



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Hansard Home Page: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/hansard>
 Email: hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au
 Phone (07) 3553 6344 Fax (07) 3553 6369

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 13 October 2015

Subject	Page
PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS	2041
ASSENT TO BILLS	2041
<i>Tabled paper.</i> Letter, dated 18 September 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 18 September 2015.....	2041
<i>Tabled paper.</i> Letter, dated 24 September 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 24 September 2015.....	2042
REPORT.....	2042
Auditor-General.....	2042
<i>Tabled paper.</i> Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament 2: 2015-16—Road Safety—traffic cameras.....	2042
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2042
Protocols for Execution of Search Warrants.....	2042
<i>Tabled paper.</i> Protocols for the execution of search warrants by the Queensland Police Service on the premises of a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.....	2042
<i>Tabled paper.</i> Protocols for the execution of search warrants by the Crime and Corruption Commission on the premises of a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.....	2042
PRIVILEGE	2042
Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member.....	2042
PETITIONS.....	2043
TABLED PAPERS.....	2044
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	2050
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry, Report	2050
Gold Coast Light Rail.....	2051
National Rugby League Grand Final	2052
Gold Coast Light Rail.....	2052
Resources Sector, Jobs	2053

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 13 October 2015

Queensland Economy	2053
Medicare, Review	2054
Early Childhood Education and Care Services	2054
Townsville Stadium	2055
Domestic and Family Violence	2055
Natural Disasters, Preparedness	2056
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2056
Visitors to Public Gallery	2056
PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE	2056
Crime and Corruption Commission, Report	2056
<i>Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Commission: 2014-15 Annual Report to the Parliamentary</i>	
<i>Crime and Corruption Committee on surveillance devices pursuant to section 358 of the Police</i>	
Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.	2056
NOTICE OF MOTION	2057
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders	2057
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	2057
Member for Cook	2057
Pool Safety	2057
North Stradbroke Island, Sandmining	2058
Gold Coast Light Rail	2058
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance	2059
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	2060
Palaszczuk Labor Government	2060
Member for Cook	2060
Infrastructure Projects	2061
Member for Cook	2061
Queensland Literary Awards	2062
Member for Cook	2063
South-East Queensland, Rail Network	2063
Member for Cook	2063
Innovation	2064
Member for Cook	2065
Community Grants Scheme	2065
Ports North	2066
DestinationQ	2067
Fire and Emergency Services, Levy	2068
<i>Tabled paper: Extract of Moreton Bay Regional Council Coordination Committee meeting</i>	
<i>agenda, dated 18 August 2015.</i>	2068
Water Resources	2068
Roma Community Legal Service	2069
Training and Skills, Tourism Industry	2069
Road Infrastructure, Funding	2070
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services	2071
MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST	2071
Member for Cook	2071
Innovation	2073
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry	2074
<i>Tabled paper: Articles and correspondence, various dates, relating to the Grantham Floods</i>	
<i>Commission of Inquiry.</i>	2074
National Rugby League Grand Final	2075
Rural Firefighters	2076
Mental Health	2077
Maroochydore Electorate, Alcohol Fuelled Violence	2077
Safe Work Month	2078
North-West Queensland, Employment	2079
Bulimba Electorate, Business Confidence	2080
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL	2081
Introduction	2081
<i>Tabled paper: Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015.</i>	2081
<i>Tabled paper: Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.</i>	2081
First Reading	2083
Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee	2083
RETAIL SHOP LEASES AMENDMENT BILL	2083
Introduction	2083
<i>Tabled paper: Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015.</i>	2083
<i>Tabled paper: Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.</i>	2083
First Reading	2084
Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	2084
HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2084
Second Reading	2084
<i>Tabled paper: Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 6, 55th Parliament—Holidays</i>	
<i>and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response.</i>	2085
<i>Tabled paper: Document titled 'Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland'.</i> ...	2088

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 13 October 2015

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2089
Error in Notice of Motion	2089
HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2089
Second Reading	2089
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letters, dated September 2015, from Vicky Hamilton, Kathleen Miller and Sallee Collins, to the Chief Executive Officer, BHP Billiton, Mr Andrew Mackenzie.....	2095
Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.....	2106
Resolved in the affirmative.....	2106
Consideration in Detail	2107
Clause 1, as read, agreed to.....	2107
Clause 2—	2107
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes to Hon. Pitt's amendments.....	2107
Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.....	2107
Clauses 3 to 11, as read, agreed to.....	2107
Clause 12—.....	2107
Resolved in the affirmative.....	2107
Clause 12, as read, agreed to.....	2107
Clauses 13 to 50, as read, agreed to.....	2107
Third Reading	2107
Long Title.....	2108
AGRICULTURE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....	2108
Second Reading	2108
Consideration in Detail	2120
Clauses 1 to 75, as read, agreed to.....	2120
Clause 76, as read, agreed to.....	2121
Clauses 77 to 94, as read, agreed to.....	2121
Clause 95, as read, agreed to.....	2121
Clauses 96 to 99, as read, agreed to.....	2121
Schedule, as read, agreed to.....	2121
Third Reading	2121
Long Title.....	2121
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2121
Second Reading	2121
MOTION	2123
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders	2123
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.....	2129
Resolved in the negative.....	2129
COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.....	2129
Portfolio Committees, Referral of Auditor-General's Report and Reporting Dates	2129
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2129
Second Reading	2129
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response.....	2130
ADJOURNMENT.....	2149
Gaven Electorate, Community Safety	2149
Meals on Wheels	2150
Southport Electorate.....	2151
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Sensational Southport—CBD Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia'.....	2151
Holland Park State School, P&C	2151
Broadwater Electorate	2152
Vietnam Veterans' Day.....	2153
North Queensland Cowboys	2153
Nudgee Electorate, Schools	2154
Domestic and Family Violence	2154
Capricorn Coast Running Festival	2155
ATTENDANCE.....	2156

TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2015

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.



Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

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

PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that on Friday, 18 September 2015 I presented to His Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill for royal assent and that His Excellency was pleased, in my presence, to subscribe his assent thereto in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

ASSENT TO BILLS



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from His Excellency the Governor letters in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letters will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letters for the information of members.

The Honourable P.W. Wellington MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 18 September 2015

“A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2015 and 1 July 2016”

“A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2015 and 1 July 2016”

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

18 September 2015

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 September 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 18 September 2015 [[1309](#)].

The Honourable P.W. Wellington MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 24 September 2015

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Industrial Relations Act 1999, the Industrial Relations (Tribunals) Rules 2011, the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990, the Workers’ Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 for particular purposes”

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

Yours sincerely


Governor

24 September 2015

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 24 September 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 24 September 2015 [\[1310\]](#).

REPORT


Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General a report titled *Report 2: 2015-16 Road safety—traffic cameras*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament 2: 2015-16—Road Safety—traffic cameras [\[1311\]](#).

SPEAKER’S STATEMENT

Protocols for Execution of Search Warrants


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the former members’ ethics and parliamentary privileges committee in its report No. 60 recommended the development of protocols in relation to the execution of search warrants on the offices of members of the Assembly. In 2014 former Speaker Simpson signed a memorandum of understanding with the Queensland Police Service which, amongst other things, committed to working together to settle such a protocol document. I am pleased to advise that protocol documents have now been settled with both the Queensland Police Service and the Crime and Corruption Commission in relation to this matter. I now table a copy of these protocol documents for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Protocols for the execution of search warrants by the Queensland Police Service on the premises of a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly [\[1312\]](#).

Tabled paper: Protocols for the execution of search warrants by the Crime and Corruption Commission on the premises of a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly [\[1313\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Speaker’s Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 27 August 2015 the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games wrote to me alleging that the member for Currumbin deliberately misled parliament in a travel report tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 8 September 2014. I have circulated a ruling on this matter. I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I seek leave to incorporate the ruling.

Leave granted.

On 27 August 2015, the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games wrote to me alleging that the Member for Currumbin deliberately misled Parliament in her ‘Overseas Travel Report—Report on an overseas visit by the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (Ms Stuckey) to Glasgow and London 29 July to 10 August 2014’ tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 8 September 2014.

In her letter to me, Minister Jones alleged that the report includes Mr James Martin as one of the Official Delegation Members, who is described as “Chief of Staff, Office of the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games”, when Mr Martin had ceased to be the Chief of Staff to the former Minister prior to the travel taking place and at the time of the tabling of the report.

I sought further information from the Member for Currumbin about the allegations made against her, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

The Member for Currumbin disputed the allegation made against her, and stated that Mr Martin was employed as her Chief of Staff at the time that arrangements and accreditations were being made for the overseas trip, and that given his work on preparing for the trip and his knowledge of the Commonwealth Games component of the portfolio, it was appropriate that Mr Martin should accompany her as the acting Chief of Staff.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

In considering whether the matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. No matter should be referred to the ethics committee if the matter is technical or trivial and does not warrant the further attention of the House.

Taking all the material before me into account, I am satisfied with the Member for Currumbin's explanation that Mr Martin had acted in the position as Chief of Staff to the then Minister for the purposes of the trip.

While it may have been more accurate to indicate that Mr Martin was the Acting Chief of Staff, it is submitted that any possible misleading of the House would only be technical in nature and, therefore, this matter does not warrant further attention by the House.

On this basis, I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee.

I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper. Correspondence, various dates, relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the member for Currumbin [1314].

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Urraween Road and Maryborough-Hervey Bay Road, Intersection Upgrade

Mr Sorensen, from 2,929 petitioners requesting the House to upgrade the intersection of Urraween Road and Maryborough Hervey Bay Road to an acceptable safety standard [1315].

North Stradbroke Island, Mining

Dr Robinson, from 516 petitioners, requesting to engage and consult with the local North Stradbroke Island communities and to commit to adhering to a 2035 end date for mining and to ensure a proper economic transition is planned [1316].

Currumbin Creek Road, Speed Limits

Mrs Stuckey, from 868 petitioners, requesting the House to either reduce the speed limit to 60 kph and put up adequate signage or put in wide speed bumps to deter the excessive speed on Currumbin Creek Road between Pigabeen Road and Connection Road [1317].

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3)—

Vaccinations

126 petitioners, requesting the House to continue to give every child the opportunity for childcare, kindergarten, school or other education or care regardless of vaccination status [1318].

Gas Industry, Rebates

361 petitioners, requesting the House to increase the Queensland government rebate for gas to match the current rebate for electricity [1319].

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

Dakabin Railway Station

Mr King, from 2,587 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently upgrade the Dakabin Train Station increasing and updating the car park and provide appropriate disability access [1320, 1321].

Cutbush Road, Traffic Arrangements

Mr Mander, from 1,442 petitioners, requesting the House to request the reinstatement of the ability to turn right in and out of Cutbush Road from Stafford Road, Everton Park [1322, 1323].

Hervey Range Road, Widening; Granitevale Road, Intersection Upgrade

Mr Harper, from 1,593 petitioners, requesting the House to resurface and widen Hervey Range Road to allow the safe passage of traffic, including the addition of bike lanes; and upgrade the Granitevale Road intersection to allow safe turning and passing [1324, 1325].

'Place of Worship' and 'Religion', Redefinition

Mr Dickson, from 10,342 petitioners, requesting the House to make legislative changes to the definition of 'place of worship' and 'religion' to exclude any group or members of a group which advocate violence or seek to promote and impose any form or part of sharia law, and who reject Australian law and the Constitution [1326, 1327].

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

Sustainable Ports Development Bill

Mr Pyne, from 1,620 petitioners, requesting the House to not amend the Sustainable Ports Development Bill 2015 to include the port of Cairns or Mourilyan as priority ports [\[1328\]](#).

Peachester State School, School Zone Flashing Lights

Mr Powell, from 78 petitioners, requesting the House to prioritise the installation of school flashing lights at Peachester State School [\[1329\]](#).

Binstead Way, Traffic Arrangements

Mr Cramp, from 364 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a dedicated left turn lane from Binstead Way on to the M1 [\[1330\]](#).

Mount Coolum National Park, Facilities

Ms Simpson, from 504 petitioners, requesting the House to provide public toilet facilities and better parking solutions for visitors to Mt Coolum National Park [\[1331\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4)—

Safe Schools Coalition

10,891 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately cease the Commonwealth government funded Safe Schools Coalition program [\[1332\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

18 September 2015—

[1134](#) Legal Practitioners Admissions Board—Annual Report 2014-15

[1135](#) The Public Trustee of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1136](#) Legal Aid Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1137](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Annual Report 2014-15

[1138](#) Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1139](#) Prostitution Licensing Authority- Annual Report 2014-15

[1140](#) Crime and Corruption Commission—Annual Report 2014-15

[1141](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 8, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 6 May 2015 and 3 June 2015

[1142](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 2, 55th Parliament—Inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors—Erratum

21 September 2015—

[1143](#) Public Trustee Act 1978—Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2015

[1144](#) Public Trustee Act 1978—Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2015, Explanatory Notes

22 September 2015—

[1145](#) Department of State Development—Annual Report 2014-15

[1146](#) GasFields Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1147](#) Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee: Report No. 4, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 6 May 2015 and 2 June 2015

[1148](#) Screen Queensland—Financial Statements 2014-15

[1149](#) Letter, dated 21 September 2015, from Linda Apelt, Chair, Screen Queensland, to the Premier regarding the Screen Queensland Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015

23 September 2015—

[1150](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Hon Bailey) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004

24 September 2015—

[1151](#) Queensland Law Society—Annual Report 2014-15

25 September 2015—

[1152](#) Board of the Queensland Museum—Annual Report 2014-15

[1153](#) Queensland Performing Arts Centre—Annual Report 2014-15

[1154](#) Queensland Art Gallery—Annual Report 2014-15

28 September 2015—

[1155](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Annual Report 2014-15: Erratum

[1156](#) Surveyors Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1157](#) Valuers Registration Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

29 September 2015—

[1158](#) Queensland Parliamentary Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1159](#) Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015: erratum to explanatory notes

[1160](#) QRAA—Annual Report 2014-15

[1161](#) Safe Food Production Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1162](#) Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board—Annual Report 2014-15

[1163](#) Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges—Annual Report 2014-15

[1164](#) Department of Agriculture and Fisheries—Annual Report 2014-15

30 September 2015—

[1165](#) North West Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1166](#) South West Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1167](#) Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1168](#) Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1169](#) Townsville Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1170](#) West Moreton Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1171](#) Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1172](#) Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1173](#) Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1174](#) Central West Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1175](#) Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1176](#) Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1177](#) Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1178](#) Mackay Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1179](#) Metro North Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1180](#) Metro South Hospital and Health Service—Annual Report 2014-15

[1181](#) Office of the Governor—Annual Report 2014-15

[1182](#) Office of the Information Commissioner—Annual Report 2014-15

[1183](#) Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services—Annual Report 2014-15

[1184](#) Department of Natural Resources and Mines—Annual Report 2014-15

[1185](#) Bundaberg Health Services Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1186](#) Children's Health Foundation Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1187](#) Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1188](#) Gold Coast Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1189](#) HIV Foundation Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15

[1190](#) Ipswich Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1191](#) Mackay Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1192](#) PA Research Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1193](#) Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1194](#) Sunshine Coast Health Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1195](#) The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1196](#) Toowoomba Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1197](#) Townsville Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2014-15

[1198](#) Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games—Annual Report 2014-15

[1199](#) Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation—Annual Report 2014-15

- [1200](#) Tourism and Events Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1201](#) Stadiums Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1202](#) Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1203](#) Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing—Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1204](#) Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1205](#) Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1206](#) The Board of Trustees of Newstead House—Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1207](#) Annual Report of General Travel Allocation Expenditure by Members of the Legislative Assembly—1 July 2014-30 June 2015
- [1208](#) Annual Report of Information and Communication Allowance Expenditure by Members of the Legislative Assembly—1 July 2014-30 June 2015
- [1209](#) Annual Report of Electorate Allowance Expenditure by Members of the Legislative Assembly—1 July 2014-30 June 2015
- [1210](#) Annual report of Air Warrant and Alternate Travel by Members of the Legislative Assembly—1 July 2014-30 June 2015
- [1211](#) Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1212](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1213](#) South Bank Corporation—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1214](#) Trade and Investment Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1215](#) Queensland Rail—Annual and Financial Report 2014-15
- [1216](#) Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1217](#) Queensland Family and Child Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1218](#) Public Service Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1219](#) Department of Premier and Cabinet—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1220](#) Queensland Audit Office—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1221](#) Queensland Treasury—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1222](#) Motor Accident Insurance Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1223](#) Queensland Treasury Corporation—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1224](#) Queensland Competition Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1225](#) Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1226](#) WorkCover Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1227](#) Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual report 2014-15
- [1228](#) QIC—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1229](#) QIC—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1230](#) QIC Limited—Consolidated annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2015
- [1231](#) QIC Private Capital Pty Ltd—Annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2015
- [1232](#) QIC Properties Pty Ltd—Annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2015
- [1233](#) Office of the Health Ombudsman—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1234](#) Queensland Institute of Medical Research—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1235](#) Queensland Mental Health Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1236](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1237](#) Public Safety Business Agency—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1238](#) Queensland Fire and Emergency Services—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1239](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1240](#) Non-State Schools Accreditation Board—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1241](#) Department of Education and Training—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1242](#) TAFE Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1243](#) Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1244](#) Library Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1245](#) Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1246](#) Department of Health—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1247](#) Gold Coast Waterways Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1248](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1249](#) Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1250](#) Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15

- [1251](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1252](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1253](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1254](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1255](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Employment and Industrial Relations Plan 2014-15
- [1256](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1257](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1258](#) Department of Housing and Public Works—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1259](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1260](#) Residential Tenancies Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1261](#) Board of Architects of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1262](#) Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1263](#) Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1264](#) Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1265](#) Anzac Day Trust—Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1266](#) Queensland Urban Utilities—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1267](#) Department of Energy and Water Supply—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1268](#) Gladstone Area Water Board—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1269](#) Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1270](#) Unitywater—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1271](#) Seqwater: Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1272](#) Mount Isa Water Board—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1273](#) Energex—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1274](#) Energex—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1275](#) Ergon Energy—Annual Stakeholder Report 2014-15
- [1276](#) Ergon Energy—Annual Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1277](#) Ergon Energy—Subsidiary Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1278](#) Ergon Energy—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1279](#) SPARQ Solutions Pty Ltd—Annual Financial Statements 2014-15
- [1280](#) Sunwater—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1281](#) Sunwater—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1282](#) Powerlink Queensland—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1283](#) Powerlink Queensland—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1284](#) CS Energy—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1285](#) CS Energy—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1286](#) Stanwell Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1287](#) Stanwell Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2014-15
- [1288](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (Hon Jones) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) regulation 2001, Grammar Schools Regulation 2004, Queensland University of Technology Statute No. 3 (Fees) 2003, University of the Sunshine Coast Statute No. 1 (Making and Notifying University Rules) 2004, and University of the Sunshine Coast Statute No. 2 (Review of Payment Demand for the Removal and Detention of Vehicles) 2004
- 1 October 2015—
- [1289](#) National Environment Protection Council—Annual Report 2013-14
- [1290](#) Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 7, 55th Parliament—Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
- [1291](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing (Hon Byrne) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Agricultural Standards Regulation 1997, Apiaries Regulation 1998, Diseases in Timber Regulation 1997, Exotic Diseases in Animals Regulation 1998, Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Regulation 2003, Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) Declaration 2003, Plant Protection Regulation 2002, Stock Regulation 1988, Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Regulation 1998, Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Regulation 1999 and Veterinary Surgeons Regulation 2002
- 2 October 2015—
- [1292](#) Response from the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing (Hon Byrne) to an petition (2420-15) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 277 petitioners, requesting the House to block legislation that introduces resource allocation through the establishment of net-free fishing zones in Queensland

[1293](#) Response from the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing (Hon Byrne) to a paper petition (2445-15) presented by Mrs Frecklington, from 20,162 petitioners, requesting the House to block legislation that introduces resource allocation through the establishment of net-free fishing zones in Queensland

[1294](#) Health and Ambulance Services Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

[1295](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 4, 55th Parliament—Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015

6 October 2015—

[1296](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade (Ms Trad) to a paper petition (2447-15) presented by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 12 petitioners, requesting the House to take note and confirm to the petitioners that your Environment and Local Government Ministers are aware of DEHP Qld reply dated 6/11/2013, EPBC Referral 2013/7038 and FCRC MCU-141070 and to take note of the non-conforming petition tabled 16/10/2013 containing 367 signatures and approximately 81% of the Turtle Cove residents against this development proceeding

[1297](#) Professional Standards Councils—Annual Report 2014-15

[1298](#) Professional Standards Councils—Financial Statements 2014-15

[1299](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Annual Report 2014-15

[1300](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills (Hon D'Ath) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999, Casino Control Regulation 1999, Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Regulation 1999, Fair Trading (Code of Practice-Fitness Industry) Regulation 2003, Gaming Machine Regulation 2002, Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Regulation 1998, Introduction Agents Regulation 2002, Liquor (Approval of Adult Entertainment Code) Regulation 2002, Liquor Regulation 2002, Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Regulation 2004, Tourism Services (Code of Conduct for Inbound Tour Operators) Regulation 2003, Tourism Services Regulation 2003, Trust Accounts Regulation 1999, Wagering Regulation 1999 and Youth Justice Regulation 2003

8 October 2015—

[1301](#) Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 8, 55th Parliament, Fisheries and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015

9 October 2015—

[1302](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 9, 55th Parliament—Inquiry into fly-in, fly-out and other long distance commuting work practices in regional Queensland

[1303](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Coroners (Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board) Amendment Bill 2015

[1304](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 6, 55th Parliament—Criminal Law (Domestic Violence) Amendment Bill 2015

12 October 2015—

[1305](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (Ms Jones) to an ePetition (2367-15) sponsored by Mr Watts, and a paper petition (2453-15) presented by Mr Watts, from 501 and 313 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to fund the construction of an Arts and Sports Hall at Toowoomba State High School, Wilsonton Campus

[1306](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response

[1307](#) Response from the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Dr Lynham) to a paper petition (2458-15) presented by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 134 petitioners, requesting the House to review the process by which amendments are made to Key Resource Areas and Transport Corridors and to rescind the revised KRA83 back to the proposed version dated February 2013

[1308](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on overseas visit by the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Mr Pitt) to Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, London and New York for the Queensland Treasury Corporation Annual Investor Roadshow, 30 August—10 September 2015

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Sustainable Planning Act 2009, Youth Justice Act 1992—

[1333](#) Youth Justice and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 127

[1334](#) Youth Justice and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 127, explanatory notes

Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

[1335](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 128

[1336](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 128, explanatory notes

Environmental Protection Act 1994—

[1337](#) Environmental Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 129

[1338](#) Environmental Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 129, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1339](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015, No. 130

[1340](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015, No. 130, explanatory notes

Cooperatives Act 1997, Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009, Health Ombudsman Act 2013, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

[1341](#) Health Ombudsman and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 131

[1342](#) Health Ombudsman and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 131, explanatory notes

Education and Care Services Act 2013, Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Education (Overseas Students) Act 1996, Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005, Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Act 2014—

[1343](#) Education Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 132

[1344](#) Education Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 132, explanatory notes

Further Education and Training Act 2014—

[1345](#) Further Education and Training Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 133

[1346](#) Further Education and Training Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 133, explanatory notes

Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2015—

[1347](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions,

[1348](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 134, explanatory notes

Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003—

[1349](#) Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 135

[1350](#) Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 135, explanatory notes

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000—

[1351](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 136

[1352](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 136, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1353](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 137

[1354](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 137, explanatory notes

Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991—

[1355](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 138

[1356](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 138, explanatory notes

Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

[1357](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2015, No. 139

[1358](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2015, No. 139, explanatory notes

REPORT TABLED BY THE CLERK

The Clerk tabled the following report—

[1359](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2015

Amendments made to Bill *

Clause 9 (Amendment of s 119 (Conditions of mass or dimension exemption (notice)))

Page 12, line 12, 'list—'—

omit insert—

list—

Page 12, line 17, 'published by it.'

omit insert—

published by it,

Page 12, line 18, 'extending—'—

omit insert—

extending—

* The following page and line number references relate to the Bill, as amended.

