1 million into the one-stop-shop initiative to ensure Queenslanders get simpler, clearer and faster access to information and services. Once again, the 2014 estimates process highlighted to the Queensland public that the Newman government is committed to stopping government waste, cutting red tape and delivering front-line services to improve educational outcomes for all Queensland students.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (9.39 pm): I rise to speak to the Education and Innovation Committee's report. Whilst I was not a member of that committee, I believe education in particular and also innovation and the arts are very important components of a mature and developing community. Education is rightly described as one of the cornerstones, the building stones, of any community. It is, as with other electorates, one of the most important areas of government investment.

I would like to place on the record my appreciation for the investment in Education that has been made in this last budget. I would also like to place on the record some of my constituents' concerns that have been articulated in the last few months. First of all, I would like to put on the record my appreciation for the staff, parents and students at Rosella Park School. I have raised this before in this chamber and I will raise it again: Rosella Park is our supported learning centre, what is most commonly called a special school. I really hope that the minister will give consideration to a program across Queensland of renaming our special schools, giving the students, the parents and the staff the opportunity to select a name that describes the school and can be used as a learning tool. Ours is Rosella Park. It is on the corner of Rosella Street and Park Street. It has geographical relevance. It is a wonderful thing to see that these kids who need support in their learning—and it can be quite significant support—can say with pride that they go to Rosella Park School as opposed to saying, 'I go to the special school.' There is a great deal of respect and resonance in them being able to make the statement that they do not go to the special school, they go to the Rosella Park School. Whilst it is known within the department that it has to have specialised resources, it is an opportunity for pride and growth.

I have to raise also the retained and strong belief in my community that a proposed Calliope high school needs to receive some investment. I remain of the view that the minister has been poorly advised in relation to the development in that region. I believe that, rather than looking at the next 20 years, which is the time line that the department uses regarding assessing the need for a high school, it will be needed within the next decade or even the next five years because the growth is so high. It would also address the safety issues of children having to commute on the highway.

We have a unique situation in Gladstone with the TAFE and the Central Queensland University merging to provide a coordinated educational opportunity. I know that the current government has invested quite a lot of money in that coordination. I believe and certainly hope that that investment will pay off in terms of offering students at both university and TAFE an opportunity to take either stream that suits their learning level, their skill set and the goal that they wish to achieve. They may be able to take credits from their TAFE type learning across into CQU and, vice versa, use their cross credits to further not only their educational opportunities but their work opportunities as well. It is quite a unique situation in Queensland. I certainly wish all of the participants success. I thank the education minister for being part of what is quite a visionary area.

In relation to the arts and ICT, I say that it is very easy to sit on the sidelines and say that the arts is a waste of time when, in fact, it is a very important area of growth, particularly for young people. All of us need for that cultural and creative side of ourselves to be developed and enhanced. It brings to our souls and to our lives a beauty that is possibly not available in most other areas. The Minister for the Arts has a very important role in filling that very great void in our lives: that need for a sense of beauty and creativity. I certainly wish him success in that area.

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (9.44 pm): Firstly, I lead off by thanking the committee for its recommendation to approve the budget. I thank the chairman, the members of the committee, those who supported it and my own staff in my office and those from my department. I appreciate very much the effort put into preparing for and appearing at the estimates hearings.

I might move immediately to the comments made by the member for South Brisbane which were, to put it in theatrical terms, where most of the sound and fury came from tonight and, as Shakespeare would say, sound and fury signifying nothing. It was a most ironic speech in that the concentration of the member was on the fact that this government has had to make savings in a whole range of areas, the Arts amongst them. The reason for that is very easy to see. I would love to be the Minister for the Arts in circumstances in which we have a AAA credit rating. I would love to be the Minister for the Arts in circumstances in which this government has no debt. I am not in such a

position and nor are my colleagues on this side of the House. We are not in that position because of the actions of the member for South Brisbane and those with whom she congregates on the opposition benches.

My role as a minister in an LNP government is to do what the people of Queensland would expect and that is to manage their budget sensibly, to manage it carefully, to target spending and to make sure that we get the best result for the dollars we spend. Here are a couple of examples of what we have been doing with Arts expenditure and I ask members of the House to make up their own mind as to whether that is an example of, as the member for South Brisbane would have it, 'removing the intestines from the Arts budget'.

Through our Boost to Touring Fund, we have tripled the number of touring performances in rural and regional Queensland. In the last year of the Labor Party's rule, 180 rural and regional performances were funded. In the last year of the LNP government, 617 performances were funded. That is a 250 per cent increase. With our Super Star Fund we are targeting money to where it matters. It means that the exclusive season of *Romeo and Juliet*, put on by the Queensland Ballet, gave them their best box office result in 54 years. More people went to the ballet than have gone for the last half century. The Queensland Theatre Company, with its performance of *Macbeth*, had its best box office result in 21 years. More people went to the theatre than went in the last 20 years. If that sort of careful expenditure, albeit with savings we have had to make, is irresponsible government, I do not accept it. I believe that we are performing well in this area, we are spending carefully and we are getting better results than the Labor government did when they were recklessly and carelessly spending money.

We are, of course, investing in a plan to look at the next 20 years of the cultural precinct. I have no idea what criticism the member for South Brisbane has of the process which we have undertaken. We have put out a plan for consultation. We have had lengthy consultation with people. We are considering the feedback. It is impossible to cost a plan until that plan is settled. I think the process has been a good one. It will result in a great plan for that precinct and it is absolutely appropriate that this government plans for the future of that precinct.

In the areas of film, I notice that last year the member for South Brisbane was very vocal about film in Queensland. She neglected to mention, of course, that this year we have had a tremendous year in film. *San Andreas* is presently being filmed on the Gold Coast with Dwayne Johnson and *Unbroken* was filmed earlier this year with Angelina Jolie. As I said to Angelina Jolie—

Mr Johnson: How do you know all these people?

Mr WALKER: I wanted that to get a better reaction! As I said to Angelina Jolie, Queensland is the best place to film, and that word is getting out throughout the world.

Other speakers have pointed out the one-stop shop. We are scoring great results in the IT digital area, with 132 new transactions online, beating our annual expectation of 100 new services. We have an ICT plan now; we have a dashboard showing where our ICT projects are going. We have a digital economy strategy. We have saved \$20 million simply by double-siding the printing and cutting out unused phone lines. These sensible housekeeping matters show the sort of government we are.

In all of the areas of my portfolio we have strong plans, and those strong plans are going to deliver a bright future for Queenslanders.

Report adopted.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.50 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Gladstone Electorate, Gladstone RSL

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (9.50 pm): Can I say that we have an absolutely wonderful community and today is our annual show day. The show society, which is a volunteer society that has been in operation for over 100 years, is having their show today. When I spoke with

my husband he said the weather was beautiful. We have two shows: Mount Larcom and Gladstone. Mount Larcom is an agricultural show of the old style with pavilions, lots of horses, chopping and cattle—

A government member interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Yes, all that sort of stuff. The Gladstone show is more of a city show with a sideshow alley, a few demonstrations and a few pavilion items. There is quite a bit happening in the ring and there is certainly plenty for everyone to look at, but the sideshow alley is the big attraction because all of the kids want to go there. I am really appreciative of what the show society does, and I would like to put on the record my thanks to them.