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

- [1360](#) Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills (Ms D'Ath)—
Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Act 2014—
Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 317, replacement explanatory notes
- [1361](#) Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Ms Miller)—
Queensland Police Service—Surveillance device Warrants Report—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1362](#) Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Ms Miller)—
Controlled Operations Committee—Annual Report 2014-15

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry, Report



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.37 am): Shortly after I became Premier in February the people of Grantham approached me with questions that had remained unanswered for the past four years. They wanted answers. They wanted the fulsome truth about what happened on that terrifying day in January 2011 when one of the most ferocious natural disasters in Queensland's history hit the Lockyer Valley, killing 21 people—12 of them in their town. They wanted closure and they wanted an ending to their story. My government acted quickly. My government was determined to give the Grantham survivors the opportunity to close the loop and get a full picture, get the truth about what happened and how it happened and what led to this catastrophe.

My government appointed highly respected QC Walter Sofronoff to head a commission of inquiry which would gather firsthand evidence from the survivors and carry out scientific testing to establish that truth. Last week Mr Sofronoff handed me the report of his commission of inquiry. What it shows ultimately is that no-one is to blame. No-one could have prevented what happened in Grantham that day and, importantly, no-one contributed to this catastrophe. Critically, no man-made structure made this disaster worse.

No-one who experienced the horrific events in Grantham on 10 January will ever forget them. No-one who lived through this event and certainly no-one who lost a family member, a friend or a neighbour will ever truly be able to put the past in the past. But I hope that their questions have finally been answered and I hope that they can now rest in the knowledge that the calamity that hit Grantham was an unpreventable act of Mother Nature.

Mr Sofronoff's thorough report gives all Queenslanders a unique and compelling insight into the events of 10 January 2011. It makes for confronting reading and recounts the true horror of that day with eyewitness reports—telling us stories that are important to our history and stories that should never be forgotten. It is a remarkable piece of forensic work.

There are stories like those recounted by Grantham resident Wendy Hodda, who faced an unthinkable choice as the floodwaters rose at a frightening force around her home on the Gatton-Helidon Road. Ms Hodda was at home with her elderly mother; her 10-year-old son, John; and her three grandchildren, Elisha, seven, Corban, five, and Mercedes, two. Warned by telephone that the evolving situation would soon become a life-or-death battle, Ms Hodda ran to a shed to fetch a ladder and, with the help of her 10-year-old son, helped the three younger children on to the roof. Tragically, she was forced to leave her mother, who walked with the aid of a frame, at the highest point she could find, sitting on the kitchen table. For several hours Ms Hodda and her child and grandchildren sat on their roof shielding themselves from the rain and the cold with a blanket. Her 86-year-old mother perished inside the house.

Lisa Spierling was at home in Grantham with her husband and four of their five children aged between four and 12. As the floodwaters rose, Mrs Spierling was advised by a neighbour to get to higher ground, although at this stage there was no sense of imminent danger. But almost immediately that changed, and Mrs Spierling and her three older children fled to the apparent safety of their neighbour's ute as her rescuer, Robert Wilkin, carried the youngest child. As they backed down her driveway, Mrs Spierling and her children in the ute's tray witnessed a wave of filthy brown water carrying debris approaching and urged Mr Wilkin to drive fast.

As they approached the railway embankment in central Grantham, Mrs Spierling—holding Mr Wilkin's baby and with her own four-year-old on her hip—shepherded her terrified children toward the only relatively high ground within reach. With the children screaming in fear, Mrs Spierling described

how, when her two sons reached the top of the embankment, she threw the younger children toward them on the railway line to safety. She then climbed up herself. Shortly afterward, she guided her children to higher ground along the railway tracks at the local school. Confident her children were safe, she turned back toward the brown wave of water to help others reach safety.


Andrea Foyle was at her parent's house on the Gatton-Helidon Road with her children, her sister and her mother. The rapidly rising waters had trapped them in the house. As the waters continued to rise, Andrea called her husband, Matthew, to say goodbye—such was her conviction that she was about to die. She and her sister decided to get to the roof. Her sister climbed up first and Andrea passed her sons up. She then clambered up herself. The family were later among the first airlifted from the scene.

Brenda Ross lived on Anzac Avenue with her partner, Christopher Face, and her sister, Elizabeth Fraser. Her son, Joshua, lived in an adjacent property. Ms Ross had been in recent poor health and various illnesses had seen her in hospital. Ms Fraser was at the railways yards when she received a call from her sister. Ms Ross said the water was up to her knees. She was sitting on her bed. Joshua was with her. He spoke to his aunty. He sounded frightened. He said the lounge room was falling apart and the house was 'creeping and the walls were shaking'. Ms Fraser knew that this meant that the water was now too high and there was nothing she could do. When she tried to ring back, there was no answer. From the pub next door to the Ross residence, witnesses said they saw the house collapse into the water. Brenda Ross, Joshua Ross and Christopher Face perished inside the house.

The story of Grantham is not just about remarkable escapes and terrible losses. It is about the heroes who found incredible inner strength. It is about the emergency service crews, the helicopter crews and the swiftwater rescue crews who saved so many people. It is about people like 23-year-old Johnathon Klaassen, who, against advice, handed his telephone to his brother, took off his shirt and dived into the raging torrent when he realised two very small children were trapped in a house. He reached the house by swimming with the current and found a terrified little girl on a couch surrounded by filthy water. Clutching the traumatised girl, he heard another child's voice from a back room. He raised the alarm and the little boy's father found him cowering in a bathroom. A helicopter arrived and the children were winched to safety.

These are the kinds of stories that live on for the people of Grantham in their hearts and minds. They will never be truly relegated to the past and nor should we expect them to, but it is my true hope that this inquiry has helped heal wounds. It is my government's true hope that now that no stone has been left unturned in investigations into the Grantham tragedy questions critical to the survivors have now been answered. I thank Mr Sofronoff for his detailed, thorough, exhaustive investigation.

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.44 am): There is no infrastructure project more important to the Gold Coast region than the continued extension of the city's light rail. It was a Labor government that delivered stage 1 of the landmark transport system, and today I am delighted to inform all members of the House that the light rail second stage is on track to be delivered in time for the Commonwealth Games after my government successfully lobbied the new Prime Minister for Commonwealth funding. All three levels of governments—state, federal and the Gold Coast City Council—are now committed to fund the extension.

Together with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, I announced the funding agreement to progress this key piece of infrastructure on Sunday. Unlike his predecessor, Mr Turnbull considers the project to be one of national significance and he has been quick to commit \$95 million to the extension of the light rail from the Gold Coast University Hospital to Helensvale. That Commonwealth support, in addition to \$55 million from the Gold Coast City Council, ensures that the project will now go ahead with state government support, which we are currently assessing through a tender process. Once again I want to place on record my thanks and congratulations to Mr Turnbull for casting politics aside so that we can kickstart the project, which will support up to 1,000 jobs during construction.

My dealings with the Prime Minister have been very refreshing, and I want to cooperate with him in the hope that we can foster a new era in state-federal relations. I very much welcome his commitment to better cities and funding public transport infrastructure.

Opposition members interjected.


Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, they obviously do not want to hear about this new era of cooperation.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Please! I call the Premier.


Ms PALASZCZUK: Until now the major obstacle in funding stage 2 of the light rail was the Commonwealth's lack of support. My deputy, Jackie Trad, and the tourism minister, Kate Jones, lobbied long and hard and publicly to make the light rail stage 2 a reality. Now that a funding agreement has been secured, my government will be able to appoint a preferred contractor early next year after tenders close on 23 December.

This project is a pacesetting, sound investment for the Gold Coast's future. It will set the Gold Coast up for boundless future tourism opportunities. It will offer Gold Coast residents connectivity between the light and heavy rail systems all the way from Broadbeach to Brisbane. Importantly, it delivers for the Commonwealth Games and Queensland's opportunity to shine on the international stage.

National Rugby League Grand Final

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.47 am): If there is one thing that Queenslanders love more than the Rugby League, it is an all-Queensland grand final of Rugby League. And what a game we were treated to on Sunday, 4 October. Just moments before the 80-minute mark it looked like the Brisbane Broncos would extend their record of never losing a grand final they have played in. The last minute of the game was absolutely incredible. Of course it was Johnathan Thurston who delivered the kick for a field goal during extra time that sent North Queensland into a week-long party. Congratulations to the North Queensland Cowboys and the entire North Queensland community. And can I say well played to the Broncos as well. It was a great grand final—one that we can all be proud of for Queensland.

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): As the Premier has already advised parliament, stage 2 of Gold Coast Light Rail will be built for the Commonwealth Games, and this means jobs for Queenslanders. Up to 1,000 jobs are expected to be generated during the construction phase, with building work expected to commence around April next year.


To date, I am advised that stage 1 of the project has spent some \$550 million with local businesses on labour and materials, with 93 per cent of goods, services and employees procured locally. Tenders are now open to build stage 2, and our three short-listed proponents have been asked to show how they will support local industry participation to maximise opportunities for Queensland businesses and workers. The three short-listed organisations invited to tender for stage 2 are some of Australia's most significant infrastructure firms, including GamesLinQ, which is a Downer EDI Works and BMD Constructions joint venture, John Holland Queensland and Leighton Contractors.

Tenders will close on 23 December 2015 and then the submissions will be assessed. We will move towards the awarding of the contract in early 2016 with construction to commence as soon as possible. I can advise the House that all of the short-listed proponents are confident of completing stage 2 ahead of the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

As vital as this project is for the Gold Coast, the broader benefits it will bring to the south-east corner are undeniable. For the first time in more than 50 years, Brisbane and the heart of the Gold Coast will be once again directly linked by rail. Practically that means that people will be able to travel much more easily between the two cities on public transport. With only a single mode change at Helensvale station, people will be able to travel from Brisbane to Broadwater or from Southport to South Bank by rail. The potential benefits for weekday commuters, for tourists or even families wanting to head to the beach on the weekend are enormous.

We are eager to get on with the job of delivering this vital piece of infrastructure in time for the Commonwealth Games, but the benefits of stage 2 will last well beyond 2018. This will be transformative and capacity building not just for the Gold Coast but also for South-East Queensland. I want to take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to the Department of Transport and Main Roads, to GoldLinQ, the Mayor of the Gold Coast, Councillor Tom Tate, and the Commonwealth government, especially the new Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, for their contributions to making this vital project a reality.

Resources Sector, Jobs

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.51 am): There is no doubt that, with low commodity prices, the resources sector and the community which services that sector are doing it tough. Over the past three years, employment in the resources sector has shrunk by 20,000, but the Queensland economy is not a one-trick pony. Labor has been driving diversification in this state for two decades, and Advance Queensland is the current vector of this ongoing drive under the Palaszczuk government.

The evidence is in these numbers: 20,000 jobs lost but 30,000 jobs created since the beginning of this year in sectors other than the resources industry including tourism; property; professional, scientific and technical services; education; financial and business services; and agriculture. Queensland also continues to ride a strong investment wave. In June 2015 there were \$211 billion worth of projects planned in this state—more than in New South Wales and Victoria combined. Our \$200 million Building our Regions infrastructure program has been brought forward by a year, and the first funds should be approved in December. There is the proposed \$600 million redevelopment and expansion of the existing Lindeman Island resort. This project could create an average of 865 construction jobs per year over four years and 300 ongoing operational jobs. In the Gulf Country, Stanbroke is working up its \$200 million Three Rivers Irrigation Project for cropping and irrigating up to 15,000 hectares of cotton. That is another 100 construction jobs.

Advanced manufacturing is a key driver of the Queensland economy in niche markets like mining equipment, technology and services, or METS, and the biofutures sector also looks very promising. I have just returned from leading a business mission to Peru and the United States, where Queensland companies hold hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of METS contracts.

Despite persistently low commodity prices, there are still bright lights on the resources horizon. In the north-west, early works have started on the Dugald River zinc mine near Cloncurry. There will be 600 jobs there when construction starts next year and 400 when mining commences in 2018. Stanmore Coal has just bought Isaac Plains coking coal mine in the Bowen Basin and will return it to production in the first half of next year. LNG exports continue to grow, with the second of three major ventures at Curtis Island now in production. Queensland's business and industry are supporting a healthy and diverse economy that will create more jobs now and into the future.

Queensland Economy

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.54 am): Queensland housing investor finance commitments remain at a near record high, according to new data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. For the three months to August 2015, investor finance commitments for the purchase of existing dwellings totalled \$4.6 billion. Investor finance commitments for the construction of new dwellings totalled \$675 million in the August quarter of 2015, roughly double the same period last year. The property sector is a real bright spot in the Queensland economy, and it is making a very positive contribution to jobs and growth.

Construction commitments in Queensland have generally improved since early 2014 following a period of weakness from mid-2008. Last week the latest quarterly ANZ-Property Council survey showed that confidence in Queensland's property sector has risen two points. With Brisbane's rental yields more attractive than those in Sydney and Melbourne, particularly for units, Queensland's property market may become more attractive for future investors. Low interest rates are expected to continue to support investor activity in Queensland's housing market.

Data out this week also shows that our liquefied natural gas exporters have shipped more than \$1.4 billion worth of LNG in the first eight months of operations this year—so much so that LNG exports contributed to a 15.7 per cent increase in the nominal value of Queensland's overseas merchandise exports in the August quarter compared with the same period last year.


The LNG sector is a brand-new export industry that was conceived and developed under a Labor government. LNG exports are expected to surpass \$13 billion by 2016-17 to become Queensland's second largest resource export after coal. Exports should ramp up further over the next year as all six LNG plants from three projects become fully operational.

The LNG industry is not our only bright spot, with other sectors of the economy also driving Queensland's export growth. Beef exports increased by 33.4 per cent in the 12 months to the August quarter. There was also a 9.7 per cent increase in coal exports. Queensland's crop exports also grew by \$315 million, with grain sorghum exports over 900 per cent higher than the previous year being a particularly good result.

Amidst a transition in the resources sector from a capital investment and construction phase to a production phase, we need to ensure that we continue to further diversify our economy in order to grow. With rising merchandise exports and a rebounding tourism sector, Queensland has all the right ingredients for growth. There has never been a better time to holiday or do business in Queensland, and we should be very confident about our long-term economic prospects.

I saw firsthand last week at the DestinationQ forum in Townsville that there is a positive mood when it comes to our future tourism opportunities, which are certainly helped by recent movements in the Australian dollar. We are open for business, and we are also open for the holidays.

Medicare, Review


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.57 am): In April this year the federal coalition government announced that it would review the schedule of items covered by Medicare, and last month the federal government commenced a public consultation process in relation to the review. Medicare, of course, is the central pillar of the Australian health system. While it is a federal government responsibility, its operation has a direct impact on the way that Queensland runs its health system. As a government, we have no problem with a review if it is designed to deliver efficiencies and support the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. There are some 5,700 items on the Medicare schedule, and reviewing how those items are being used could help support better health outcomes.

As a government we support evaluation of government programs to see if they are fulfilling their aims, but in this case I am suspicious about the motives of a federal government that has proved time and time again that it cannot be trusted with health. In announcing the review, the federal health minister claimed that 30 per cent of health expenditure is wasted. Before the review even starts, it seems the federal government has a position that 30 per cent of procedures currently allowed under Medicare will be cut. Why have a review if you already believe that 30 per cent of the services are wasted? Why have a review when you have already made up your mind?

This government shares the concerns of the Australian Medical Association that this review is another way of cutting funding and cost shifting health expenditure from the Commonwealth to the states. The federal health minister said, 'We will realise efficiencies,' and then, 'We will reinvest into the government's bottom line.' This review appears to be designed to deliver a smaller list of procedures, not necessarily a better list. The risk inherent in such a review is that it is all about shifting the diagnostic burden to state systems. As a state government we support a more efficient system that is designed to make Queenslanders and Australians healthier, but we cannot support yet another cost-cutting measure in health.

The Australian Medical Association is suspicious. The AMA's federal president, Brian Owler, has stated that the federal government's comments were 'a direct attack on the integrity of the profession' and one which 'undermined the confidence that patients have in their doctors'. So the position of this government and the AMA is exactly the same: we do not want to see any more health cuts by stealth in this state.

Early Childhood Education and Care Services


 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (9.59 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that every Queensland child has access to early childhood education and care services. That is why today I am launching a new early childhood education and care workforce action plan. This is a growing sector. It currently employs 31,000 Queenslanders and we expect more than 4,000 additional early childhood educators will be needed in the next three years. This is one of Queensland's growing sectors, and our workforce action plan will support and create more jobs for Queenslanders in this industry.

It forms part of the Palaszczuk government's Working Queensland jobs plan that will provide an upskilling of the workforce and create more jobs. We know that quality education and development outcomes for young children depend on the knowledge and expertise of the educators. Our plan includes a careers campaign that will promote the value and professionalism of the early childhood

workforce. It includes promotion of early childhood education as a career to secondary school students. Extra study assistance and new scholarship programs will help educators in rural, remote and Indigenous communities to gain qualifications. There will also be face-to-face professional development and networking programs right across Queensland, which will include leadership skill development, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.


Together we can build a workforce that has the training, skills and support needed to provide the very best services for all children and families and to grow jobs in the early education sector.

Townsville Stadium

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (10.01 am): More than a week on from the fantastic Rugby League grand final win by the North Queensland Cowboys, North Queenslanders are still celebrating. The Cowboys showed the rest of Australia that we have got what it takes to be the best. I joined thousands of cheering Cowboys supporters to watch the game at the Leagues Club, to welcome the team back to the airport and to officially celebrate their win at the civic reception. The feeling in the air at each of these gatherings was absolutely unbelievable. The crowds were cheering for the players and for their team, but they were also cheering and chanting for a new stadium. Jonathan Thurston said it best on the night of the grand final: North Queenslanders deserve a new stadium. He said it on stage in front of the Prime Minister, and I hope Malcolm Turnbull was listening.