There are so many groups in my electorate that I would like to thank, but I do not have the time to go through them all. I would like to particularly thank the RSL because we have an RSL sub-branch that is actively involved at the moment with the 2014-2018 celebrations in remembrance of the First World War. I know that they have made a number of submissions to the committee to fund certain activities, some of which are excellent. One in particular which is under the auspices of the federal member Ken O'Dowd is for a train to come from I think Longreach right down to Brisbane. It will reach Brisbane on the day before Anzac Day next year, and our Gladstone community will see the train and some of the activities one afternoon. So I would like to thank the RSL, which works tirelessly every year to ensure that the Anzac Day services are done appropriately and with great dignity. We also have a committee in Mount Larcom, a group in Calliope, another group at Boyne Tannum and one in the Boyne Valley, all of which add to the solemnity and the appropriate remembrance that is Anzac Day. I know that each of those groups is excited by the activities that are planned for the next few years to remember the Great War and that the cost of peace is the price of war. We need to hold that cost dear, otherwise we will forget what freedom is all about.

Woodridge Electorate, Indigenous Military Service

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (9.53 pm): At the outset I would like to pay my respects to our first nation people, who generously share so much of their ancient culture and Dreamtime stories with us and enrich our understanding of their special relationship with this land. Much history has already been revealed about our Aboriginal and Islander men who have served our nation in various theatres of war going right back to the Boer War. They were a people not recognised as citizens in their own land who gave their heritage, as from other lands, and valiantly fought alongside our men as equals. Alas for those who returned, they went back to being unrecognised, ineligible for any of the benefits afforded our diggers, and their sacrifices were soon forgotten.

It is a wonderful opportunity during this special year when we are commencing the commemoration of the First World War—the Great War—with its horrendous loss of life to also be recognising our Aboriginal and Islander men who fought in all theatres of war as part of our Australian contingent. I wish to thank our Logan elders, including Auntie Peggy Tideman, Auntie Betty McGrady, Uncle Wayne Saunders, Uncle Noel Summers and many others, as well as our Logan library staff, for a very moving ceremony at the Logan Art Gallery. It is a regret that I do not have the program with me tonight to recognise many others who took part in that program, but I particularly wish to mention some of our local connections. The art gallery was beautifully decorated and packed with community members as a special flag ceremony began. The rich tones of the didgeridoo, the warm welcome and recognition of the traditional custodians and special guest speakers all added greatly to this delightful service.

I wish to make special mention of Uncle Noel Summers, a Butchella man from the Fraser Island-Hervey Bay area. Uncle Noel is one of a number of our elders who have completed their degree through Curtin University. As his special community project he undertook a number of projects such as the Maibin Yana Men's Group, a youth group and a huge commitment within our schools. However, it is his family's military history of which I would like to make mention tonight. Uncle Noel's father was a naval man. He and two of his brothers, Colin and Kevin, also joined the Navy, plus three nephews and a niece. In all they served our Navy over 100 years, and I think that is a tremendous effort. We also had the likes of Uncle Paddy Jerome, who served in the Army and has sadly passed away, and many other connections in our local area. They have done us proud over the years, and I want to thank them all.

Hope, Mrs C; Mudgeeraba Special School

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.56 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise tonight to inform the House about a fantastic local school in my electorate of Mudgeeraba and the great progress they are making to enhance the education of their students. I was absolutely delighted to visit Mudgeeraba Special School last Wednesday to present their outstanding principal, Mrs Colleen Hope, with a cheque for the school worth \$30,000. This funding means that the Mudgeeraba Special School will be able to further enhance the education of the special children who attend the school every day and is testament to the level of commitment that Mrs Hope and every single staff member at the school have to their students. As the local member, I have worked alongside Colleen and the school community to deliver great outcomes for the Mudgeeraba Special School since my election in 2009. I have been privileged to attend countless events, presentations and award ceremonies at the school, and I am always inspired by the caring and nurturing environment that makes Mudgeeraba Special School one of, if not the most, highly regarded special schools in Queensland.

Through my involvement I have gained insight into what makes this school the amazing learning environment that it is. It is obvious that it is Mrs Hope's leadership that makes Mudgeeraba Special School not just an educational institution, but a nurturing environment in which to learn and grow for the countless special students who are treated as unique individuals by caring staff day in and day out. Every student, parent and staff member of this school recognises Mrs Hope as a leader who leads by example, selflessly putting her students, staff and school first as a principal who is approachable, hardworking and heavily engaged with all aspects of school life.