Cowboys fans travel from across the north to go to the games in Townsville. A new stadium would mean Townsville can host bigger events, draw more visitors from across the state and create more jobs and opportunities for growth. In addition to construction jobs, once this project is complete we will see more jobs flow through our hotels, restaurants and local tourist attractions. It means that Townsville will be able to say yes to major events that we currently do not have the ability to host. That is why we are already working closely with the Townsville City Council, the NRL and Rugby League fraternity to get this project up and running. We have committed \$100 million towards the new stadium, and this includes \$5 million in this year's state budget for my colleague Minister Lynham's Department of State Development to undertake a business case and master planning. But we need the federal government to chip in their share to see this project become a reality. I call on the local federal member, Ewen Jones, and the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, to give North Queenslanders the stadium they deserve.

Domestic and Family Violence


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.03 am): The Queensland government is committed to realising the vision of a community free from domestic and family violence. This government has instigated a comprehensive response to the *Not now, not ever* report and has already acted swiftly on many recommendations, including the important Criminal Law (Domestic Violence) Amendment Bill 2015 and the death review and advisory board amendment bill 2015, which will be debated in this House this week.

In addition to progressing these reforms, the government has fast-tracked a number of key reforms following the very recent public and horrific domestic violence incidents including the murders of two women in separate incidents in South-East Queensland alone. There is more work to be done. Recommendations 118 and 120 of the special task force also relate to criminal law reform. These recommendations provide for the introduction of a circumstance of aggravation of domestic and family violence to be applied to all criminal offences so as to increase the maximum penalty for the offence and for the consideration of the creation of a specific offence of strangulation. The Queensland government committed to consult stakeholders on recommendations 118 and 120 and the best way to achieve the objectives underpinning them.

To facilitate this consultation, I can advise that this week a discussion paper has been released by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and it can be found at www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au. It has also been circulated to over a hundred stakeholders. This discussion paper sets out the background of each of the two elements to be considered and provides a number of possible approaches to implementing the recommendations. Thirteen questions are posed to encourage engagement and to prompt useful and constructive debate.

I would encourage all interested members and the Queensland community to review the discussion paper and provide feedback. Together the Queensland community and the government must insist on respectful relationships, together we must refuse to turn a blind eye to violence and together we must say enough is enough.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.06 am): I know that we have heard it many times, but we live in a sunburnt country, a land of droughts and flooding rains. Nowhere in Australia does Dorothea Mackellar's famous words ring more true than here in Queensland. As the old saying goes, if it does not rain, it pours—and don't we all know it here in this state? Over the past seven years we have experienced natural disasters that have tragically taken the lives of 43 Queenslanders and cost in excess of \$43 billion. Now we are in the midst of a crippling drought and battling a severe bushfire season, exacerbated by a strong El Nino in the Pacific Ocean.

Last month I attended the annual predisaster briefing hosted by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The Palaszczuk government stands ready with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Queensland Police Service volunteers and other community partners, who are hard at work and ready to respond to whatever Mother Nature might throw at us this summer season. Our staff at the State Disaster Coordination Centre are ready and training has been conducted for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Queensland Police Service, the Public Safety Business Agency and whole-of-government staff who will work in the State Disaster Coordination Centre during an activation, building on the learnings from around 130 multi-agency exercises conducted right across Queensland during the last financial year.


Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has also partnered with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Department of Energy and Water Supply and the Bureau of Meteorology to develop water catchment profiles which will allow for real-time situation awareness of flood gauges at district and local levels across Queensland.

Although we are feeling the effects of an El Nino weather pattern, we are still preparing for the ever-present threat of a coastal cyclone possibly crossing between November and April. Meetings have recently been held at local centres for the 12 approved cyclone shelters located across Queensland and the two places of safety at Kowanyama and Cooktown to ensure operational readiness for the severe weather season.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to keeping Queenslanders safe. Our State Emergency Services are well prepared for a busy summer and we stand proudly with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Queensland Police Service, our valued local government partners and our amazing volunteers to ensure that we are well prepared and that we are agile and resilient as we face another Queensland summer together.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I am pleased to announce that we have University of Queensland policy and practice students present in our public gallery observing the proceedings this morning.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE


Crime and Corruption Commission, Report

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (10.09 am): Mr Speaker, I lay upon the table of the House the Crime and Corruption Commission's 2014-15 annual report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on surveillance devices pursuant to section 358 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Commission: 2014-15 Annual Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on surveillance devices pursuant to section 358 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 [[1363](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders


 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.09 am): I give notice that I will move—

That so much of Standing and Sessional Orders, including standing order 87, be suspended so as to:

1. enable this House to reconsider the amendments to chapter 19 of the Standing and Sessional Orders moved by the Leader of the House on 5 May 2015;
2. immediately allow the Leader of the Opposition to move a motion without notice for the reconsideration of the amendments to chapter 19 of the Standing and Sessional Orders; and
3. ensure that debate of the motion in (2) take precedence over all other business and be concluded by the end of this day's sitting.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS


Member for Cook

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.10 am): A few minutes ago the Attorney-General stood in this place and said 'enough is enough' in relation to domestic and family violence, so it is also true that enough is enough when it comes to the member for Cook, Billy Gordon. It is no longer good enough for this government to keep making excuses in relation to the member for Cook, because if one goes back to 2013 in this place the now Premier stood here and said, in relation to the former member for Redcliffe, Scott Driscoll, that it was not good enough for him to be expelled from the LNP and it would only be a true mark of the government's principle if it was not prepared to accept his vote. In the case of the former member for Redcliffe, at that time he only voted in this place on one other occasion, and that was with the Labor Party. They were very happy to accept his vote in October 2013. A few months ago in this place the Premier had the opportunity to join with the LNP on a matter of principle and provide the opportunity for a political party to not accept the vote of someone they did not want to accept the vote of because of the background or behaviour of that person.

The simple reality is that the Premier hand-picked the member for Cook. She put the member for Cook there; the member for Cook keeps the Premier there. It is not good enough to cry crocodile tears. It is not good enough for the Premier to say that she is concerned and appalled when she is prepared to have her government propped up by the vote of the member for Cook. The Premier herself said some time ago that she is not prepared to accept the member for Cook's issues with regard to his undisclosed criminal record and matters in relation to the nonpayment of child support. Now issues have arisen in relation to three women who have raised concerns, and these matters are before the police. There is a pattern of behaviour from the member for Cook and also a pattern of behaviour from the Premier. This Premier is not prepared to act on a matter of principle and is not prepared to be judged by the same standards that she demanded some two years ago in this parliament.

What we are hearing is a clarion call for help and recognition from the traditional elders of Cape York. They are saying that they have had enough and that it is time for Billy Gordon to go. If the traditional owners are prepared to take a stand on principle, why aren't the Labor leaders in Queensland? It is because it is a matter of political convenience.

Pool Safety


 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.13 am): Mr Speaker, as we head into other scorching hot summer there is an important message that all of us need to remember: pool fences keep our kids safe. That is why the former Labor Party government introduced new pool safety laws in 2010 to protect Queenslanders, particularly children under five years of age, from pool accidents. On 1 December this year the law's five-year phase-in period will come to an end and all pools will need to comply with a single pool safety standard. There are approximately 340,000 pools registered in Queensland, and we estimate that thousands more are not. It is a requirement that all pools are registered, and fines apply if pool owners fail to complete this very simple process.

To get Queenslanders ready for the end of the grace period I am today launching a new public awareness campaign. The campaign includes print, radio and television advertising as well as social media. New materials have been produced to explain how households can make any changes that may

be required. Homeowners can download a checklist to take into their own back yard to check if their pool fence is compliant. If they are still not sure they can contact the QBCC, their local council or call in a licensed pool safety inspector. Local councils will be responsible for policing pool fencing, and on-the-spot fines from \$800 may apply.

When the current pool safety laws were introduced in December 2001, drowning was the leading cause of death in young children under five in Queensland. This is no longer the case, which shows that effective pool barriers help to protect our kids. However, in 2013-14 there were 94 ambulance callouts and near drownings for children aged one to five in Queensland. That is basically 94 near misses. Supervising young children, teaching them to swim and having effective pool fencing can save lives. I implore all Queenslanders to please ensure that their pool fence is up to scratch by 30 November.

North Stradbroke Island, Sandmining

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (10.15 am): Recently we have had a series of concerning and unfortunate announcements in the resources sector in Queensland involving low commodity prices in the coal, gas and minerals sector, resulting in the contraction of project operations and the loss of hundreds of jobs. Arguably, these job losses have been the result of the cyclical nature of international markets and not so much about domestic policies or decisions, but there is one decision on the horizon here in Queensland which will unnecessarily cost hundreds of jobs. That decision is the ridiculous and politically motivated commitment that Labor has made for the second time in the lead-up to the 2015 state election to bring sandmining to an end on North Stradbroke Island by 2019.


This decision hangs over North Stradbroke Island like a dark cloud. With so many jobs being lost in the Queensland resources sector, you can hardly believe that Labor would be crazy enough to make a decision to close an existing operating resource project which supports hundreds of jobs and the local economy on North Stradbroke Island. Is the Palaszczuk government such a slave to ideology and such a slave to the extreme Greens that they will blindly defy common sense and condemn several hundred more Queenslanders to unemployment on purpose when it is just not necessary? It absolutely defies belief.

We know that Labor is divided. The Palaszczuk government would have you believe that the policy to shut down sandmining on North Straddie is going down smoothly with the locals, but nothing could be further from the truth. The community is absolutely livid, and businesses on the island are beside themselves with uncertainty. The mine employees, who are members of the Australian Workers' Union, are in open rebellion against the Palaszczuk government. We saw the pitched battle at the Labor conference between the left and the right, between those who want to keep jobs and those who want to keep Greens preferences. The internal struggle in the Labor Party must be absolutely epic.

We have a sidelined, impotent mines minister who lost the North Stradbroke Island legislation to the environment minister in the machinery of government arrangements at the start of this year. We have a Treasurer who is also the employment minister. He obviously does not want the royalties and is happy to give the jobs away. Ahead of the 2012 state election the LNP gave a commitment that we would repeal the Bligh government legislation that was to bring sandmining on North Stradbroke Island to an end by 2019. In 2013 the LNP delivered on that commitment by passing legislation which provided for sandmining to remain until 2035 and we established a realistic economic transition strategy.

Today I reiterate the position of the LNP: we believe that the 2035 date is the best outcome for North Stradbroke Island; it is the best outcome for the employees; it is the best outcome for the residents; and it is the best outcome for local businesses.

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (10.19 am): Gold Coast Light Rail is a tremendous success story—over 6.5 million trips in the first year and a 25 per cent global increase in public transport patronage on the Gold Coast. This is a project that was planned by Labor, funded by Labor and built by Labor. Now we are doing the same for stage 2, providing a vital connection for the Commonwealth Games and supporting jobs and economic development.

The minister for major projects at the Commonwealth level, Paul Fletcher, told the Commonwealth parliament yesterday that stage 2 was 'an important piece of national infrastructure'. Tourism and Transport Forum CEO Margy Osmond said that stage 2 would provide 'a major boost for tourism and the economy of South-East Queensland'. Gold Coast mayor Tom Tate said that the funding

announcement last week was 'an historic day for our city', while Steve Harrison, chair of the Gold Coast Light Rail Business Advisory Group, said 'the Palaszczuk government shall be congratulated for taking the leading role in brokering the funding arrangements'.

Our commitment to build stage 2 is great news for the Gold Coast but, unfortunately, not everyone agrees. Who could forget the member for Indooroopilly suggesting at estimates that the project was not value for money? Then two weeks ago the member for Clayfield claimed that we were rushing the tender process. But as the *Gold Coast Bulletin* said at the time—


He was the Newman-era treasurer who dithered over stage two of the Gold Coast light rail and ultimately failed to deliver it.

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition is also out talking down the project—questioning the funding and the business case—despite coming out on ABC Radio yesterday saying that he has always supported it. We have not been able to find any actual evidence of that.

Our business case will be finalised once the tenders have been closed. We have delivered the business case—over 350 pages—to the federal Liberal government and they have come on board. I call on the state LNP to stop talking down this project, stop talking down Queensland and start supporting the Palaszczuk government's plan to create jobs, to build critical infrastructure and to deliver the best Commonwealth Games for the Gold Coast and for Queensland in 2018. In order for them to do that, they need to start focusing on Queenslanders and not themselves. They need to stop playing petty politics, as we see with the motion proposed by the Leader of the Opposition today. We know that the Leader of the Opposition is not long for this job. Maybe if he started focusing on Queenslanders' jobs and not his job he would stay in his position.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (10.23 am): It is a bit rich for the Deputy Premier to talk about petty pointscore! This Palaszczuk Labor government is running scared of parliamentary scrutiny and accountability by running away from parliamentary sittings. This year has seen the lowest number of sittings in about 20 years. This is a shame. It is a disgrace for a government that self-proclaims its integrity and transparency but then is contemptuous of the very institution it claims to uphold. It is such a joke that, with the number of sittings in this place, some Labor members still have to use a GPS to get to parliament. They do not know where the parliament is because it sits so rarely. In fact, we still have Labor backbenchers wandering around here as if they are on a school tour. They look a bit lost because they have not been to many sittings of parliament.

There is no excuse for a Labor government that claims it upholds the institution of parliament but then avoids it. Unfortunately, this joke is being played out on Queenslanders, who did not vote for a Labor government to talk about accountability and integrity but then avoid it like the plague. Labor says one thing and then does another. It cannot claim the high moral ground about valuing parliament when its actions treat it with contempt.

This chamber is the place where ministers should be held to account by coming before the whole parliament, but this year has seen the lowest number of sittings in more than 20 years, even taking into account estimates hearings. That is a disgrace. I see the Deputy Premier laughing it off. Those opposite think parliament is something to be avoided. This is the place where they need to answer questions about their plans for Queensland and their behaviour. Wait. What plans? That's right: there aren't any plans for Queensland. That is why they do not want to hold parliamentary sittings.


Those opposite also do not want to be held to account for their actions with respect to members such as the member for Cook who are bringing this place into disrepute with respect to allegations of the most disgraceful behaviour that should not be condoned by any government or by this executive, which is behind the scenes propping up the member for Cook in order to prop up this government.

This is a government that has no plans for Queensland. It does not want to be held to account in the very place it needs to be held to account by Westminster convention: the parliament. This is a government that instead has gone out with more than 60 reviews in search of a policy in search of a plan. This is a government that does not even have an infrastructure plan. This is a government that is relying on the infrastructure plans that were put in place by the previous government. This is a government that has no standards in regard to the members of parliament on their side who are propping them up.

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude at 11.26 am.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Palaszczuk Labor Government

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (10.26 am): My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to *Hansard* of 18 April 2013, when the member for Inala asked—

... will the Premier and the LNP now sit back and be happy to accept the vote of the member for Redcliffe from the crossbenches?

I ask: does the Premier still subscribe to this standard now that Labor is in government in Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am more than happy to talk about standards today because there seems to be a double standard when it comes to the LNP and those opposite. The member for Cook is no longer a member of the state Labor Party caucus. However, the former member for Redlands remained a member of the LNP right up until they called for preselections. Let us talk about standards. On the ABC on 9 April the Leader of the Opposition was asked about the former member for Redlands. He said—

Well, there was action taken with regard to that member not being a member of committees and those sorts of things.

The former member for Redlands remained a member of the LNP. But wait, there's more. On 20 August the House voted on the former health minister's Health Ombudsman Bill. On that occasion the member for Redlands voted with the LNP not once, not twice but three times. The Leader of the Opposition should not come in here with his double standards.

It is very interesting that the University of Queensland policy and practice students are present in the chamber today, because they will not hear opposition members talk about anything to do with policy or practice. This is the same LNP that we saw under Campbell Newman. Nothing has changed. The same team is still there: the member for Southern Downs, the member for Clayfield, the member for Indooroopilly—

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My question was specifically to the Premier: does she have the same standard today that she had in April 2013 in relation to accepting votes from the crossbenches? That was the question. She has had two minutes of indulgence and has not answered the question.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, I have answered that question very clearly. But what we will not see from this opposition is any questions about policy because it does not have a plan and it is the laziest opposition we have seen. Today we are talking about securing a fundamental infrastructure project by working with the council and the federal government to deliver the second stage of the light rail and there has been not one noise from those opposite about this vital piece of infrastructure on the Gold Coast which will create more than 1,000 jobs. Those opposite are stuck in the past. It is the same LNP.

Member for Cook

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Premier. Given that all ministerial staff are contracted to the Premier, can the Premier guarantee that no ministers or ministerial officers are providing support to the member for Cook?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I make it very clear that people who hold an office and sit in this chamber are members of parliament. If any member of parliament wants to contact my office or a minister's office, they will be answered because they represent their electorates. That is what they were elected to do. They are elected to this House—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Pause the clock. Please, members. Thank you. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. They are elected to this House to represent their constituents. I have made it very clear that this is a new era of government—unlike the past when it was very rare that we were granted any briefings under the former government, we were shut out of any form of decision making and we were hardly ever told if a member was coming. I think once the Leader of the Opposition came to my electorate and let me know.

Mr Dick: Kicked out of the parliamentary precinct.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right—it kicked the then opposition out of the parliamentary precinct. That is the legacy of those opposite. This is the LNP legacy of how it dealt with it. At the recent election Queenslanders rejected that style of government. That is what they did. They firmly and utterly rejected that style of government. If this opposition is going to have any relevance moving forward, it needs to start coming up with some ideas. For instance, does it support our view about diversifying the economy and growing jobs, noting that there is a downturn in the commodities industry not just in Queensland but also across Australia? Is it going to support our Advance Queensland initiative about growing a biofuels sector, making sure that we value our researchers? Is it going to support our focus on growing the agricultural sector, making sure that we have exports into the Asian markets where we are seeing a massive increase in beef exports of, as the Treasurer mentioned today, 33 per cent over the last year and the extra growth that we will see with the TPP? This is an opposition stuck in the past and it is about time it started responding to the needs of Queenslanders—that is, talking about the issues of the day, talking about the policies of the day and talking about what is going to make a difference to the lives of Queenslanders.

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. There is no relevance to the ranting we are now getting. Please direct her back to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: No.

Infrastructure Projects

Mr HARPER: My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier please outline any significant recent infrastructure investments for Queensland and any other important infrastructure projects that the Premier is aware of?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa very much for that question. As we know, today my government is talking firmly about an infrastructure project that we have been able to achieve for the Gold Coast and the south-east. This is a landmark infrastructure project of my government. I have said at length how very pleased I am of the work that the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games have done in securing the funding for the light rail through the Commonwealth government and the council, but I note that not everyone opposite is on board. In fact, the member for Clayfield was actually quite at odds about supporting this light rail project. In fact, he slammed the stage 2 announcement. That is what the member for Clayfield did—all aboard except Tim Nicholls. But I know someone who was on board on Sunday, and that was the member for Southport. He came bounding up to the press conference. I was sitting on the tram with the Prime Minister and the member for Southport put his head in between us and was standing right behind us. He even said—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: But wait, there is more. He even said to my staff member, 'Can you take a photo of me with the Premier and the Prime Minister?' I commend the member for Southport for supporting a key infrastructure project on the Gold Coast.

In all seriousness, I now turn my attention to Townsville. We need this Townsville stadium to generate more jobs in the Townsville region. Our money is firmly on the table—\$100 million. The business case is being fast-tracked because we know how important this is for the north of our state. I was speaking with the Mayor of Townsville, Jenny Hill, this morning. She is going to see the Prime Minister today to put the case. When I raised it with the Prime Minister he said that he was going to give it serious consideration as soon as the business case is received. My message to the LNP is to get on board with this other key infrastructure project for the north. It is vitally needed. We need those jobs up there to make sure that we get our state moving.

Member for Cook

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Premier. Given that the Premier has admitted that her government provides support to the member for Cook, will the Premier detail the nature of that support?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I have said very clearly, my government will provide assistance to any inquiry that a member raises. I said this at length before and I will say it again: this is a different style of government. Where those opposite shut the then opposition out from briefings and meetings, we are an even-handed government and we will make sure that we are a government for all of Queensland unlike when those opposite were just a government—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker—

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. One moment, Premier. What is your point of order, member for Mermaid Beach?

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, the question was very clear, very direct and very simple. Under standing order 118, the question was clearly in terms of what support was provided from the Premier's office. Please get her to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There would be no difference to what would be provided if the member for Mermaid Beach rang my office. There is absolutely no difference, because people are elected to serve their constituents. People are expected—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, let me conclude by saying this: my government is a government for all Queenslanders. Let me just close on this point: I was in Townsville at DestinationQ the other day and I also had an economic forum in Townsville where I met with a lot of mayors and a lot of people from the industry community. What did they say to me? They said, 'Premier, your style of government is refreshing unlike the style of the former government where we were contacted and abused down the phone.' That was the style of the former government—ringing up mayors and abusing them down the phone. That was the style of government that they experienced. People will not see that under our watch. We will be a government for all of Queensland. We will stand up for Queenslanders right across this state. It is about time the opposition members had a good long look at themselves. Where are their policies? Where is their vision? There is absolutely none.