As the parent of a disabled child, Colleen has an intimate understanding of the challenges experienced by the parents of special children, and this has allowed her to invoke a distinctly personal understanding of Mudgeeraba Special School families and their unique situations, both in and outside of the school environment. It has allowed her to assist with strategic planning for families outside of the school and provide guidance and support to families and the school community if a young person passes away. She is regarded not just by me, but all who know her, as an outstanding leader who is always willing to go to any lengths to assist students with their educational and personal goals.

This is why I am confident that this funding boost will be of such value to the school community, and I congratulate Colleen on all that she has been able to achieve for the Mudgeeraba Special School and the wider community in what is no doubt a very challenging role. I look forward to continuing my support and involvement with the Mudgeeraba Special School and to witnessing firsthand the way that this funding will be put to great use.

Underwood Park Netball Association

 **Mr GRANT** (Springwood—LNP) (9.59 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise in parliament this evening to speak about the Underwood Park Netball Association players and their achievements. At 5 am last Friday they bundled themselves into buses and headed off for a state competition in Rockhampton, and shortly I will share some of their competition results. I am pleased to inform members that \$100,000 of state funds through our Get in the Game: Get Playing grants have gone to the club for the upgrading of six netball courts. They have 111 teams set to attend the club carnival later this year.

I come back to the Rockhampton trip. This year the association was able to send seven representative teams, and five of them brought home a win in their respective divisions—a tremendous effort. I am very pleased to commend all involved.

The Netball Queensland hosted state event, now called the Sunshine Carnival, has historically been known as the country carnival that attracts the strongest regional associations and is also the only state event where the open ladies are set to compete.

The Underwood team results are as follows: open 1 came first in division 1, coached by Rachael McPherson; open 2 came first in division 2, coached by Bob Jeanes; the 19s came first in division 1, coached by Julie Duffy; the 16s came first in division 1, coached by Kasey Lewis; the 14s came first in division 1, coached by Tracey Harboune; the 13s came third in division 1, coached by Barb Lennox; the 15s came fourth in division 1, coached by Fiona Paech; and the opens 2 and 19s were also undefeated in their division.

All coaches volunteer their time from October until July to train the players. Without these dedicated coaches, the players would not achieve these sorts of results. I would like to thank sincerely Pauline Gregory, the association president, for consistent efforts over many, many years. She says—

Without the support of government funding the costs to players for travel to Rockhampton make competing prohibitive.

The association extends its sincere appreciation and thanks for this support.

Regards

Pauline

Crime Statistics

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (10.01 pm): Today we witnessed disgraceful behaviour from some senior members of the LNP cabinet, including the Premier and the police minister. We have seen a desperate Premier and a second-choice police minister rely on cherry-picked statistics to mislead Queensland. The Newman government is counting on its own cherry-picked categories of crime so that the police minister and the Premier can spin Queenslanders.

This is part of the LNP's 'crime week' media strategy. The Premier and the police minister know that crime is down much less than they claim, and I look forward to them correcting the record. Queenslanders would have been horrified to see other statistics on the news tonight that the Premier and the police minister deliberately avoided: sex offences up three per cent; rape up eight per cent; identity theft up 27 per cent; extortion up 109 per cent; and homicide on the Gold Coast up 150 per cent. The Premier says that these numbers are about crimes that matter. Perhaps the Premier can explain why he thinks sex offences, rape and murder do not matter to Queenslanders. Why were domestic violence offences excluded? Why were drug offences excluded? Of course statistics look good when you omit large proportions of serious crime that affect everyday Queenslanders in communities right across the state.

The Newman government is not tough on crime; it is loose with the truth. A way to put an end to this rot is a full and fair publication of accurate and detailed independently assessed crime statistics. Independently assessed crime statistics work in New South Wales and they will work in Queensland. Independent assessments mean that the debate about crime will be based on fact, not on government spin.

Other disturbing matters from today were the way in which these statistics were presented in the House and the inadequate explanation from the police minister about where these were received from. The police minister refuses to explain how he came to hold police statistics that were clearly developed for party-political purposes. It is not usual practice for police to collect and publish statistics based on electorates for the political needs of the government of the day. That is not the way the Police Service operates, and Queenslanders are right to ask what is going on.

Given that the police minister refuses to explain where or who the politically motivated statistics came from, I can only wonder. Perhaps the government compiled the statistics themselves, which raises questions about the accuracy of the cherry-picked numbers. Which is it, Minister? Were they prepared by the police on your instructions or were they prepared by your staff? Which is it, Minister? Which is it, Premier?

Eat Local Week; Fassifern Equestrian Vaulting Team; Athletic Prosthetic Limbs

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (10.04 pm): I rise to draw the attention of the House to the continuing drought which is occurring in the state of Queensland. With about 79 per cent of the state still suffering under oppressive drought conditions and my region of Beaudesert and the Scenic rim suffering extraordinarily dry conditions, it is important that we all remember the contribution made to this state by regional Queensland and by primary industries in particular. We have had some terrible frosts in the Scenic rim this year and very little rain since about November last year, with a few inches in March really just staving off the conditions for some time. It is pretty tough out there for our growers and our cattle producers, and we need to remember that as we go into the first half of this financial year.

With that in mind, it was great to see the Scenic Rim Regional Council put on Eat Local Week, which showcased all of the fantastic produce that is produced in the Scenic Rim. It was a really fantastic week. We got some great coverage here in Brisbane city. People came from all parts of South-East Queensland to see the wonderful things that are grown in the Scenic Rim. Tourism and

Events Queensland contributed \$10,000 to that event. I am sure that contributed to the large number of people coming from Brisbane and beyond to visit the Fassifern, Beaudesert and Tamborine Mountain to see what we have on offer. It is a very special part of South-East Queensland, and I am proud to represent it. It is the heart and soul of South-East Queensland. We produce some really fresh, lovely produce.

Last Sunday I farewelled and had a preview of the performance to be put on by the Fassifern equestrian vaulting team. This week they are heading off to the World Equestrian Games representing Australia. We have a team from the Fassifern representing Australia at the World Equestrian Games. We should all be very proud of them. They are Queenslanders—they are from Boonah—and I as their local member am very proud of them. I am sure they will do Australia proud in Normandy. I am sure they will.

In the last budget a fantastic program was announced—\$7.7 million over four years to provide athletic prosthetic limbs for children. That was as a result of representations I made on behalf of a little boy in Jimboomba named Kyle Haslam, who unfortunately lost his lower legs due to an infection when he was a little boy. As a result of this government's program he will be able to receive athletic prosthetic limbs and will be able to continue to be involved in little athletics, which he has been for the last few years. It is not just Kyle; there are 130 other children around the state who will benefit from that fantastic program. I am very proud to be part of a government providing programs like that.

There are a lot of great things going on in my electorate as a result of this government's action. Beaudesert Hospital is just the perfect example of that. Procedures and maternity services are continuing there—

(Time expired)

Monarch Nominees Poultry Farm

Mr Stevens interjected.

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (10.07 pm): Cannot die, as the saying goes, member for Mermaid Beach! The issue I want to draw to the attention of the House concerns the operation of a poultry farm within my electorate. Monarch Nominees operates a significant poultry farm operation at 299 Ford Road, Burbank. It is a large operation—some quarter of a million birds are housed there—and it operates under approvals under the Environmental Protection Act and the town plan.

I have had significant numbers of complaints from residents within my electorate living in the Rochedale and Burbank areas, both close to the poultry farm and far removed from it, concerning in particular odour, noise and dust which is emitted from that operation. It is obviously necessary and important for us to have poultry farms, and this poultry farm has been there for some time, but the incidence of complaints has grown significantly and I believe that the poultry farm is not paying appropriate attention to the way in which it is operating, and it is causing significant distress amongst my constituents.