Queensland Literary Awards

Ms PEASE: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier please inform the House of the success of the recently reinstated Queensland Literary Awards?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member very much for the question. On Friday evening I was delighted to attend the Queensland Literary Awards. One may remember that about 3½ years ago one of the first acts of the former LNP government—and we were talking about style of government—was to axe the Premier's Literary Awards. Today, I commend the small group of people who rallied to the cause and kept those Literary Awards going in the dark years. It is a sign of a society about how we value our writers. That act was a huge blow to the literary community right across Queensland.

I am very pleased to announce that Libby Connors won the inaugural Premier's Award for a Work of State Significance for her book titled *Warrior*. Megan McGrath and Rebecca Jessen won the Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Awards for writers aged between 18 and 30. One of those writers is in the electorate of the member for Sandgate. We have also introduced Queensland Writers Fellowships—to enable our writers to not only be able to work but also spend some time completing their books—to Inga Simpson, Karen Foxlee and Krissy Kneen.

I also note that another book came out just recently. In fact, I have a copy here. I wonder if this book will make it to the Literary Awards next year? The former premier does mention that perhaps he should not have axed the Literary Awards, that it was not a good political decision. He says some things about the member for Clayfield as well. I understand a lot of the members opposite were missing from the launch.

Ms Trad: Not the member for Indooroopilly.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, there was one who was there: the member for Indooroopilly. Where was it held? It was held at the Tattersall's Club

Member for Cook

Ms DAVIS: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth. Has the minister consulted with leading women advocacy groups to ascertain if they support the Palaszczuk Labor government's decision to continue to accept the vote of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. The Premier and the Deputy Premier have already commented. They have said that these reports are appalling—and they are appalling—and are totally unacceptable. But this is an issue that is now before the police and in one instance it is now a matter before the court. So ongoing commentary is particularly unhelpful.

As the Premier has said today, the member for Cook is an Independent member of this parliament. The Premier acted swiftly to eject the member for Cook from our caucus. The member for Cook's participation now is a matter for him. What I can say is that anyone who has any complaints of this nature should go straight to the police. This behaviour is completely appalling and unacceptable.

South-East Queensland, Rail Network

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport. Will the Deputy Premier advise the House on the government's plans to improve the capacity of South-East Queensland's rail network and how these plans compare with previous plans?

Ms TRAD: I thank the honourable member for Brisbane Central for the question. I know that the member for Brisbane Central is a passionate advocate for public transport in her electorate. We are getting on with the job of delivering improvements to the South-East Queensland rail network. We are delivering stage 2 of light rail on the Gold Coast and we are planning for improvements in the heavy rail network.

Cross River Rail remains the government's highest infrastructure project. The project is critical to support economic growth, to combat congestion and also to boost economic productivity in our region. A project team is working to finalise the preferred alignment and rail station locations, but I can confirm that there will be no bus element included. The fundamentals of Cross River Rail are the same as when Infrastructure Australia gave the project 'ready to proceed' status, the highest ranking status possible under Infrastructure Australia, in both 2012 and 2013.

I am aware of media reports that the Lord Mayor is intending to lobby the Commonwealth government for funding for the Newman government's Bus and Train tunnel. Let me make it clear that there is no comparison between Cross River Rail and Campbell Newman's Bus and Train tunnel. The Bus and Train tunnel was still at fantasy stage: no funding was allocated or committed for construction, the final alignment for the project was not endorsed, the necessary properties were not acquired, the final approvals were not in place and no contracts were let for construction works.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Ms TRAD: I take the interjection of the member for Southern Downs in relation to the infrastructure plan. For three years those opposite came into this parliament without one single infrastructure project of their own, without an infrastructure plan for our state. They can put all of this to rest if they come into this place and table for the benefit of the House and for the benefit of Queensland their infrastructure plan, their ideas for infrastructure for South-East Queensland.

But I fear that we will be waiting a very long time, because so obsessed are they with doing the internal numbers over whether the member for Everton will be leader by the end of the year or whether the member for Southern Downs will hold on to his job as Leader of the Opposition. This is why Queenslanders booted them out—because they were focused on themselves, they were focused on fighting Queenslanders and they were not focused on Queenslanders themselves. I hope that those opposite remain fixated with themselves and we will get on with the job of delivering jobs for Queenslanders.

Member for Cook

Mrs SMITH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Has the minister consulted with Indigenous leaders to ascertain if they support the Palaszczuk Labor government's decision to continue to accept the vote of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. I think the line of questioning today from those opposite is obviously a theme. I think that we can all see that.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: If they want to ask a serious question and laugh right after it, that is fine.

Mr SPEAKER: Order members!

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, it is sad that the member for Mount Ommaney continues to follow the script that she is given from the leadership team over there, because during estimates this year she also continued a line of questioning about industrial relations and unions and managed to somehow disgrace herself and talk about the stolen wages fund. Instead of having thought bubbles offered up by the chief of staff to the Leader of the Opposition, or someone else who is trying to send her down a path that she should not be going, she should come up with some original questions.

Today, we have had these questions asked. It is astonishing to see those opposite now seeking to turn the world on its head, particularly the member for Callide, who argued so strongly for a new way of voting in this parliament. It was all about ensuring that parliament became more efficient. Now, we are seeing them wanting to turn that on its head because it will suit them politically.

The Leader of the Opposition has been three times rejected by the people of Queensland and he knows that the only way he can be premier is if he can do it by stealth. That is the way that the Leader of the Opposition is operating and, of course, he is feeding questions to all of his members to ask the same thing.

In answer to the question of the member for Mount Ommaney, no, I have not asked that because in any electorate you can ask one, two or 10 people whether or not someone should accept a vote and they will say no and then you can ask another 10, 20 or 30 people and they will say of course you should. It is an absurd proposition. The member for Cook has been duly elected. He is no longer a member of the Australian Labor Party. He is an Independent member of this House representing the seat of Cook, which has a large number of constituents all of whom, I suggest, are going to have some relationship with the member who has asked the question and the shadow portfolio she holds. There will be some disagreement, but certainly the question asked by the member for Mount Ommaney is an absurd question. Any member in this House should be able to vote accordingly, if they have been elected. That is the position that the Premier has clearly stated today.

If the opposition wants to continue to ask questions such as this and if the member for Mount Ommaney wants to be led down the garden path by the Leader of the Opposition and his team—and obviously they are clamouring for him to stay in power as the Leader of the Opposition—then so be it. However, I do not think she does herself any justice by asking those sorts of questions and trying to tie the political story of the day to what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are looking for.

Innovation

Mr PEGG: My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer outline what the Palaszczuk government is doing to promote innovation in Queensland and whether there are any alternative proposals?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for Stretton for his question. He is a member who gets innovation. Of course, Brisbane Technology Park is located within his electorate of Stretton. The first budget of the Palaszczuk government certainly showed that there are innovative ways to create growth and opportunities in our state of Queensland and there are innovative ways that do not increase debt or sell our income generating assets. Through our Advance Queensland initiatives, which is a very important suite of initiatives worth \$180 million in the budget, we are supporting and fostering those industries and skills that will help further diversify and strengthen our economic foundations here in Queensland. Through the \$40 million Business Development Fund, we will be providing early stage venture capital co-investment to emerging and growing innovative Queensland businesses. We will also have a fund that matches investments from private sector co-investors in emerging and high-growth innovative business. Of course, that fund will help further diversify the Queensland economy.

There is one message that I want to get across to all members of this House. Today we have heard the member for Hinchinbrook acknowledge the commodity prices and what is happening in very globally volatile circumstances. We know that it is very important that not just one sector of our economy makes up more than 10 per cent of our economic output. It is important that we have a diverse economy and Advance Queensland is about further diversifying that economy.

We want the private sector to play a bigger role, including through our market-led proposals initiative. That is in stark contrast to those opposite who, when in government, talked about the four pillars but then ignored the rest of the economy. Come to think of it, the former government did not do much in terms of the four pillars either. Under their watch, we saw economic growth go down and unemployment go up.

As further evidence that the Opposition does not have a clue when it comes to their fleeting interest in innovation, in his budget reply speech the Leader of the Opposition referred to the budget as a 'jobs, infrastructure and innovation fund pipedream'. To my surprise, last week I read that the Leader of the Opposition has somehow undergone a conversion in terms of innovation policy. It seems the sudden change of Prime Minister has seen a sudden change in position by the Leader of the Opposition, who apparently has changed his view on a number of things. On 8 October, an article in the *Courier-Mail* stated—

Mr Springborg said he spoke with Mr Turnbull about his innovation policies as well as his plans to help fund infrastructure in Queensland.

The article goes on to quote Mr Springborg as saying—

On the issue of innovation I indicated that we are very keen to make sure that we dovetail our policies in with his agenda on that. It's critically important.

Now that the member for Southern Downs has come around on innovation, we look forward to his ongoing and continued support of everything that we do with our Advance Queensland agenda. Hopefully, we will get his support at every opportunity. If the Leader of the Opposition does not get with the program, his party may start to get innovative with him. If they start getting innovative with him, they will be taking an innovative approach to finding a new leader.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Nanango, I inform members that students from the Padua College, Kedron in the electorate of Stafford are present in the public gallery, observing our proceedings.

Member for Cook

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland. I ask: has the minister consulted with the women of Cape York to ascertain if they support the Palaszczuk Labor government's decision to continue to accept the vote of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for the question. As my ministerial colleague has already stated, the Premier and the Deputy Premier have already spoken on this issue. This matter is—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs O'ROURKE: And I am saying that these matters are currently before the courts and it would be inappropriate for me to discuss them any further. Also, we have heard from the Treasurer as to whether or not he has had conversations with locals. Personally I have not spoken to people from Cape York. However, I am of the same opinion that it is completely irrelevant and inappropriate at this point in time.

Community Grants Scheme

Mrs LAUGA: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House about the community grants scheme and actions the state government has taken since coming to office?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Keppel for her question. Community based health groups do an enormous amount of work helping others in the community. Most of those organisations started because a group of people saw a problem in the community. They saw a health gap and they wanted to fill that gap by helping other people. They perform vital and highly specialised work to help in a number of areas. Some of those groups may be small, but the impact they have is great. I speak of groups such as The Compassionate Friends Queensland, based in the electorate of the member for Springwood; the Asbestos Related Disease Support Society Queensland; the stillbirth and neonatal death support group, which is strongly supported by the member for Brisbane Central; the Amputees and Families Support Group, based in the heart of Logan City in the electorate of Woodridge; and many other groups supporting Queenslanders with cancer, cystic fibrosis, epilepsy and similar health conditions. The value of the outcomes they deliver to individuals and families is immeasurable.

Today I am pleased to announce that the Palaszczuk government has restored funding to those groups. We have restored \$7.5 million to those organisations and that funding will be provided over three years. That means certainty for three years for those organisations. Today those 20 organisations will be acknowledged at the highest level of government when the Premier and I host an afternoon tea to thank them for the work they do.

What did I find when I became the minister? In 2013, when the then minister for health was trawling around looking for soft targets to pick off, he decided to attack those groups. Not content with attacking doctors and nurses and not content with sacking thousands of public servants, he sought out the most vulnerable groups in the health system and defunded them. That is what he did. That is his legacy. He can go around trying to pick other soft targets. We know that he is doing that, because that is his form. He tries to pick soft targets because he does not have the courage of his convictions.

Not one of those 20 organisations was funded by members opposite. Not one was funded by the member for Southern Downs. Not only did he defund groups, but also he gagged the groups that he did fund. He said to those groups, 'Your voice cannot be heard. You cannot speak up against government. If you receive government money, you are to be silent.' That is how they treated Queenslanders. We have removed the odious, offensive and objectionable gags clauses. They have gone. Organisations are free to speak against the Queensland government. We are not afraid of civil society groups and we are not afraid of civil society organisations, because their voice makes democracy and government strong in Queensland.

One of the first things I did following our pledge in opposition was to examine funding for those groups. We have done that. We have restored funding. The long walk in the wilderness is over for those groups and they will be funded into the future.

Ports North

Mr CRIPPS: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer to the \$4.76 million before-tax improvement and the \$1.25 million increase in dividends recorded in the annual report tabled recently for Ports North for the 2014-15 financial year. I ask: given the increased financial performance of the corporation, can the Treasurer explain why the Palaszczuk government dismissed the former chairman of Ports North, Mr Brett Moller?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. The first point I would make to the honourable member when he talks about the performance of the port, what it means to Queensland and what it means in terms of revenue coming in is that under their plan they would have sold the port. We will make that our response every time they stand up in this place and want to ask a question about how our utilities are performing and how our ports are performing. We will put it straight back on them every time and say that their plan—the plan that they said was the only plan for Queensland—was about ensuring that they sold everything off, being very short-sighted and losing future revenue.

In answering the member's question and at every opportunity I remind those opposite of the ridiculous plan they took to the people of Queensland and that Queenslanders saw through very easily. The member would well know, having been a former member of cabinet, that there is a process that we go through in terms of significant appointments, including board appointments.

In terms of the specific question, Mr Moller was an appointee like other appointees. It is the government's prerogative to ensure that, through a process, they have the right balance of skills and abilities on those boards for the future direction of those boards operating as commercial entities. There were a number of well-canvassed board appointments that were made. We have made those decisions.

Mr Cripps: If you do well, you get the boot.

Mr PITT: For the benefit of the member for Hinchinbrook—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: I will wait for them to finish. For the benefit of the member for Hinchinbrook, the process for undertaking our GOC board appointments was an advertised process. Contrary to some of the things that have been espoused by those opposite, there was a public advertisement to call for expressions of interest. That included a particular focus on encouraging more women on boards. This is an initiative that I am very proud of. I know that the Premier is driving strongly to have more women on boards. We have a target of having 50 per cent representation on all government boards by 2020.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr PITT: I am advising the member of exactly the process we have gone through. We have said again—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr PITT: He asks the questions but does not want to know the answers. Very clearly he has a very warped view of how question time works. He wishes he were still over here answering the question. Now he is trying to answer his own question. It is a bit of a shame.

In answering his question, I point out that we have a process that we have gone through. We have deliberated and we have made the call. Using the same logic that he is trying to apply here, I would ask the question: what did the former chair of Ports North, Dr Ken Chapman, do wrong to be axed? That is very good question as well. It is one that the member for Hinchinbrook may wish to answer at some stage in the future.

Mr SPEAKER: I would urge the member for Hinchinbrook to control himself. Most of his interjections were not taken.

DestinationQ

Mr STEWART: My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister update the House on the DestinationQ forum recently held in Cowboys country and home of the NRL champions and the industry's reaction to the Palaszczuk government's commitment to grow tourism in Queensland?

Mr Rickuss: Great question.

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I agree with the member for Lockyer: it is a great question. That is right. We know that the DestinationQ forum, in the words of some people who attended, was 'the best one ever'. We have had great support from the local members. I have to acknowledge the member for Townsville, the member for Thuringowa and my ministerial colleague from Townsville—the wonderful Townsville team—who were all there to show their support. In actual fact, it was the best attended DestinationQ forum ever held, with more than 400 industry representatives, mayors and members of the government there.

Members do not need to take my word for it. What I also had a lot feedback on was how great the new Tourism and Events Queensland board is. The chair of the new board is Bob East. He has a whole career in tourism. The member for Hinchinbrook should not come in here and start spruiking about board appointments when those opposite had Mr Di Bella appointed to the Tourism and Events Queensland board the same year he made an \$18,000 donation to the LNP. We have a new board.

Speaking about boards, let me talk about Gary Smith who is on the board of Tourism and Events Queensland and also the chair of Flight Centre. As the member for Currumbin would know, Gary Smith has had a long involvement in tourism. He is well respected in the tourism industry. What did he say about DestinationQ? He stated—

It was fantastic to see the very strong commitment from the Palaszczuk Government with the Premier, Deputy Premier, Tourism Minister ... amongst the strong Ministerial representation. There was a tremendous vibe among the tourism operators at the event—definitely a feeling that Queensland is on a strong upswing—we have our mojo back! I think it will go down as the most successful DestinationQ held yet.

That is the kind of feedback we are getting. We know that tourism means jobs. What is this government all about? Those opposite are fighting over who should have the top job. As the Minister for Tourism and Minister for the Commonwealth Games, I spend quite a lot of time on the Gold Coast advocating for jobs in the tourism sector there. Do members know what the little birdies are telling me? They are telling me that the member for Everton has the numbers and that the Gold Coast members in this House want to support him.

Ms Trad interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. He wants the job. We all know that. He cannot hide that parading around. Whether he is actually going to do it or not is the question we want answered. What time by the end of the year will he pick his score? As a Rugby League supporter he should feel emboldened by the all-Queensland grand final. In all seriousness, while they are talking about themselves and who should have the top job, we are getting on with the job. We are creating jobs in a tourism industry that we know is growing.

When we look at the growth in the China market, we find that in the last 12 months we have seen a more than 15 per cent increase in tourism visitors from China coming to Queensland. This is the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry. That is why the Premier has been working hard and meeting with major stakeholders in China to grow this market.

By 2030 over one billion Asians will be travelling in the global tourism market. We want to be at the forefront of this. We have a new board in place. We have the groundwork in place. We have the funding in place to ensure that we take advantage of this.

Fire and Emergency Services, Levy

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Emergency Services. I table copies of Moreton Bay Regional Council documentation confirming that the Palaszczuk Labor government's enforcement of the fire and emergency services levy is to now apply to every lot not just every rateable lot, as was the case under the former LNP government. Minister, given the now obvious parallel between this fire levy under Labor and Labor's former failed ambulance levy, is the minister taking us back to the past?

Tabled paper: Extract of Moreton Bay Regional Council Coordination Committee meeting agenda, dated 18 August 2015 [1364].

Mrs MILLER: I thank the member for the question. In relation to the emergency management levy, I point out that it is applied right across Queensland and has been for some time. The emergency management levy is to fund fire and emergency services right across Queensland. I think it is a great shame that the member for Kawana has raised this issue in the House because obviously he does not support our fire officers. He does not support our emergency services officers.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. There are two points of order. One is that I take personal offence and I ask the minister to withdraw. Secondly, with respect to the question, under standing order 118 the question related to Labor's new policy about putting the emergency services levy on every lot in Queensland, all farming lots, which was not case previously. I ask for a withdrawal because of the personal reflection and I also ask for the minister to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, a withdrawal has been requested.

Mrs MILLER: I do withdraw. However, I will say—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, the member for Kawana raised two issues. One was a personal reflection—

Mrs MILLER: I withdrew. This emergency management levy is very important to fund the operations of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. This fund is there to make sure that our Queensland firefighters have the appropriate equipment and that they also have the appropriate training to ensure the safety of the people of Queensland. It is also there to make sure that our rural fire officers have the appropriate equipment and the appropriate accoutrements in relation to fighting fires in rural areas. It is also there to make sure that our emergency services are funded appropriately so that they can come on board in relation to the summer season of storms and cyclones. They need to be funded appropriately, and that is the case.

I think it is shocking that the member for Kawana obviously is trying to muck rake in relation to this issue. We need, as the Parliament of Queensland, to support our firefighters and all of our emergency services officers because they perform a difficult and dangerous job. In relation to the firefighters in particular, our firefighters are not only trained in fighting fires but also trained in swiftwater rescue, and they are also trained in hazards. I think it is very important that this parliament unites and shows its appreciation for our firefighters and our emergency workers across Queensland.

Water Resources

Mr BUTCHER: My question is to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Will the minister tell the House how the government is managing water resources to boost jobs and economic development?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Gladstone for his very important question, and may I say what a great resource the City of Gladstone is. It is a true economic driver for Queensland. It is also a great job creator for Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is planning to make available up to 18,200 megalitres of unallocated general reserve water to support rural industries, communities and jobs in Queensland's Great Artesian Basin. More than 4,000 megalitres are going to be made explicitly available for the development of agriculture in North Queensland. That should make all of the members from North Queensland very happy indeed.

Expressions of interest will open this week for competitive tenders. The Great Artesian Basin, as you know, underlies more than 1.7 million square kilometres of Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory, and stores in excess of 64,000 million megalitres of water. About 70 per cent of the basin lies within Queensland, and its precious groundwater plays a significant role in the development of our rural and regional communities and industries.

The release of unallocated water will provide targeted support to rural and agricultural industries including irrigated stockfeed, hay production and sorghum cropping. It will help drive regional development and rural industry jobs and support basin communities through this ongoing drought. It

will also provide opportunities for drought affected graziers to obtain water for irrigated fodder cropping purposes and increase their water reliability and livestock feed during times of drought. The Palaszczuk government is stumping up for our drought affected farmers with remittance from their release payments, with licensing fees being waived and also with this allocation of water through the Great Artesian Basin.

We are timing the call for expressions of interest for this competitive tender to coincide with current public consultation on the development of a new water resource plan for the Great Artesian Basin. The current Great Artesian Basin water resource plan is due to expire on 1 September 2016, so we need to develop a new science and evidence based 10-year plan—and the emphasis is on the words ‘science and evidence based’ planning for this very important research. I expect water availability will be a topic of considerable interest during the public forums currently being held in Great Artesian Basin communities until 5 November 2015.

Roma Community Legal Service

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Attorney-General. I refer to the Roma Community Legal Service, and I ask the minister: when will the state government commit to a new three-year service agreement for this organisation or is the government going to transition this service to closure, removing the only non-Indigenous domestic violence support service in a region that covers 320 postcodes?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. The member is well aware, as the community is, that my department has been working very closely with the Roma community legal centre in relation to the fact that when it came to funding this year it was the only community legal centre that did not have accreditation. In not getting accreditation it was not able to be eligible for funding. It has functioned for many years, and I acknowledge the great work in the past of the Roma community legal centre. But we have an obligation to the community, to taxpayers, to ensure that community legal centres can meet the highest standards in relation to getting access to funding. Unfortunately, the Roma community legal centre were not able to do this. They had had an independent report and assessment done that advised the government that they had not met certain standards in relation to their operations. They are well aware of this.

To ensure fairness, the government then put it out to a tender, and we allowed the Roma community legal centre to apply. We allowed the Roma community legal centre to apply, despite not having the accreditation, because we wanted to ensure the fairest process in relation to putting it out to tender. The panel that considered those tenders put aside the issue of accreditation and simply looked at the applications on merit, value for money and service.

If the Roma community legal centre had met those requirements and had been the preferred applicant, then we would have gone back to the Roma community legal centre to once again recommend that they get the proper accreditation so they could get the funding. Unfortunately, what the process showed for the Roma community legal centre was that they were not the preferred applicant because the applicant that was successful was able to provide a much better service for Roma. The Roma community legal centre only provided one person once a month in relation to providing legal services in Roma, where the new provider will be providing, as I understand, more than two people—full-time eventually—to the town of Roma.

We have an obligation when it comes to taxpayers' dollars to provide best value and to ensure that they meet the highest standards. So we went through a fair process, a process where the Roma community legal centre had every opportunity to meet the standards required and to offer the same service. They could not meet that standard. We have selected an applicant that can provide greater service to the people of Roma, and we have an obligation to do so.

(Time expired)

Training and Skills, Tourism Industry

Ms LINARD: My question is to the Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister outline to the House how the government is helping to address the need for skilled workers within the tourism sector in Queensland, particularly as we seek to attract high-end tourists to the state ahead of the Commonwealth Games and the proposed Queen's Wharf integrated development?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Nudgee for her question. I know she is very passionate about training and jobs for her community and for this state. Listening to other ministers talking about tourism, Townsville, light rail and the Commonwealth Games, we know it is important to ensure that we are

providing the training for the workforce of the future. That is why I had the pleasure of witnessing last week, with Echo Entertainment and also TAFE Queensland, 14 students who are the first students to undertake a six-star international hospitality training course right here in Brisbane.

Those 14 students are undertaking a Certificate III in Hospitality that has been specifically designed, with input from industry partners, to ensure that it is delivering that six-star service. It is not enough to simply build the five- and six-star facilities in our great state of Queensland. We need to ensure that we have the workforce and the service to match that because if we want to attract high-end tourists to come to these facilities they expect to get the best service. We need to ensure that our training is delivering that.

This is not just about jobs; this is about career paths. These 14 students doing the Certificate III in Hospitality will be undertaking this through TAFE Queensland under their new Queensland Hotel and Hospitality School. They will be joined by new students who will be undertaking two new apprenticeships into the future—a culinary arts apprenticeship and also a front-of-house apprenticeship.

These are real career opportunities. With Queen's Wharf commencing in 2022, 8,000 workers are going to be needed. We could be a government, as some have been in the past, where we sit and we wait and say, 'That's 2022; we don't need to do anything right now,' and then wonder why we have a skills shortage. That is not the Palaszczuk Labor government. We recognise that we need to train the students of today for the jobs of the future, and that is what we are doing. Of course, we do not need to wait for Queen's Wharf; we need these workers right now in our five-star hotels and restaurants. We will need them for the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

I want to congratulate TAFE Queensland, Echo Entertainment and all of the partners—Hilton Brisbane, Palazzo Versace, Hotel Jen, Intercontinental Sanctuary Cove and Royal International Convention Centre—and many more who partnered with TAFE to develop these courses and are supporting this training because they understand we need the absolute best. Our workers will be not only highly skilled and highly experienced but also highly sought after. We will have a workforce and a training school that we can be proud of internationally.

Road Infrastructure, Funding

Mr McEACHAN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Main Roads, and I ask: does the minister support his chief of staff's statement that asserts residents of the Redlands region should not expect road funding if opposition members voted against the Premier's decision to raise the cost of car registration by more than 2½ times inflation?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question. If he would like to supply the letter, I would be happy to have a look at it. The only people in this House who held people hostage were the opposition at the last election when they said, 'If you don't vote for our MPs, you will get nothing.' That was the LNP policy. They held people hostage, and what happened? They lost 36 seats. Queenslanders stand up for fairness and equity.

I do not accept the premise of the question. If the member wants to supply a letter, I am happy to have a look at it but we will not be verbalised by the member for Redlands. He can stand up for his local constituency all he likes—that is fine—but we will not be going down the route taken by the LNP in the last election to hold people to hostage. We will work with everybody. As the Premier said, this has been a collegiate government.

I was at a DestinationQ forum last week working with local mayors who are very happy to see our injection of funds into roads in this state. The opposition cut \$200 million from QTRIP each and every year as they built their tower of power next door. They cut TIDS funding and then they cut money from local councils for local roads, and the mayors and local councillors right across this state were outraged at that. They are working with this government to inject money into local roads. The western roads package in the areas of Gregory and Mount Isa has been extremely well received. In those local communities we are working with local councils to seal roads, to widen roads and to invest in those areas of drought. We will work with local communities. They are very happy with our TIDS funding. I have been getting a lot of letters from local mayors who are very happy to see us investing in local roads and working with local government instead of picking fights with them, as we saw under the opposition.

It is all about priorities. Under the opposition we saw huge cuts—\$200 million every year to roads. We saw \$600 million in cuts and yet their prioritisation was for projects like the tower of power next door. That is why they lost. That is why they are irrelevant. I say to the honourable member for Redlands: I hope the opposition has learnt from its attempt to hold Queenslanders to hostage in the

last election when it told them, 'If you don't vote for us, you'll get nothing.' That is not the way to treat Queenslanders. I hope they have learnt their lesson and that all members of this parliament treat the Queensland people with respect.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Mr FURNER: My question is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister advise how the Palaszczuk government is working to keep Queenslanders in bushfire prone areas safe?


Mrs MILLER: I thank the honourable member for Ferny Grove for his ongoing support for our hardworking fireys who put their lives on the line each and every day to protect our Queensland community. On this side of the House our MPs know that our fireys do a great job. I am pleased to advise the House today that, thanks to an investment in new technology, no doubt funded in some way by the emergency management levy, Queensland firefighters are the first in Australia to take advantage of a brand-new fire modelling system. QFES is the first agency in Australia to create and to deploy a new prototype called the simulation analysis based risk evaluation, or the SABRE fire system. It has been developed right here in Queensland. It will help fireys better predict the behaviour of a bushfire. The SABRE fire system has capabilities above and beyond what was previously used by the QFES as it provides fireys with a number of different fire probabilities based on a range of factors.

Last year the QFES started using Phoenix, a world-class fire simulation tool used by fire behaviour analysts to support firefighters on the ground. This year the SABRE fire system is being used in conjunction with Phoenix to provide in-depth insights and probabilities that will assist in predicting expected fire location, timing and behaviour. Bushfires can be unpredictable and they can change rapidly in speed and direction. This technology will assist the QFES to better anticipate, understand and forecast the possible impacts of a bushfire. This is money well spent by the emergency management levy.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Question time has now concluded. I am pleased to advise that we have another two groups from the Padua College in Kedron, in the electorate of Stafford, in our public gallery observing our proceedings.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Member for Cook

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.27 am): Actions certainly speak louder than words. In the parliament today the Premier and her ministers failed to take the action necessary and show the commitment to principle which is necessary in relation to the behaviour of the member for Cook, Billy Gordon. When the Premier was asked in parliament today whether she was prepared to subscribe to the standard that she demanded of the former LNP government in this place in April 2013 in relation to the then member for Redcliffe, Mr Driscoll, she squibbed it. She backed out.

I think it is very important that we go back and look at what happened at that time. When those issues were brought to the attention of the LNP, Mr Driscoll was suspended from the LNP. He then faced expulsion from the LNP. Before doing so, he resigned and then sat on the crossbench. On only one occasion did he vote after that and he voted with the Labor Party in this parliament, notwithstanding the fact that the now Premier stood in this place and said the real test of the credibility of the LNP government would be whether we accepted his vote. Indeed, we did not but the Labor Party did.

What we are seeing again here is the same thing in relation to the member for Cook, Billy Gordon. We have a Premier who pretends she is concerned about this issue but when it comes to action is not prepared to act in a principled way to meet the clarion calls of concern that are coming from the member for Cook's own electorate. We have now seen two days of reports of significant and very well respected Indigenous leaders who have been prepared to come out and call for the member for Cook to go.

What have they been met with? They have been met with a reluctant Premier and a government that is not prepared to take the same stand on principle. Indeed, if it were not for the Premier saying one thing and doing another thing in relation to the member for Cook, the member for Cook's position in this place would not be as strong as it is. We see a set of circumstances in which the Premier put the member for Cook into this place and now her own survival relies upon the member for Cook. When it comes to principle, this Premier is not prepared to act. This Premier was given an opportunity some months ago to move and to work with us in this place so that we no longer accept the vote of the member for Cook. She was not prepared to do that at that stage. Depending upon the outcome of a

motion in this parliament later on this evening, she will again have the same chance. If the Premier fails on that particular occasion, I think her inaction will certainly speak louder than words. Indeed, if the Premier fails to back the motion that I will move later on today, it will prove that she is prepared to accept the vote of the member for Cook in all circumstances and on all occasions. Principle will go straight out the window.

We cannot expect the member for Cook to leave this parliament if the Premier does not want him to leave. By propping up the member for Cook, she is encouraging the member for Cook to stay in this parliament—to stay right here, to not leave, to not go anywhere. We have all seen—those on this side of the parliament, those on that side of the parliament, those in the gallery and other people who have come into this place—the bonhomie, the open displays of affection, the encouragement that has been provided to the member for Cook by his erstwhile colleagues. The member for Cook is a member of the Labor Party in all but name. He is a critical member of this government. There has been no sustained admonishment of the member for Cook. There has been no pressure put on the member for Cook by the Premier or by this government. Indeed, as we learnt from the Premier this morning, it is highly likely that they are giving him special privileges that do not normally apply to crossbench or non-government members of this parliament. There can be only one reason for this and that is that this government is prepared to throw principle out the window in a desperate bid to cling on to government regardless of the consequences and the integrity or lack thereof of the member for Cook.

Again, why is it that the Premier was prepared to say something just over two years ago in this place as the member for Inala and yet today she is prepared to be exposed in this parliament in a critical way as a hypocrite? That is what we see with regard to this Premier, who stood up today and would not even answer the question; there is such a major disparity in what she demanded in 2013 and what the Premier is delivering in this parliament in October of 2015.

Today in this parliament the Premier failed to clearly outline what sort of support is being provided to the member for Cook. Is the government, through funded ministerial officers, writing speeches for the member for Cook? Is the government, through funded ministerial officers, writing draft press releases for the member for Cook? Is the government, through funded ministerial officers, providing particular and special services through ministerial liaison for the member for Cook? Is the government, through ministerial officers funded by the taxpayer of Queensland, providing a heads-up to the member for Cook about what is happening in the area around his own electorate so that he is getting a benefit that does not normally accrue to members of the crossbenches or to non-government members in this parliament? Is it true that we continue to see a set of circumstances, based on what we are hearing, where the member for Cook is a Labor member in all but name in the electorate of Cook, where he is given special privileges, where he is given special advance notice, where he is given the opportunity to mount his case with the support of a ministerial office which is funded by taxpayers who, in increasing numbers, are absolutely abhorred by what we know the member for Cook has done—and much of what he has done has been proven beyond any doubt. Now we have four women who have been prepared to come forward and say that they are disgusted by the actions of the member for Cook. Indeed, we have had three or four weeks of debate, of bipartisan discussion in this state—members of the government, members of the opposition in unison in this parliament and outside this parliament—about the treatment and the cultures with regard to attitudes towards women. Minister after minister have stood in this parliament and said that we have to change our attitude towards women, that we have to make sure that as leaders we set appropriate standards in this parliament and outside of this parliament. Indeed, one could be blamed for wondering why people out there in the community would be shaking their heads as to how one thing has been said by the Premier and other ministers and now we have a different course of action when it comes to the member for Cook.


The other day I was with the Lord Mayor, the council opposition leader and a range of people, including my own shadow ministers, at a major march down to Reddacliff Place against domestic and family violence. Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that you may have been there in your capacity as the member for Bulimba. Numerous people including women came up to me saying that no-one should accept the vote of the member for Cook because it sends the wrong signal to Queenslanders, that these sorts of attitudes are not acceptable and that this sort of an attitude is not acceptable from a member of parliament. We are talking here about matters that have been referred to the police—ongoing issues. They are just not going away.

What do we see in the cape? We see respected traditional owners and traditional leaders standing up saying they do not want the member for Cook to continue to represent them. The same philosophy and the same stance does not permeate the attitude of the Premier in this parliament. Indeed, if we go back to April there was a little bit of a sentiment of hope when the Premier said that

Billy Gordon should leave this parliament. How does that then stack up with the fact that they have been resourcing him, supporting him, providing him with ecumenical support in this place to make sure that he stays here? He will never leave this parliament unless this parliament is prepared to stand up and say that it does not accept this intolerable activity.

(Time expired)

Innovation

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (11.37 am): I rise today to talk of the economic importance of fostering innovation and start-up companies in Queensland and how the Advance Queensland policy of the Palaszczuk Labor government will do that. There is an increasing recognition that innovation will be the key to the growth of the Queensland economy in the future. We have to build our economy based on knowledge and innovation. We need innovation based businesses if we are going to thrive in a world that is increasingly driven by technology.

The OECD estimates that innovation will account for at least 62 per cent of the productivity growth in Australia in the long term and a significant part of this innovation and growth will be from businesses operating on digital platforms. Three of the five top US firms by capitalisation run digital business platforms. Facebook and Google are examples of digital platforms. These platforms offer great opportunity as they are low-cost shared infrastructure. Platforms are at the centre of an ecosystem surrounded by apps and app developers. Your innovative business can rest on a platform such as these or, ideally, you create your own platform. Adrian Turner, the CEO of Data61, a CSIRO entity, says more and more value in companies is being built from data, not physical assets or products. He further states that we must aim to own and build our own digital platforms, not just participate on them. Nevertheless, the first stage is for local Queensland start-ups to get onto that digital platform.

I can inform the House that businesses based on digital innovation and platform economics are starting up in Queensland. I was able to see examples of this innovation—using digital platforms—when I attended two pitch nights in Brisbane on behalf of the Minister for Science and Innovation, and I thank her for that opportunity.

Pitch nights are where start-up companies have five minutes to make a sales pitch to investors in the room and answer their questions. Last week I was at the pitch night for iLab, a Brisbane incubator and accelerator institute. iLab start-ups pitched to a range of investors in the room. We heard from companies such as Skyborne, which is developing a new type of drone, and genomicOS, an online genome sequencing company. On Sunday night it was pitch night for the start-up weekend for Brisbane women run by River City Labs and hosted by blue sky private equity. Over the weekend teams developed their ideas and pitched them to a panel on Sunday night.


The overall winner was a company called AirSponge, which matches people who want their cars washed with car washers. Started on Friday night, this company had paying customers by Sunday afternoon. It was exciting to see a total of 16 innovative Queensland start-up companies. I wish I could talk about all of them, but I can say that it is critical to nurture them and keep them here in Queensland. My message to them was that Advance Queensland will help keep that innovation here and develop it.

Advance Queensland is a policy of the Palaszczuk Labor government that creates the economic environment to keep this local talent here. It provides a comprehensive suite of interventions and programs that will create jobs, boost productivity and spur the commercialisation of companies such as these start-ups. The same models in New Zealand have generated \$3 of private investment for every \$1 invested by government, and I can tell you that local start-ups know about Advance Queensland and they love it. They are excited by the \$76 million Advance Queensland Business Investment Attraction package, which is designed to support innovative start-ups by matching their investment-ready deals with investors.

The package also includes a \$12 million commercialisation program which will support the start-ups we saw on these pitch nights with their proof-of-concept projects, and the start-ups are very keen on the \$24 million Startup Queensland program. We will work with incubators and accelerator institutes like iLab and River City Labs to provide a suite of seed funding, co-working space and monitoring. I know many are keenly awaiting the \$48 million Business Development Fund, which will provide co-investment to match angel and venture capital investments in these start-ups.

This is an amazing time in the start-up and innovation sphere. As we know, this is at the forefront of political conversations right now. Others may be talking about fostering innovation but with Advance Queensland, at a time when platform economics has just emerged, the Queensland government is first out of the blocks to foster innovation and Queensland start-up companies.

Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.41 am): The Premier mentioned the Grantham flood inquiry this morning and it was a sad occasion, but what evidence did the Premier have to call this inquiry? None! We have ample evidence that the CFMEU are corrupt. They have destroyed evidence on an industrial scale and ignored court orders, yet the Premier does nothing but act as a quasi-bagman for the Queensland CFMEU. But no inquiry has been called. The old adage is that a little bit of knowledge is dangerous, but was it? This was highlighted last week with the handing down of the Sofronoff report.

I have read all four volumes of the report. Unfortunately, the Premier and the member for Nicklin appear not to have read the first three volumes. I have also read the coroner's report. I am sure they will not even read the fourth report. Former Justice Kate Holmes, now Chief Justice, was the former commissioner of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. In March this year she took the media to task about their reporting of the Grantham floods, and I will table some documents.

Tabled paper: Articles and correspondence, various dates, relating to the Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry [\[1365\]](#).

In April of this year I wrote to the Premier and the member for Nicklin not supporting this inquiry. I never saw the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, or the member for Nicklin in 2011 or 2013 when the Lockyer had floods, but all of a sudden they have become experts on how to spend money by calling another inquiry. The Premier did take advice from the local mayor, whose council was found wanting in the disaster. The Lockyer Valley Regional Council did not follow the disaster management legislation. The mayor went missing in action during the clean-up. The CEO could not find the mayor and the police had to search for him. The mayor could not chair some of the local disaster management group meetings, and the assistant commissioner of police had to ask him to leave a public meeting because of his inappropriate conduct.

Justin Fisher, a young engineer, brought the lack of preparation to the attention of the council during a meeting in September 2010. Unfortunately he was ignored and no money was put aside for flood preparations. Who gave the Premier and the member for Nicklin the supporting evidence that millions of dollars of taxpayers' money needed to be spent? Hundreds of thousands of dollars of Lockyer Valley Regional Council ratepayers' and private citizens' money were wasted. The Premier said it was \$2.5 million, but this was before the extension of time for the Sofronoff inquiry. Does this take into account the extra money that was spent by the Department of Natural Resources, police, emergency services, EPA, Queensland Rail, Lockyer Valley Regional Council and other agencies? I know the Wagners were talking about in the vicinity of a million dollars. I would not be surprised if the total expenditure was in excess of \$5 million. This does not include the angst it has brought to my community, people who experienced this flood and others. Will the Premier assist with providing \$5 million for people who have had their homes inundated locally throughout the Lockyer?


I cannot believe the Premier acknowledged that it was media pressure that brought on this inquiry. I could be a cynical old politician and say it was a win-win for the Premier. The seat is fairly conservative and the Labor vote is somewhere between 15 and 25 per cent—at about 24 per cent—so at present it is not affecting Labor leadership or Labor politicians. The media, Fairfax and News Limited and that sad old has-been who directed all of his vitriol at the Wagners, Alan Jones, were the groups who called for this review. We all know about Alan Jones and his defamation cases, we know about his London case and we know about cash for comments. That silly old man is still trying to give himself a profile at the expense of others. It is over, Alan. You are past it, mate. Give it up; retire.

This government has highlighted how it gives jobs to the good old boys and girls: you only need to look at the appointments to boards that have just happened. There is no experience needed and no managerial expertise required, but union membership is a must. An expertise in dodgy deals is preferred for board positions. The Queensland government now has 68 of these types of inquiries going. As I stated, this inquiry has cost \$5 million plus and there are a further 68 still in progress, so I would say they will cost at least \$300 million.

Could I be underestimating the Premier? Never call an inquiry unless you know the answer. Did the Premier know the answer all along, but she wasted \$5 million to obtain false kudos and support her media and legal friends? Yet she is terrified to do anything about the substantial corruption in the community that has been carried out by Queensland CFMEU. She knows that an inquiry into Queensland CFMEU would be devastating to her Labor administration, the Labor Party leaders and Labor MPs. Never call an inquiry unless you know the answer. There has been no inquiry into the corruption of the Queensland CFMEU.