There are two particular issues that I want to draw to the attention of the House and the operators because, as representatives of those in my community, both I and, I am sure, the deputy mayor, Councillor Schrinner, who is the representative at local government level, will be watching this operation to make sure it complies with its operating requirements in all areas.

The first area—and it does relate to the Brisbane City Council but it obviously is of interest—is the conditions under the town plan that apply to the operation. I am aware that, in relation to conditions granted to this operation, there are certain conditions which must be fulfilled at certain times by this operation to bring it into compliance with the town planning condition and to ensure that the impact of noise, odour and dust is kept to a minimum for my constituents. As I said before, I am sure that both the deputy mayor and I will be taking a keen interest in compliance with those town planning provisions and will be ensuring that all steps are taken such that the operator cannot wriggle out of complying with those conditions by seeking to alter or amend them in any way. The other area is the area under which the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries polices the environmental approvals for the operation. I am aware that DAFF has issued an environmental protection order under the Environmental Protection Act requiring compliance in certain ways by this operation. Once again, I put the operation on notice that I as the local member will be watching on behalf of my constituents to ensure absolute compliance with the requirements of DAFF in the operation of this poultry farm.

Marsden State High School

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (10.10 pm): Madam Speaker will know that I am a great fan and a great supporter of the work that goes on in the schools across my electorate of Waterford. Indeed, from time to time I take the opportunity to get up and talk about some of those things in specific schools. Tonight I want to talk about one school in particular, and that is Marsden State High School. Very recently I had the distinct pleasure of being at the school for yet another one of the junior campus awards days, if you will. On previous occasions where I have gone to some lengths to have some discussions with the students about the importance of pride, pride in one's self, pride in one's work and pride for those around them, I had the distinct pleasure on this most recent occasion of seeing these kids having grown and developed from the last occasion. Seeing those youths come back again to receive awards and accolades for their achievements throughout the year is wonderful, but seeing the continued growth in the number of students who are performing and being recognised for it and seeing ever-increasing attendance rates in a school like Marsden where so much work goes on to make sure that these students have the best possible opportunity to get the best possible outcome for their education and for their future was a wonderful event. Whilst on this occasion I might use this speech to express my apologies to the senior component of the school who I did not get to see on that morning, I understand it was in fact a great morning nonetheless.

Parent participation is something that I look for in my schools. I think it is a mark of the school's success in engaging with their students and with the community in general, and to see such a strong contingent of parents at that school was both gratifying for me and the work that the government has been doing but more importantly a true mark of the work that has been going on in that space. Previously I have spoken about the successes of schools like Loganlea High and schools like Beenleigh High and the work that they are doing and, of course, a number of primary schools in my electorate—the member for Woodridge will know the great work that goes on at Mabel Park primary given our recent attendance at some of its awards as well—but tonight is my night to talk about and reflect upon the great work that is going on at Marsden State High School. For that I again express my gratitude to the school and my congratulations to the students for the work that they have been doing so far and may they continue that to the end of the year.

Public Transport, Tertiary Transport Concession Card

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (10.13 pm): With regard to question time this afternoon and the transport and main roads minister's answer to my question without notice on the new Tertiary Transport Concession Card, that is, the TTC card—and whilst I agree with him that we do not want people rorting the transport system—there appears to be some major inconsistencies when it comes to granting these cards to students and the utilisation of them. Let me outline the case of a young ballet student from my electorate who last night was getting off the train at Nerang—it is pretty dark with young people and young women getting off trains at night—and about to board a bus when she was slapped with a warning from a transport inspector for not having her TTC card with her. She was told very forcefully that she could be hit with a fine of \$250 and have her name on the offenders record for the next three years for failure to carry the card. She did, however, have her student go card with her. This student, who studies ballet at the Queensland National Ballet School, travels to Brisbane each day to study and has in the past used the student go card.