Unfortunately, the do-nothing Premier antagonised a lot of my electorate, who understood that this inquiry was a waste of money. As a longstanding riparian landholder, I really do feel that I was totally ignored in this and that, unfortunately, we could have saved \$5 million with a desktop audit of the appropriate work.

National Rugby League Grand Final

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (11.46 am): It is great to get up today and talk about the best thing to happen in North Queensland in recent times. You can see that I have ditched the Maroons tie for the new Cowboys tie, and I think that should be the uniform for all members. In case you have not heard, but I am sure you have, on Sunday, 4 October, with just seconds to go, history was made during the National Rugby League grand final game between two great Queensland teams: the Brisbane Broncos and the mighty North Queensland Cowboys. What happened in the dying seconds of what is likely to go down as the best NRL grand final ever played was indeed something special—so special, in fact, that I think the good Lord above would not have seen that coming.

That two Queensland teams were in Sydney for the grand final was in itself history making, and let us hope this piece of sporting history can be rewritten in future years. What this win means to North Queensland goes well beyond the footy field. It brings not only celebration but a sense of positivity to North Queensland, from Weipa and remote areas up in the cape like Thursday Island back along the coast, passing through major centres like Cairns and every town along the way to the beautiful islands, and I reckon even down through to Gladstone and perhaps even below and out west to Longreach and Mount Isa and back along the Flinders Highway to Townsville—which of course is now home to the premiership-winning North Queensland Cowboys.

There were some very important and well-timed words said by co-captain Johnathan Thurston on the big stage as he accepted that premiership trophy with fellow legend and co-captain Matt ‘Thumper’ Scott, and they were that Townsville deserves a new stadium right in the city.

With that, I believe that the new Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, raised his hand in acknowledgement. The Prime Minister would know that Townsville has spoken as he, even being in Canberra or Sydney, should have been able to hear the thousands of passionate, loyal, patient and excited fans yelling at the top of their voices whilst waiting at the airport: ‘Stadium! Stadium! Stadium!’ Not only did they yell it there; the crowd back at the old 1300SMILES Stadium swelled to some 16,000 fans who again joined the chant when I joined the member for Townsville, Scott Stewart, and member for Mundingburra, Coralee O’Rourke. The message was absolutely deafening as they repeated that ‘Stadium!’ chant.


Thousands of loyal fans of the beloved North Queensland Cowboys have waited patiently for our club to grow. They produced some great home-grown talent along the way—from the early days, like the inaugural captain, Laurie Spina, a cane farmer from Ingham who led out the team in 1995, or Matty ‘Mango’ Bowen from Abergowrie up Hope Vale way, to those match-winning Townsville lads schooled at Iggy Park college at Townsville: Michael Morgan and that other legend who placed the try to level the scores with just seconds to go, Kyle Feldt.

Those loyal fans have waited long enough for a new stadium, but it is more than that. It will be an integrated stadium that will deliver jobs to over a thousand locals. It will also create the priority development area, one that will attract momentum for investment and even more jobs for Townsville. And it will be the new, modern home to the 2015 premiers, the North Queensland Cowboys. The grand final Rugby League trophy has a new home, and it is North Queensland. From the Foley Shield to the NRL premiership-winning Cowboys, Rugby League has evolved, and it comes from those living in the north.

This win is something special. From those doing it tough in drought conditions out west on the land to those sweating it out and working hard along the coast on the sand, this is just the shot in the arm that everyone sure did need. Those Cowboys did not let us down and did not give up, even if it nearly finished them or made them bleed. Now there is talk that a humble Johnathan Thurston might join Townsville mayor Jenny Hill to go to see the new Prime Minister and get in his ear, for it is a new stadium that Townsville would like a federal commitment on some time this year.

This major piece of infrastructure will bring so much for all the north: jobs, prosperity, important economic development and—who knows?—perhaps another premiership going forth. I am sure every parliamentarian in the House would join me in congratulating the Cowboys on their magnificent achievement.

Rural Firefighters

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.52 am): Today is a very special day for rural fireys right across Queensland. Today we celebrate rural fire day by wearing yellow ribbons. I am proud to see so many members in the House wearing yellow ribbons to celebrate this very special day.

There are approximately 36,000 rural fireys right around Queensland. They cover approximately 93 per cent of the state of Queensland. Rural and regional members know how diverse the state is and how geographically isolated many communities are. To have the rural fireys there where the urbans are not is particularly important for regional and rural Queensland. However, it is not just about rural and regional Queensland. I am based on the Sunshine Coast, and there is a hinterland a short distance from the beach.

Mr Powell: It is on the other side of the highway.

Mr BLEIJIE: It is on the other side of the highway. Also in that area, on the border of the electorates of Buderim and Glass House, we have the Ilkley and Eudlo rural fireys who do a fantastic job. They are supported of course right around Queensland by members of parliament.

Recently I was particularly pleased to attend the Bli Bli rural fire service and the Gold Coast. Many members at the Gold Coast joined with the member for Mudgeeraba and others on the coast. They got all of the rural fireys together to show the support the LNP have for rural fireys right around Queensland.

Mrs Stuckey: Currumbin?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection of the member for Currumbin. I enjoyed my visit to the Currumbin rural fire station also. I also visited locally on the Sunshine Coast.


Rural fireys cannot do their jobs without the support of an association. Today I mention the Rural Fire Brigade Association of Queensland and its chief executive officer, Justin Choveaux. That organisation represents some 36,000 rural fireys in Queensland, 2½ thousand fire wardens, 1,400-plus rural fire brigades, 415 rural fire stations and 942 rural fire trucks plus trailerable and slip-on units. As I said, 93 per cent of Queensland is covered by the rural firefighter volunteers. The Rural Fire Brigade Association has provided over \$1 million in grants to the rural fire brigades, and the association is recognised as the peak body supporting and representing Queensland rural fire brigade volunteers.

This LNP team acknowledges today the very important work of rural firefighters and all firefighters right around Queensland. If it were not for the LNP firefighters accord that we signed with the firefighters in late 2014, we would not have seen some of the reforms we saw passed through this parliament a few weeks ago, including presumptive legislation. We on this side of the House were not going to discriminate with our presumptive legislation. We believed that all firefighters who contracted cancer should obtain the benefits of that presumptive legislation. That is why I was particularly pleased that, although the LNP bill did not get passed through the parliament, the government were forced to amend their bill, copying the LNP bill, to provide all firefighters with protection. Whether they drive a red truck or a yellow truck, all firefighters in Queensland are now supported by that presumptive legislation.

National Firefighters Remembrance Day was celebrated last weekend. The nation observed a minute's silence to acknowledge and remember all firefighters—whether they drive a rural fire truck, a red truck, an urban truck or an auxiliary truck. We remembered those who have lost their lives fighting fires right around Australia but particularly in Queensland. We acknowledged those who have lost their lives because of the dangerous job they have. We also acknowledged their families. Every time firefighters leave the house their families do not know what sort of day they are going to have—if they will be called to a bushfire, a house fire or a traffic accident. They have to deal with things no-one should have to see or deal with in one's life.

On this yellow ribbon day, on behalf of the LNP I pay particular tribute to all our rural fire brigade volunteers—some 36,000—and thank them from the bottom of our hearts for the tireless work they do in making sure Queenslanders are protected from the elements and protected from what many in the community walk away from. We send our rural fireys into difficult situations to, on many occasions, save Queenslanders. We salute the rural fire brigade. We salute all firefighters in Queensland for the amazing work they do. We on this side of the House offer our utmost support for our rural fire brigades on this very special yellow ribbon day.

Mental Health

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (11.57 am): I rise to speak about the important issue of mental health. Last week was Mental Health Week. Mental Health Week gives us an important opportunity to promote awareness of mental health and wellbeing. The theme this year was 'value mental health'. It is all about helping people to realise their own abilities to cope with the normal stresses of life and about us as a community helping to create an understanding and inclusive society.

Nearly half of our population will experience some form of mental health issue at some stage in their lives, yet it is still an issue that many people do not speak openly about. Mental Health Week provides a great chance for us to dispel some of the myths about mental illness that persist in our society. People living with mental illness will often experience stigma and discrimination from friends, family, employers and the community as a whole. We know that disadvantage and isolation due to this stigma can be more disabling than the illness itself. The stigma can stop people with mental illness seeking help and support, and it can even cause a worsening or relapse of their condition. That is why it is so important to let people know about the facts of mental illness.


As I have said, mental illness is common. Mental illness is treatable. The vast majority of people with mental illness are not generally violent. Indeed, people being treated for a mental illness are no more violent or dangerous than the general population. Most people with mental illness receive treatment in the community. Most people with mental illness recover well and are able to lead fulfilling lives in the community with the help of treatment and support.

I commend the Ipswich community for valuing mental health by getting behind last week's Mental Health Week community events. The West Moreton Mental Health Collaborative held a number of free community events around the Ipswich region, including a morning walk, a community showcase at The Park centre for mental health and an information night, as well as a free breakfast in Queens Park. It was my great pleasure last Thursday to open an early childhood mental health forum run by Aftercare as well as the West Moreton Mental Health Collaborative's silent art auction at the Ipswich community art gallery. The Ipswich community's participation in these events shows that we are a community that values its mental health.

I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk government also values mental health. Our government is committed to providing the very best mental healthcare and support services in the country. Last Tuesday the health minister unveiled the Queensland Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan 2015-17. The plan aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Queenslanders by taking early action. The action plan includes a grants program administered by the Queensland Mental Health Commission which has already delivered \$1.48 million for local initiatives that promote good mental health and wellbeing. Minister Dick also announced more than \$450,000 in funding to improve mental health through greater social inclusion and community participation, particularly in regional areas.

The Palaszczuk government values the mental health of our youth and has committed \$11.8 million over four years to rebuild mental health care for young people in Queensland after the last three years of neglect. This stands in stark contrast to the LNP, whose closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre—Queensland's only care facility for adolescents with severe mental disorders—is the current subject of a commission of inquiry headed by the Hon. Margaret A Wilson QC. I cannot stress how important it is that we take Mental Health Week's theme to heart and value our mental health. I recently had the opportunity to visit a youth residence at Greenslopes run by Aftercare which provides a home situation to five young people experiencing mental health issues. It is about rehabilitation and it has been running for eight months at Greenslopes. Its rehabilitation of young people is second to none and is a good example of how the Queensland government is getting people with mental health issues back into the community and contributing. Mental health is an issue that touches all of our lives at some point, either personally or through the experiences of friends and family. Most of us can manage these issues and get on with our lives, but others need help. Whether as a government, a community or individually, we must do everything we can to assist them.

Maroochydore Electorate, Alcohol Fuelled Violence

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.02 pm): The fears of the Sunshine Coast community have been realised as we have witnessed a shocking video of another violent attack on our streets—an alcohol fuelled attack at the taxi rank in Maroochydore—and we are left wondering how the attacker has walked free from court with a suspended sentence, particularly as this was his second violent assault in less than a week. This is a shocking attack. It is completely unacceptable and we need to see tougher penalties and responses to challenge the culture that tolerates binge drinking and losing

control and take a stand against behaviour that disrespects others and threatens their safety. This senseless crime comes less than two years after the tragic deaths of Wayne Dover in Maroochydore and Bruce Steensen in Mooloolaba which rocked our usually safe Sunshine Coast community. Their deaths sent a clear warning and were met by great grief and anger, with a community-wide resolve to stop the violence.


The LNP government responded with a comprehensive package to address the issue of alcohol fuelled violence in Queensland. Based on extensive community consultation, we established 15 safe-night precincts in key entertainment areas across the state with local boards to manage the precinct and police empowered to ban patrons from those precincts and apply tougher penalties for bad behaviour. The LNP government provided funding for this strategy and was working with stakeholders to put tailored plans in place for those local areas to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. Unfortunately, these plans have been left in limbo since this new government took office. This Labor government scrapped \$24 million in Safe Night Out funding over three years from the state budget and we are still waiting to hear what the alternative plans are. We are still waiting, with these local stakeholder groups wanting to be involved in the solution but getting very frustrated when they put their plans in. When I wrote to the Attorney-General and raised this issue I got a letter back in which the Attorney-General claimed that those groups had not submitted their plans. They tell me they have. They are frustrated and they want to see this matter resolved, as I do, because the answers to these issues require strategies that are integrated and funded with the cooperation of government. It is simply irresponsible to scrap one plan to tackle alcohol fuelled violence without providing an alternative.

The LNP did introduce tougher measures to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. As I have said, they have been put on hold. The LNP introduced plans to introduce compulsory ID scanners so that venues and safe-night precincts could share information on banned patrons, but again Labor has put this plan on hold. Late-night venue operators tell me of their frustration at having purchased ID scanning equipment as required but the system is yet to be implemented. This means that police can ban unruly patrons from a precinct but they cannot easily share that information with licensees. This recent attack occurred at the busy Ocean Street taxi rank in Maroochydore which local taxi operators have described as a ticking time bomb, expressing concerns that there will be major incidents or could be an incident in the busiest precinct on the coast before Christmas. We have already seen this incident just occur, and one incident is one incident too many. This is now the busiest taxi rank on the whole Sunshine Coast. As part of any strategy in entertainment precincts, moving people out of a precinct in a timely way is critical to ensuring that they can go out and have a fun and safe night.

The rapid growth and popularity of this entertainment precinct does mean that it needs this strategy to be implemented and funded. In May the police minister was on the Sunshine Coast and promised that funding would be released, but we are still waiting. I have asked for a deputation with the Attorney-General with the safe-night precinct board and that has been accepted for this Thursday. The matter is urgent and I would certainly ask the minister to reconsider and ensure that funding is available sooner rather than later because these stakeholders have been engaged and have lodged plans. Sadly, we have witnessed a violent incident while public safety measures have been left in limbo by this government. The actions of this man who has undertaken this coward punch on the streets of Maroochydore need to be condemned. We do not want to see any more of these attacks. There must be penalties to deter them as much as possible and the strategy—

(Time expired)

Safe Work Month

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.07 pm): This month is Safe Work Month and I was pleased to join Shane Webcke, one of the great legends of the game, at the Safe Work Month breakfast in Rocky recently to promote work health and safety. Shane gave a very emotional and insightful talk about his personal experience after his dad's death as a result of a workplace incident. I also recently attended the Queensland Miners Memorial Day in the historical township of Mount Morgan on 19 September, Police Remembrance Day on 29 September and Firefighters Remembrance Day on 10 October in Rockhampton. It is a tragic reality that in 2014 34 workers died in Queensland and 624 Australian workers have been killed at work since the start of 2012. In Queensland the cost of work related injuries to our economy is about \$6.2 billion or 2.8 per cent of our gross state product each year. The good news, though, is that recent surveys show safety really matters to businesses and very few employers now accept dangerous behaviour in the workplace. Because of this, work related deaths and injuries are trending down and our businesses are paying the lowest workers compensation rates in the country. Working together, the government and business can make real inroads to cutting the tragic toll of workplace deaths and injuries.

I was honoured to lay a wreath at the service in Rockhampton on Police Remembrance Day to commemorate the 140 Police Service officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. National Police Remembrance Day is a time for Queenslanders to reflect on the difficult and dangerous job officers do to keep the community safe right across the state.


Over the 151-year history of the Queensland Police Service, 140 serving officers have died protecting others. National Police Remembrance Day is an opportunity for all Queenslanders to reflect on that sacrifice and to show our police how deeply we appreciate everything they do each and every day to keep us safe. There are times, however, when no matter how dedicated, committed and courageous our officers are, they face unbeatable odds.

The 2015 Miners Memorial Day service at Mount Morgan was also an emotional tribute to those who have lost their lives in Queensland's mines. It was fitting to hold the service at the historical mine site at Mount Morgan. Miners Memorial Day shines a light on the most important aspect of mining: the safety and health of the men and women who work in Queensland's mines. Since 2008, the Queensland government, industry and unions have come together to honour the memory of the more than 1,500 people who have lost their lives in Queensland mines since mining began in the 19th century. On 19 September every year, a service is held to mark the anniversary of the state's worst mining disaster. On this day in 1921, 75 miners lost their lives in a gas explosion in a coalmine at Mount Mulligan in North Queensland.

Likewise, on 10 October we recalled the brave and fateful firefighters who have laid down their lives in service of their community at the Firefighters' Remembrance Day service in Rockhampton. We also paid tribute to those men and women in the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services who on a daily basis continue to put their lives on the line to protect those in the community. Firefighters' Remembrance Day is a sobering reminder of the danger faced by all career and volunteer firefighters. Without a doubt, their courage makes Queensland a safer place and we should never forget that. Sadly, since 1877 in Queensland we have lost 50 officers and, on Saturday, we paid our respects to their sacrifice.

It was inspiring to see so many local people at the recent work health and safety forum, who came together to discuss and learn from each other and demonstrate their commitment to improving safety in their workplaces. Likewise, the Palaszczuk government is committed to collaborating with employers to make workplaces safer whilst maintaining a strong compliance focus. But as long as workers are getting injured, there is more that each of us can do, especially if we want to see workplaces in our state become the safest in Australia. If employers and workers understand the real cost of workplace injuries, both human and economic, and the return on investment that safety delivers they have a strong incentive to improve their safety culture. By working together, the government and business can make real inroads into cutting the tragic toll of workplace deaths and injuries, because the Palaszczuk government believes that everyone has the right to return home safely to their loved ones after a day's work.

North-West Queensland, Employment

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (12.12 pm): I rise to, firstly, talk about the recent announcement by Glencore to cut about 500 jobs in the north-west region. That raises a couple of important issues that I think parliament should be made aware of. Of those 500 jobs, about 140 of them were based in Mount Isa. That is an interesting point to reflect on, because many of those 500 jobs were held by people in Townsville and maybe to a lesser extent in Cairns and Brisbane. People who were in those jobs were flying in and flying out of that region. It is also important to note the temporary nature of these jobs cuts. The zinc market, to which this decision relates, has a good outlook. There has been an unsuspected, or a difficult-to-describe, drop in the price of zinc that is not consistent with the global dynamics of the zinc market. There is an expected upturn in the future.

However, the point to make is that the majority of those jobs were held by people who lived on the coast. The majority of the jobs throughout the north-west of Queensland in the mining industry are held by fly-in fly-out workers and 100 per cent of mining royalties come down here to be distributed by the government with no real demand for those royalties to be returned to the north-west in the form of tax concessions. Right now, the difficulties that are being experienced in the Townsville economy are a result of the downturn in the mining industry, and a lot of that downturn is occurring in the north-west.

There are no votes in the north-west, or west of the Great Divide. I think we could all agree that spending from all levels of government and from different parties in this House has gravitated to the coast. The money is not going where it has to to stimulate industry and, in this case, primary industry. That is part of the economic cost that we are now experiencing in Brisbane and all along the coast. The

only way to get these office towers built and retail centres re-leased is to also nurture our primary industry that sits out there. Unfortunately, there has been an enormous deficit in that space. I am not just talking about mining; I am also talking about rural industry.

There are some answers. A few years ago there was an answer by providing competitive energy pricing to the north-west. There was a lot of money contributed from the federal level towards the transmission line that would have kept competitive energy pricing in the north-west. But at the state level that was not committed to. Now, we do not have a transmission line and we are also battling rising gas prices. That is something that we have to address.


At the moment, rural debt and the cost of rural debt is by far and away having the biggest impact on the economy in rural areas. If we can address that issue, we could have a good, viable industry that creates jobs, that pays taxes and that keeps our towns alive. There is a good, viable solution to address that issue by having a reconstruction board. It is also cost effective for taxpayers and it solves a lot of problems that the government has in balancing its budget down here. Without it, we have a lot of problems.

While I am talking about problems, last week I was driving through the west. After three years of drought the owner of a good, solid local business that by all means should be travelling well—and I think his would be a good case in point for all the businesses that exist in every town in my electorate outside of Cloncurry and Mount Isa—said to me, ‘Rob, I have to save each week to see if I can get enough money to fuel the car to go to Townsville to pick up stuff.’ That is the sort of poverty that I am talking about in the north-west at the moment. These people are on their knees. They need some help from the government and if we do not help them, a lot of towns out there will struggle to maintain their existence. We are dying in numbers now. We have had year 7 taken from us. Every industry in my electorate is affected. There are not many other reasons to be out there, because it is pretty remote. The people in my area desperately need help.

There are some answers, but it will take some affirmative action from this government. The time to act on this issue was about six months ago. There is a plea from my area to get some action on this issue. I am talking about investment in critical infrastructure. I can throw in things like work on the Hann Highway and investment in water and sewerage in those industry-rich areas. We do not want glass baubles and shiny things; we need things that are going to develop industry or nurture and stimulate industry. The people out there want jobs. They want certainty.

I think the loss of those Glencore jobs is a good wake-up call. We need to be affirmative. Queensland wants a signal from the government. Regardless of what the deficit or debt is, they want to see affirmative action from the government and see it involving itself to create opportunities for jobs and industry.