On 24 June her school, a registered training organisation with the department of education and training—DETE—sent off a bundle of applications from its students for the TTC card. This young ballet student is still waiting for her application to be processed and this is six weeks later. Surprisingly, some applications from the ballet school were approved, others were rejected and my constituent's application is still in the pipeline. Members can imagine how upset she was last night when she received this warning and a heavy-handed approach from the transport inspector. She burst into tears and was not prepared to go to school today, fearful she would receive a fine if she travelled on public transport. This girl has no job; she is on a healthcare card. The school is a registered training organisation where students attend from 9 am to 3.30 pm Monday to Friday and occasionally have eisteddfods—

Mr Dillaway interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You just keep quiet there. You put these people ahead of you—

Mr Dillaway: No, no, no. You're misleading the House.

Dr DOUGLAS: You are—

Mr Dillaway: You're misleading the House.

Dr DOUGLAS: You are an absolute pain. The ballet school had complied with Queensland Transport and was issued—

Mr Dillaway interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: I am going to make a complaint to Madam Speaker over you.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr DOUGLAS: It was issued with a TTCC registration number on the same day as it sent off the bundle of applications. A go card fare from the Nerang station to Bowen Hills is \$11.79. A concessional fare is \$5.90. The issue for this student is that without a job she has to find \$150 per week for full fares for a go card or \$175 for paper tickets. A concession card allows her to travel for \$60 a week which, for a full-time student, is a lot of money. It is peculiar that some applications have not been accepted. There has been no response from TransLink to the school's inquiry today. I ask the minister—

(Time expired)

Get in the Game, Toowoomba Bowls Club

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (10.16 pm): I want to talk about the great funding that is available in my electorate through the Get in the Game funding that the sports minister has available. A seminar was recently held by the department to help people understand the funding and how it works and how they might apply. I was really pleased to find out that the Toowoomba Bowls Club is interested in looking at the funding and seeing if it can get an application together so it can encourage young people to join the bowls club. Toowoomba is very fortunate in that it has some great bowls clubs—West Toowoomba Bowls Club, Toowoomba City Bowls Club, which has a former member of this House on its committee, and North Toowoomba Bowls Club. I visited the Toowoomba Bowls Club and its great committee welcomed me: Janet Hark, the president; Deidre Ansell, the secretary; Margaret Pascoe; Margaret Podmore; and Ruth Edie. They were all there on the day that I visited and they let me have a go at bowls. It turns out that the greens might be just a little fast for me and I am actually not very good at bowls, but they advised me that with a bit of practice and a bit of training they could improve my game. The men's committee consisting of Dick Fowler and Terry Woods were also available on the day and were very interested in understanding how the grant works. We spoke about the potential of putting a package together so that we could encourage some of the schools on a Wednesday afternoon to get involved by bringing students down to learn and understand how to play the game. That is an opportunity for people to keep fit and get involved.

The club itself at the moment is doing it a little bit tougher than it would like. It has an ageing population. The club's green was first built at the turn of the century in 1900 and the second green was constructed in 1957. It has had many members over the years and it has provided great recreation for the people of Toowoomba, but at the moment it would like to see some youths get involved. In terms of the Get in the Game funding available and with some great schools like Toowoomba East just around the corner and other schools in the area, it is really encouraged to look at the funding, work out how it might be able to put some programs on that will suit some of the young people living in my electorate and introduce them to a sport that they may not have otherwise considered. It is interesting to note that at the Commonwealth Games 12 out of the 15 people on the bowls team were under 40 and a third of the team were under 30. When people think of bowls they think that maybe it is not a young person's game, whereas in reality some of the best competitors in Australia are actually quite young. I look forward to working with the Toowoomba Bowls Club to encourage young people to come and have a look at the game and get in the game with help from the funding of the minister.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.19 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, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Lynham, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young