Bulimba Electorate, Business Confidence

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (12.17 pm): There are many fantastic businesses in my electorate. Wherever I go they are telling me how pleased they are that the Palaszczuk government is talking up the economy and, not only that, that we are listening to what business is telling us and we are responding. Just the other day someone from one of the major peak bodies was telling me what it was like working with—if you could call it that—the LNP government where it was clearly its way or the highway and how excellent it is just to work with this government instead and know that we genuinely want to know what business thinks. In fact, this morning the Premier and the Minister for Tourism made similar comments. The Premier referred to someone saying how refreshing it was to work with this government. I think the Minister for Tourism said that someone had said to her, ‘Business has got its mojo back under this government and that is fantastic.’ So I take the genuinely positive approach and listening attitude of the Palaszczuk government and combine it with—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order on my left!

Ms FARMER: Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you—tangible initiatives to deliver jobs now and jobs for the future, and I refer to initiatives such as our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland jobs package and our \$180 million Advance Queensland package, and you have a real agenda to get our economy moving again.

The results are speaking for themselves. Since the election of the Palaszczuk government in Queensland, an extra 28,500 jobs have been created. Housing investor finance commitments in Queensland have hit a near eight-year high. According to the latest quarterly ANZ/Property Council Survey, confidence in the property sector has risen two points, putting Queensland above the national

average. The Property Council has acknowledged that our positive economic policies are one of the key factors behind that increase in confidence—initiatives like the government's new proposed planning legislation, along with the SEQ Regional Plan and our new State Infrastructure Plan.

In the last quarter, Queensland business confidence was the highest of all the mainland states for two months in a row. Consumer confidence has increased. In fact, the NAB business survey—these figures were released just in the last hour or so—show that Queensland remains the highest of the mainland states in trend terms. Queensland has an exciting new pipeline of major developments: we all know about stage 2 of the Gold Coast light rail project, the Queen's Wharf integrated resort development, Aquis in Cairns, ASF on the Gold Coast and the Herston Quarter in Brisbane, just to name a few.


Our exporters make a huge contribution to the Queensland economy with goods exports of more than \$47 billion and service exports of about \$10 billion, according to the latest figures. What are some examples of those? LNG exports contributed to a 15.7 per cent increase in the nominal value of Queensland's overseas merchandise exports in the August quarter, compared to the same period last year. There has been a 9.7 per cent increase in coal exports. Beef exports have increased by 33.4 per cent in the 12 months to the August quarter and crops exports by \$315 million. We know that in recent weeks the Premier has led a hugely successful trade mission to China and Japan. We have a massive \$30 billion worth of trade with China and Japan, which are our top two trading partners. The value of our agreements with them, including the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, cannot be overstated.

I cannot speak about business in this state without mentioning some of the outstanding businesses, both large and small, within the Bulimba electorate and some of the individuals who are associated with them and who are now being acknowledged for excellence in their fields. I want to mention some of them here now. Australian Country Choice was a finalist in the agribusiness category of the Premier's Export Awards. Safe work and return to work finalists include Decmil Australia for most significant improvements to work health and safety performance, plus the best health and safety management system; NOJA Power Switchgear for best solution to an identified electrical issue; Ecoriginals for the 2015 Telstra Queensland Start-Up Award; Susie Upton from Child Aware, winner of the 2015 Young Women's Business Award; and Savour Australia HOSTPLUS Awards for excellence in Queensland and Northern Territory restaurants and catering, for Satay Ria and Sushi Train, both in Cannon Hill. We are so proud of those businesses in our local area. I thank them for everything that they do to contribute to our local economy and community, and also to the Queensland economy.

The Palaszczuk government is pro growth and pro jobs and that is showing through. Most of all, we are about supporting Queensland to be the best it can be. We will continue to work with business and industry to promote jobs, growth and investment. I am very proud to be a part of that government.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.21 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 [[1366](#)].

Tabled paper: Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1367](#)].

The Family Responsibilities Commission is an independent statutory body established under the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008, the act. The FRC is a key mechanism supporting Queensland's welfare reform program based in the community areas of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The welfare reform program is a successful tripartite partnership between the Queensland and Commonwealth governments and the Cape York institute. A representative from each partner constitutes the Family Responsibilities Board that advises me about the operation of the FRC and, if requested, can also provide advice to the FRC.

As noted in the act, the main objects that form the foundation of the FRC are to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas and to help community members resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of the community. To assist in achieving this goal, the FRC is constituted of a commissioner and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local commissioners.

The fundamental way the FRC contributes to the objective of securing more resilient communities is by having the FRC convene conferences with community members who are the subject of formal notification for breaching a trigger under the act. Currently, the act provides for four trigger events. Those triggers operate when: a child does not attend school or is not enrolled; a child safety report is made; a person is convicted of an offence before the court, including the Childrens Court; a tenancy agreement is breached or the premises are used for an illegal purpose. Once the FRC is in receipt of a notification, it will then decide whether to request the person attend a conference in order to address the offending behaviour. In the case of a child convicted before the Childrens Court, the parent of the child will be the relevant person for the conferencing. In all cases, the FRC might decide that it will not take any action or give the person a warning about the offending behaviour, or it might recommend or order that the person attend community support services to address the offending behaviour, or where it considers it is warranted the FRC might order compulsory income management over the person's welfare payments.

Unfortunately, however, the current triggers do not cover all aspects of antisocial behaviour. Domestic violence is unacceptable. The issue of domestic violence has been forcefully drawn to our attention recently. If a person cannot feel safe at home and with their family, that is nothing short of a tragedy. As noted in the final report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, *Not now, not ever—putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*, it is a horrifying statistic that in Queensland the number of reported incidents increased from 58,000 in 2011-12 to 66,000 in 2013-14. That equates to more than 180 reports to police of domestic violence incidents every day.

In investigating and preparing the report, the task force, which included Ms Ada Panawya Woolla, a local commissioner for Aurukun and now deputy mayor, received submissions suggesting a domestic and family violence trigger be created to facilitate FRC conferencing and referrals in circumstances where domestic violence orders are made by the courts. Recommendation No. 93 of the task force report subsequently recommended that the Queensland government amend the act to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent. By including an amendment to the act to give legislative effect to recommendation No. 93, this government reinforces its commitment to address the incidence of domestic violence and, as far as the welfare reform communities are involved, reiterate its commitment to provide a mechanism to restore socially responsible standards of behaviour and help community members resume primary responsibility for themselves, other community members and families.

The bill also introduces a number of measures that take account of the practical realities of the day-to-day business of the FRC that have arisen since its establishment in 2008, to make sure it can operate in the most efficient way. As I have said, the FRC might, in appropriate circumstances, order that a person be subjected to compulsory income management in relation to their welfare payments. Under the act, a decision to order income management can only be exercised by the FRC commissioner. In recognition of their experience and representative role within the communities, the bill allows delegation of the commissioner's responsibilities to the chairperson of a commission constituted by local commissioners where the commissioner is satisfied that the appointed chairperson is appropriately qualified. Importantly, this increases recognition of the authority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local commissioners. It will also allow cost savings in terms of the commissioner's travel and improve practical flexibility for the FRC.

The bill contributes to this improved flexibility by expanding the eligibility requirements for the FRC registrar position to recognise the managerial and executive elements that the role requires. Eligibility requirements will be extended from the person needing to be a lawyer or having relevant court experience to reference a person who is appropriately qualified for the position given its expanded role. As the Commonwealth government has phased out its community development employment projects or CDEP scheme, the bill will amend the act by deleting all outdated references to CDEP scheme participants.

The proposed amendments that introduce the domestic violence trigger will also clarify the process for generating agency notices under the existing youth justice trigger. The amendment will require that the court provide a notice regarding a child when it is advised that the child or the child's parent live or have lived in a welfare reform community.

I thank all the FRC commissioners, community leaders and other community members within the welfare reform community areas and our partners, the Australian government and the Cape York Institute, for their continued commitment to welfare reform in their respective communities. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.27 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

RETAIL SHOP LEASES AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015 [[1368](#)].

Tabled paper: Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1369](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015. The Retail Shop Leases Act 1994 governs retail leasing in Queensland and its object is to promote efficiency and equity in the conduct of certain retail businesses in our state. The act sets out mandatory minimum standards for retail shop leases and provides a low-cost dispute resolution process for the retail sector. The statutory framework under the act encourages good leasing practice and promotes fairness during the negotiation and term of the lease. It addresses imbalance in negotiating power and access to information between major shopping centre landlords and small retail tenants.

The purpose of the bill is to give effect to the consultation outcomes from the statutory review of the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994. The review commenced in 2011 and included public consultation on a discussion paper and an options paper. There were 58 submissions to the review and submitters included key retail sector and professional stakeholders, individual tenants and landlords, as well as legal and valuation professionals.

The review consultation also included a stakeholder reference group process. The reference group comprised representatives from the National Retail Association, the Australian Retailers Association, the Australian Property Institute, Lease 1, the Property Council of Australia Queensland, the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the Queensland Newsagents Federation, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Queensland, the Queensland Law Society, the Large Law Firm Group and the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland.

The reference group considered 127 options for changes to the act raised through the public consultation process and provided its report and recommendations to the former government in December 2013. The reference group report was tabled in the parliament in November 2014 by the former government on introduction of the Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2014. The amendments contained in the bill are based on the findings and recommendations in the reference group report. This bill represents the government's respect for the long consultation process and the hard work of those stakeholders over many years.

The reference group has also been consulted in the drafting of this bill, and I thank them for all their work. In particular, the reference group provided input into an amendment that will exclude a certain class of non-retail leases from the operation of the act. This exclusion will apply to non-retail leases on a level of a shopping centre or in a building that is part of a centre where, on the date the lease is entered into, 25 per cent or less of the total leased floor area of the level or building is used for retail business purposes. This prospective amendment will reduce red tape and compliance costs for non-retail tenants and their landlords by removing certain lease preparation and disclosure costs and allowing the parties the commercial flexibility to negotiate key lease terms. The amendment will also

give effect to the reference group's in-principle recommendation that the act should not apply to non-retail leases in an area of a shopping centre generally regarded or identified as commercial or for non-retail service providers.

The bill contains various measures to enhance protection for retail tenants. For example, it will require disclosure to incoming retail franchisees and also by landlords to sitting tenants who are looking to renew their lease under an option. The bill will also safeguard prospective buyers of a retail business by requiring the seller to give them disclosure about the lease for the business premises before the business contract is entered into. The bill will improve transparency for tenants in relation to centre management fees and marketing expenditures and provide for release of an assignor's guarantors from their liabilities under the lease.

Other amendments in the bill directed to reducing red tape for the Queensland retail sector include: narrowing the act's coverage by excluding leases with a floor area greater than 1,000 square metres in recognition that these tenants are generally sophisticated business operators who do not require special protection; and exempting shopping centre landlords from liability to compensate tenants for trading losses where the centre is closed in an emergency situation, for example, during flooding. The bill also includes various amendments to clarify and improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the act, including providing flexibility for tenant waiver of the landlord disclosure period and streamlining current market rent determination processes.

Given differing interests and priorities of landlords and tenants, there were issues on which the reference group was divided and for which no change is provided in the bill. One such matter is the requirement for statutory review of the act every seven years to determine whether its provisions remain appropriate.

On balance, this government will retain the mandatory review provision to ensure that the red-tape reduction and other changes in this bill, and the act generally, operate effectively and appropriately for individual retail businesses and the retail sector as a whole. Future reviews could be conducted on a targeted basis and would be expected to be forward focussed having regard to new or emerging industry or legal issues and future developments in other jurisdictions.

This bill seeks to continue the good work of stakeholders and industry over many years. I hope this bill can achieve practical benefits for those in this industry. It has widespread support amongst stakeholders. I hope it can progress with bipartisan support. I commend this bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.35 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee


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

Before we move to the next order of the day, I indicate that students from Padua College in the electorate of Stafford, represented by Dr Anthony Lynham, are in the gallery.

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 3 June (see p. 1036).

Second Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.35 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its report tabled on 10 August 2015 and those who made submissions to the committee about the bill and also those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry.

The bill contains two major components: firstly, changing the Queen's Birthday and Labour Day public holidays; and, secondly, implementing changes to the way high-risk work licences are administered under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. I note that the committee agreed that the proposed amendments to the high-risk work licences be supported but was unable to reach agreement on the proposed changes to public holidays.

The committee made only one recommendation which was that, should the bill pass, the minister work with community and other groups to alleviate any inconvenience caused by the movement of public holidays. I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 6, 55th Parliament—Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response [\[1370\]](#).

The government accepts the recommendation of the committee and notes that the changes to public holidays made by the bill do not commence until 2016. It is appropriate that the proposed changes do not commence until 2016 so that the community and other groups have sufficient notice and opportunity to make appropriate adjustments for events in 2016 and beyond.

The bill, from 2016, returns the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in October to its rightful place on the first Monday in May and moves the Queen's Birthday public holiday from the second Monday in June to the first Monday in October. While the name of the public holiday in October will change, it is important to note that there will still be a Monday to recover after footy finals weekend. As a very proud North Queenslander, I can say that I needed that Monday to recover.

It has been necessary to reinstate the date for Labour Day and change the Queen's Birthday public holidays because of the spiteful actions taken by the former Newman LNP government. After extensive public consultation in 2011, the former Labor government responded to the overwhelming preferences expressed by the community by moving the Queen's Birthday public holiday to October in 2012. From 2013 the former LNP government, without any community consultation and without taking it to an election, shamefully moved the Queen's Birthday to June and moved the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May—which had been a long tradition having been celebrated for over 100 years—to October.

In 2013, while in opposition, Labor made a commitment to honour Queensland's history and reinstate Labour Day to the first Monday in May. In addition, Labor supported a public holiday in the second half of the year by shifting the Queen's Birthday public holiday to October. We are doing what we said we would do and we are delivering on this historically significant election commitment.

There is a great deal of cultural and community significance attached to the celebration of Labour Day in Queensland on the first Monday in May. One of Australia's first Labour Day marches was held in Queensland in 1891, when striking shearers in Barcaldine marched with flags and banners. The day has been consistently celebrated as a public holiday at that time since 1901. It is the significant history of events such as these in May in Queensland and the subsequent achievement by the labour movement of the eight-hour working day, collective bargaining, fair and safe working conditions and minimum wages for modern society which are recognised by observing Labour Day on the first Monday in May.

There is no corresponding historical or cultural significance attached to the celebration of the Queen's Birthday in June, with the date of our current sovereign Queen Elizabeth II's birthday being in April. The bill reinstates arrangements introduced by the then Bligh Labor government from 2012 to celebrate the Queen's Birthday public holiday on the first Monday in October which responded to overwhelming community support for a public holiday to occur in the second half of the year and specifically on that day. I note the Queensland Tourism Industry Council reported to the Finance and Administration Committee during examination of the current bill that there was a strong preference by their members for the movement of the June public holiday to October—a preference which was indicated to them through an extensive statewide survey.

The movement of the Labour Day and Queen's Birthday public holidays as proposed by this bill also spreads public holidays across the calendar year similar to other states and territories. Western Australia, New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory all observe a public holiday in the second half of the year around October. Victoria already celebrates Melbourne Cup Day in November and a public holiday for the eve of the AFL grand final in October. The proposed

amendments, however, do not affect public holidays in 2015. Making them effective from 2016 delivers certainty and stability by giving prior notice to business, community organisations and local governments of the changes.


Under work health and safety laws across Australia, a high-risk work licence is required for persons operating certain high-risk equipment such as cranes and forklifts, or performing scaffolding duties. High-risk work licensing ensures those who operate this type of equipment or perform these duties can do so safely and competently. There are approximately 260,000 high-risk work licence holders in Queensland, with around 30,000 new high-risk work licences granted each year.

This bill will change how the Office of Industrial Relations delivers its high-risk work licence services by leveraging off the Department of Transport and Main Roads' existing licensing system. The bill includes amendments to transport legislation administered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads to set up a framework that will allow workers to apply for a high-risk work licence through an online process, rather than in person at an Australia Post outlet. The amendments extend the Department of Transport and Main Roads' existing scheme for taking, keeping and using digital photographs and signatures for transport licence products to allow the Office of Industrial Relations to use these records and the department's card production processes for the purposes of issuing, replacing or renewing a high-risk work licence.

Implementing an online application system will have a number of benefits for workers, employers and government. For workers it will make it easier to apply for a high-risk work licence, especially for those living in rural or remote areas or for those people who might be fly-in fly-out workers. Further it will allow workers to apply for their licence 24 hours a day, seven days a week at any location. For example, a person holding a current driver's licence and who has recently completed training and assessment in operating a forklift will simply be able to apply online for their high-risk work licence from their workplace or using their smart tablet at home without the need to attend Australia Post or have their photograph taken. Similarly, if a person renews their driver's licence and they have recently had their photograph taken for a high-risk work licence there would be no need to attend a Department of Transport and Main Roads licensing customer service centre to have their photograph taken again.

For employers it will save both time and money as workers will no longer need to attend an Australia Post outlet or be required to purchase a passport sized photograph. In fact, the Office of Industrial Relations in Queensland Treasury anticipates that workers and employers will save approximately \$1.6 million per annum. Government will also benefit from the Office of Industrial Relations using the Department of Transport and Main Roads existing licence processing capabilities. In particular, it is estimated to result in savings of up to \$750,000 per annum. In addition, the proposed online service is expected to reduce delays in processing applications, facilitating a faster and more efficient service along with more robust identification verification processes which significantly reduce the potential for identify fraud.

Importantly, the amendments in the bill and the enhancements to the Department of Transport and Main Roads information system to accommodate high-risk work licensing establishes reusable infrastructure. This will allow for additional departments and agencies to transition their licensing application process to the system and have licences produced under similar arrangements, yielding an increasing return on investment for government. This is what this bill is about. I encourage all members to have their say, particularly as it relates to the holidays component of the bill. I am very proud to stand in this House and be overseeing a bill which is about restoring Labour Day to its rightful place in May.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (12.44 pm): In the speech by the Treasurer that we have just heard, we heard words like 'shameful' and 'spiteful' and other emotion laden language. The word we did not hear was 'sensible', and that was what the changes that the former government made to the public holidays in this state were. We have a situation here where both sides of the House agree that there needs to be a change to the spread of holidays in Queensland to make them more sensible throughout the year. There are too many holidays in the first part of the year and not enough in the second half of the year. So the question becomes which of the holidays—the sensible ones to look at are the Queen's Birthday holiday or the Labour Day holiday—is the more sensible to move?

The reason that the former government chose to move the Labour Day holiday was that for a number of reasons that is the more sensible one to move. In every state in Australia, except Western Australia, the Queen's Birthday holiday is celebrated in June. So it would seem that for consistency with the other states the sensible one to remain in June would be the Queen's Birthday holiday. On the other hand, the Labour Day holiday—and that is an important holiday; we on this side of the House do not any in any way deride the fact that it is important to mark that day. I remember myself going to big May Day processions in years gone by and printers' devils running down Queen Street much to the entertainment of me as a young boy watching that procession.

Mr Hinchliffe: I note you call it May Day, not Labour Day.

Mr WALKER: There is nothing in the calendar of the church or this parliament—I remind the Leader of the House—that requires that celebration to be in May. Nobody else in Australia feels that way either. When is Labour Day celebrated in the rest of the country? In New South Wales it is on the first Monday in October; in Victoria it is on the second Monday in March; in Tasmania it is on the second Monday in March; in South Australia it is on the first Monday in October; in Western Australia it is on the first Monday in March; in the Northern Territory—you finally hit the jackpot!—it is on the first Monday in May; and in the Australian Capital Territory it is on the first Monday in October. Queensland was also proposed to be on the first Monday in October but is now proposed to be on the first Monday in May. There is nothing in the DNA of this day or in the culture that surrounds it that requires it to be celebrated in May. Obviously workers around the rest of the country do not feel that.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr WALKER: That is right. There are certainly other countries who do it but no other states. The previous government was sensible in keeping the Queen's Birthday holiday in line with other states and realising that there was no consistency to Labour Day throughout the rest of the country. The other sensible thing about the way the previous government did it was that it does spread the holidays more evenly if you move the May holiday rather than the June holiday. There was nothing ideological or—I am going back to the words that the Treasurer used—'shameful' or 'spiteful' about the decision taken by the previous government. It was an eminently sensible and logical thing to do if you wanted to spread the holidays more logically and clearly throughout the year.

If that is the case, if that was a sensible decision, what is this all about? It is pretty clear what it is about, Mr Deputy Speaker. You will not be surprised I am sure to hear me say that it is nothing more than payback to the union bosses for their support of the Labor Party during the January state election. We know that Labor takes its cue from the unions, and the rest of Queensland know that too. I have a pile of papers here about union influence on the Labor Party. The people of Queensland knew what their influence on the Labor Party was.

In a poll that was published earlier in the year, 47 per cent of people polled said that they knew that Labor was too close to the unions and that it was the unions who were running this government. That is clearly what is driving this. It is a payback to the unions. In fact, the day after the change of government this year QCU President John Battams—and I think we have heard his name recently; if we are wanting to talk about paybacks of all sorts, Mr Battams has certainly been paid back—was already issuing instructions to the government on the timing of Labour Day, proclaiming that Labour Day would return to its traditional day in May. The Labor Party has rolled over to its union bosses to do this for an ideological reason and to make an ideological point, not a practical or a sensible point.

Mr Hinchliffe: Responding to an election commitment is being ideological?

Mr WALKER: Responding to an election commitment that was made for a very clear reason: for the support that you guys received.

Mr Stevens: You got the union help.

Mr WALKER: That is right. The national alignment given by the previous government's decision in this matter is going to be set aside in an ideological campaign by this government. We have seen it not only in this legislation but also in the legislation that brought forward the union encouragement policy. We will eventually see it if the government ever gets around to bringing back to the House the workplace safety legislation. We will see the payback yet again in fine form.

This is pure ideology. We have adopted a common-sense approach. The approach that has been adopted here is an ideological one. The committee heard from a number of people who made the point in submissions to the committee. The committee, as has been pointed out to the House, was not able to agree on this aspect of the legislation. The Carpentaria Shire Council pointed out some practical issues in moving the Queen's Birthday holiday from June to October with a number of local events being held on the June long weekend each year. That is similar for a number of organisations around the state that have already put their position in place. Now because of this typical approach by this government of revisionism—anything that was brought in by the previous government has to be changed—they are once again being put out to deal with that ideological and revisionist concept.

Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council wanted Labour Day to remain in October. The North Burnett Regional Council wanted the Queen's Birthday to stay in June and had no preference for the date of the Labour Day holiday.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr WALKER: It makes sense, as the Leader of Opposition Business says. We also have to take note of what business in this state is looking to do and what its desires are with respect to these matters. The CCIQ, which represents business, particularly small business, in this state, urged the committee to note that it was the Queensland business community's preferred option to leave the Queen's Birthday holiday as it is on the same date across Australia, with the exception of Western Australia. However, to achieve an even spread of holidays across the year that inferred leaving the Labour Day holiday in October.

The CCIQ noted that this option has positive implications for tourism and for the economy, but it does relegate the government's commitment to the union movement to reinstate Labour Day to May. The CCIQ noted and reinforced the point that had been taken on board by the previous government when we made the original decision, and that was that national consistency and an even spread of holidays across the year are the two outcomes that best grow our economy and create jobs. That is best achieved by moving the Labour Day holiday to October and by leaving the Queen's Birthday holiday in June, putting ideology to one side and looking at an outcome that assists—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr WALKER: We will always support national consistency, Leader of the House, where it is the decision of the state to comply with national consistency.

Mr Stevens: When it is good for Queensland—all of Queensland.

Mr WALKER: When it is good for Queensland, we will support it, not when it is good for the union bosses who happened to put you blokes there. Consistency is good for Queensland. What the former government brought in was consistent and appropriately spread the holidays throughout the year. This government is trying to pay back its union bosses and ideologically shattering that sensible consistency. The CCIQ requested the committee to note that it was most important to Queensland businesses to have the 11 core public holidays and no more. The decision to move Labour Day in 2016 allows for ample planning so the timing was understandable.

The government talks loudly about how it previously consulted with the community and the community loudly endorsed the change that it is now proposing. The consultation paper that is talked about was released in 2011 by the Bligh government and it was called *Getting the Balance Right*. It noted that 24½ thousand people submitted to the online survey about these matters. Of that, they purport to say that 85 per cent of the respondents supported moving the Queen's Birthday holiday to the second half of the year and that 82 per cent of respondents specifically agreed to move it to a Monday in October.

I was not content to rely on that summary. I went back to the consultation paper. The consultation paper is a typical Labor Party consultation paper—*Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland*. What is proposed is not: 'Can you tell us which of the holidays you want to move?' What is proposed is this—

It is proposed to move the Queen's birthday public holiday in Queensland to the second half of the year from 2012, ideally to September or October. In order to avoid the September school holidays, a day in October would seem the best option.

What was proposed to the Queensland people was not what we would expect: a choice or a proper survey of whether people wished the Queen's Birthday holiday to be moved or whether they wished the Labour Day holiday to be moved. Labour Day was held sacrosanct and all that was put to people was a proposal to move a June holiday to October. In the sense of making those holidays uniform throughout the year, it is hardly surprising that people agreed with that, but no choice was put to the people of Queensland. I table that discussion paper with respect to that particular issue.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland' [\[1371\]](#).

This was telling the people what they were going to do, loading the survey and then telling everyone that the majority of people agreed with them. It was hardly a fair dinkum, open and honest survey of people's attitudes towards this issue. We will be opposing the provisions of the bill that relate to the change of the holiday. It should be noted—and I will make the point once again to make it quite clear—that the Queen's Birthday holiday is on the second Monday of June in every state and territory except Western Australia. We are now proposing to move ourselves out of line with that. On the other hand, the Labour Day holiday is scattered throughout the year in all states. No other states regard May Day as a sacrosanct date on which Labour Day has to be held. In New South Wales, it is the first Monday in October; in Victoria, the second Monday in March; in Tasmania, the second Monday in March; in South Australia, the first Monday in October; in Western Australia, the first Monday in March; in the Northern Territory, the first Monday in May; in the ACT, the first Monday in October. With this move, we are moving ourselves away—

Mr Stevens: Backwards.

Mr WALKER:—or backwards from national consistency on this matter, and that is to the detriment of Queensland's economy and to the jobs that are necessary for our state to flourish as we wish it would, all sacrificed on the altar of commitment and promises to the union movement. As the Leader of Opposition Business and the member for Nanango say, it is all in the name of expediency, not of principle.

The second part of the bill relates to high-risk work licences. The committee was agreed on this section of the legislation, and we on this side of the House have no difficulty with those provisions. The amendments in respect of high-risk work licence changes were commenced by the former LNP government and the changes proposed in this bill follow on from that process. We will not be challenging those provisions of the bill. However, we will not be accepting the bill with respect to the retrograde moves to take Queensland away from a nationally consistent position because of commitments or repayments to the union movement that this government is so clearly beholden to.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of students from Iona College in the electorate of Lytton.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Error in Notice of Motion

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I have received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition advising that there was an error in the notice of motion he gave this morning. The error was with one word. The 'Leader of the House' should read 'Leader of the Opposition'. The difficulty is that, without alteration of the notice of motion, it is factually incorrect. Consistent with previous rulings, I am not prepared to let stand a notice of motion that is factually incorrect. I appreciate that this is an obvious drafting error and so, in accordance with standing order 70, I amend the notice of motion to substitute 'Leader of the House' with 'Leader of the Opposition' to make the notice of motion factually correct. I am amending the notice of motion in this way as I am satisfied that no prejudice occurred to any member of the House in that I am confident all members knew the Leader of the Opposition's intent.


Further, I wish to draw to the attention of the House that the notice of motion is seeking leave to suspend standing and sessional orders to allow a substantive motion to amend standing orders to be moved and debated. Debate on the question is limited to the merits of the suspension of standing and sessional orders, and members should not debate the substance of the proposed substantive motion.

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed, on motion of Mr Pitt—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.32 pm): As chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, I rise to speak to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The bill contains two major components: moving Labour Day from the first Monday in October back to the first Monday in May and moving the Queen's Birthday from the second Monday in June to the first Monday in October, and implementing changes to the way high-risk work licences are managed. Since there appears to be universal agreement on the high-risk work licences, I choose to speak only on that aspect of the bill which deals with public holidays. However, I would like to congratulate all of the departmental officers involved with the high-risk work licence project on what seems to have been an excellent process and a really great example of cross-agency collaboration.

This is yet another bill to right a wrong, which is the restoration of the Labour Day public holiday to the day which had been marked for the occasion for well over 100 years and which was stripped away by the LNP within six months of coming to government—basically as soon as they could do it. It is a simple story. On the one hand it is about celebrating the battle for the hard-won rights and conditions of Queensland workers, including people who are not union members, but on the other hand it is a story about spite. That is exactly why Campbell Newman and the member for Kawana—and it is interesting

that most of these sorts of stories seem to come back to the member for Kawana. It is about the way that those two changed the Labour Day holiday. There was no impetus. There was no clamouring for change on any of the grounds raised by the member for Mansfield. There were no throngs of people knocking down their doors saying there was a crisis of national consistency in public holidays. There was no consultation at all. It was simply a way of them having a whack at unions in exactly the same way as they whacked the public servants, lawyers, nurses, doctors, community organisations and just about anybody else you can think of, although I do not think they hate or go on about any of those groups quite as much as they go on about unions.

However, when they made this rude gesture towards union members, they failed to recognise two things. Union members are not some group of thugs who sit away from the rest of the community in that caricature that members opposite so frequently paint. Union members are the people who we all see every day in our lives. It is the man who serves you at the fruit shop. It is the lady you sit next to on the bus. It is the person you pass jogging every day or the person who is the head of your local P&C. They are ordinary, everyday Queenslanders and they are the people to whom the LNP were mean and spiteful when they changed this day.

The other thing the LNP did not take into account is related to those people who are not union members. We on this side of the House acknowledge that there are many Queenslanders who are not union members and many Queenslanders who do not like unions at all. However, what the LNP did not realise is that it was their spitefulness that these particular people—these people who are not union members—did not like. To a lot of people, this change was just another example of the LNP picking an unnecessary and petty fight. It took about one second of radio time, of Campbell Newman spruiking his new book, for us to remember just how petty and spiteful they were and still are. That is the reason that they lost 36 seats in one fell swoop at the last election.

The story about this bill is this. In 2011 the Bligh Labor government conducted an extensive consultation around the arrangement of public holidays across the year. Queensland was at that time the only state not to have statewide holidays between mid-June and late December. The then premier felt it was important to have a more even spread of public holidays across the year. More than 24,000 people responded to an online survey that was part of the consultation. That is a lot of Queenslanders in anyone's book. There would be no pollster or researcher who did not say that that gave the government a good indication of opinion. A total of 85.4 per cent of those respondents supported moving the Queen's Birthday to the second half of the year, with 82 per cent supporting moving it to a Monday in October. As you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, a Labor government is a consensus government and so it was changed.

This consultation is in stark contrast to the LNP's 2012 bill—and is this story starting to sound familiar? No public or stakeholder consultation of any kind was undertaken by the then government to inform their amendments. In fact, significant criticism was aimed at the government at the time for the disruption caused to the business and broader community by altering public holiday arrangements so soon after the 2011 amendments, particularly when there had been no apparent impetus for change and it seemed clear that it was simply based on ideological grounds, which makes the high moral ground that they take on small business so hypocritical. On and on they go about the care they take for small business, saying that they are the champions of small business, but there was no regard at all for the disruption that they caused to small business by making that change.


Issues have been raised by the member for Mansfield—and I am sure they will be raised by others—about the need for national consistency of these public holidays, and I referred to that earlier. Although this was raised a bit, there was no evidence presented to the committee to show that a lack of consistency across the states and territories does have a financial or any other impact on business. In fact, it was pointed out to the committee that such inconsistency has existed for many years without measurable impact not only across the states but even across local government areas in Queensland. The local show holidays are a case in point. Non-government members also raised the impact on tourism as an important consideration for keeping the Queen's Birthday public holiday in June. However, the QTIC itself reported that its members, through a quite comprehensive survey, indicated a strong preference for moving the public holiday to October, and we were very happy to hear that.

I do acknowledge and sympathise with the concerns that were raised by the three organisations that appeared before us—Wujal Wujal and Carpentaria shire councils and the Goondiwindi District Historical Society—about the impact of the change to the Queen's Birthday public holiday on significant local events. Possibly more councils had concerns. However, we did not receive submissions on this particular point from any councils other than those mentioned.

I do know that under the previous government similar issues were raised by organisations about the change to the Labour Day holiday, but that was not heeded and I do not think that will be raised by any on that side of the House. However, on the basis of the concerns raised by those three organisations, the committee did make its one unanimous recommendation, which was that the minister work with community and other groups to alleviate any inconvenience that might be caused by the movement of public holidays. I would like to thank and acknowledge the Treasurer for noting this.

There is a cultural and community significance to the date on which Labour Day is celebrated in Queensland which cannot be said of the date on which the Queen's Birthday is acknowledged, and I say that with the greatest respect to the Queen. As we all know her actual birthday is in fact in April, and the Queen's Birthday in mid-June does not have any significant community celebrations attached to it. I do not have to tell anyone on this side of the House where Labour Day came from, and I do not think anyone on that side is really that interested. However, we do know that Labour Day means a lot to us in Queensland. It means a lot across Australia, but the first Monday in May means a lot to many people in Queensland. It has been marked and celebrated right across our state since 1891, when striking shearers marched with flags and banners. For the member for Mansfield to suggest that our proposed change in this legislation is a sellout to unions when in fact we are returning the state to something which has been celebrated and revered for over 100 years across this state is simply ludicrous. By passing this bill we will be paying respect to what has been a strong and important tradition and celebration for many, many years in this state and we will be doing the right thing by the workers of Queensland, union or nonunion.


I would like to thank our research director Deborah Jeffrey and her staff for the wonderful work that they did on this bill and all the support they have provided to this committee and all of the people and organisations who made submissions to our committee. There were some very passionate submissions made from both sides, and I thank all of those people. I would like to thank the member for Nudgee for helping us out on one occasion by sitting in as a proxy and I thank the members of our committee on both sides. It is a very hardworking committee. We do not always agree, but I certainly appreciate and respect the hard work that all members put into this. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (2.41 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, particularly in relation to the sections dealing with transport. As is pointed out in the bill, it does deal with the issuing of licences. As is indicated, there are approximately 260,000 high-risk work licence holders currently in Queensland and approximately 30,000 applications for high-risk work licences are made every year to authorise operators of high-risk equipment such as cranes, forklifts and the erection of scaffolding. As the minister quite rightly indicated, these licences have been in some ways difficult to obtain in the past depending on where you are in this great state of ours. I know in my area it may be more easy to get one of these licences, but if you are in some of the more remote and regional parts of Queensland getting the required proof was more of a challenge, and this legislation does deal with that.

I wanted to address the issue of privacy, and this is something that we have to be careful with when we are looking at legislation such as this. I note that the issue of privacy was dealt with by the committee, and it was confirmed during the committee's deliberations that the same privacy standards will apply as those already applying in DTMR products. That is important because modern technology does provide easier access, better mechanisms and more innovative approaches, but it can also mean that there are risks. I am pleased to see that the committee has dealt with this.

Once we have dealt with the privacy issues the important thing is simplification of legislation. This bill does this by removing previous duplications across a number of pieces of legislation. The consolidation of these provisions with the appropriate processes in place for the taking, keeping and using of digital photos and digitalised signatures for transport and non-transport products will make a significant difference.

I do welcome this legislation. This continues on the path that we put in place when we were in government previously in terms of reducing red tape for the whole transport industry so it can be more economical, efficient and effective. Over the next decade we expect to see a massive increase across this industry in terms of logistics. I welcome this legislation and I am pleased to see it before the parliament today.

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (2.45 pm): I rise today to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

An honourable member interjected.


Mr CRAWFORD: Yes, I do. I take that interjection. Labour Day in Australia is known in many countries as International Workers' Day or May Day. It developed out of the eight-hour-day movement, which sought to allow for eight hours for work, eight hours for leisure and eight hours for sleep. 1 May was officially recognised in the United States as a day of demonstration in 1893.

Australia's May Day celebrations began in 1890, in 1891 in Barcaldine the shearers' strike and march occurred and in 1854 there was the widely recognised and publicised Eureka Stockade rebellion in Ballarat, Victoria, where miners and colonial forces clashed and history was created. This is the kind of history that defines us as Australian, as hardworking battlers standing up for what you believe in and standing together to take action for change. These are the attributes that Australians went to war with and the attributes that placed Australia on the world stage respected for courage, bravery and mateship and being proudly labelled 'diggers' and 'rats'.

Workers have a proud history in Australia of standing up for their right to have a safe workplace and a fair day's pay. Labour Day is a day for workers; it is not a day that can be placed anywhere in the calendar. It deserves the same respect as other key holidays such as Australia Day. It belongs in May, and those opposite had no right to move it. It should be left where it belongs and not used as a political football. Since 1901 Labour Day in Queensland has been celebrated consistently on the first Monday in May. The Queen's Birthday public holiday originated in 1912.

In September 2011 the Bligh government released a discussion paper titled *Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland* as part of a review into the state's holiday system because at that time Queensland was the only state not to have a statewide public holiday between mid-June and late December. I note that the member for Mansfield mentioned the online survey and I will mention it again. Out of 24,505 respondents, an overwhelming 85.4 per cent—or in excess of 19,000 people—supported moving the Queen's Birthday to the second half of the year. Despite this, despite history and despite the obvious will of Queenslanders, those opposite in the last parliament moved Labour Day in a move that could only be seen as an insult to workers and a direct attack on the union movement and workers in a bid to break the way workers collectively stand up for their rights. It did not work, and 31 January proved it.

As a government why would you intentionally attack your workers by undermining the importance of their day—not ours: theirs? Those opposite got it wrong. They shifted the wrong day, and today I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that rights the wrong. I support the bill.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.49 pm): I rise to make a few brief comments in relation to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I take note of the previous speaker's advice that, overwhelmingly, people supported moving the Queen's Birthday holiday. Since they were only asked about moving the Queen's Birthday holiday that may be fair enough. It would have been interesting if the survey had bothered to ask about both options.

An opposition member: They reckon Queensland can't handle multiple choice.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection. Report No. 6 of the 55th Parliament's Finance and Administration Committee reports on the review of this particular piece of legislation—rushed again. All of it is in a hurry. It has always been in a hurry; it always will be in a hurry. We have yet again done what we did last time. That is, we listened to all of the evidence and then those on the government side ignored 80 per cent of the evidence. We on this side supported the people of Queensland.

Interestingly, I found some research online from the union movement that back in 1993 the union movement was quite buoyant and growing—up until that time, anyway—with membership of around 40 per cent. I have just put the piece of paper down and lost it, but it shows that union membership was around 40 per cent of the workforce. I think the union website stopped updating the chart in 2011 because the chart showed membership going down, down, down. By 2011 it was down to 20 per cent. It had halved from the early nineties through to 2011. I have just been advised by one of my colleagues that union membership is now around 17 per cent.

What we are talking about here is a comparison between the union movement, which represents 17 per cent of Queensland workers, and the rest of Queensland. There are 4.6 million or 4.7 million people in Queensland. Seventeen per cent of the workforce is supportive of moving the Labour Day weekend back to May. No-one else in Australia bothers with it. I am sorry: the Northern Territory does, so we are trying to fall into line with the Northern Territory. Don't worry about the rest of Australia; we will fall into line with the Northern Territory! We will go out of kilter in relation to the rest of Australia, but that is the union movement's way. That is the government members' way of dealing with these things: 'What do you think, union members?' 'We think this.' 'Right. Thanks for that. We'll take that on board. That's the way we will vote in committee.'

Council representatives from right around the state came and talked to us about their issues and so forth. None of them was supportive of changing things around, but the union movement was supportive of changing things around. They must get, like, a five-to-one advantage over the rest of Queensland because the councils represent 100 per cent of Queenslanders. Every Queenslanders lives in a council area so councils represent 100 per cent. They all came to us with their issues, with their problems, with what their economic loss would be in relation to all of this. But that is okay, because the union—the 17 per cent of the workforce—wanted it to go this way so that is what will happen.

Mr Walker interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection. With consultation after consultation, one sometimes wonders why we bother consulting with anyone but the unions, because the unions always win. Is that something those opposite would like?

Mr Russo interjected.


Mr CRANDON: I take the interjection. The preferred position of government members is that we only consult with the unions, that we only talk to the unions about anything and everything because the unions know everything. I need not go on.

I will make a few points in relation to some of the argument that was put forward. I have found the chart I was referring to earlier. It shows that in 1992 there was 40 per cent and it shows less than 20 per cent in 2011. I knew I had it somewhere. It looks good. I really am glad I found that.

Some of the arguments around moving the dates had to do with the Easter weekend not being relevant because it was held in March or early April, so I had a bit of a look. Over the next 30 years, 10 Easter weekends will fall in the second half of April. We all know that Anzac Day is 25 April. That will be there every year—year in, year out. I am not for one minute suggesting that people would be doing anything other than going to Anzac commemorations and what have you on that day. Ten of the next 30 Easter weekends fall in the second half of April, Anzac Day is on 25 April and then just a week or so later we have the Labour Day weekend, rather than having a five-week break—before all of this occurred—to the Queen's Birthday weekend and then celebrating Labour Day like everybody else in the country other than the Northern Territory, which celebrate it closer to the first weekend in October. I think Western Australia has it after the last weekend in September or something like that.

We reviewed all of the evidence. We had a look at it all. We had a bit of a chinwag about a few things. Then the government members threw all of that out, forgot all about that and voted with the unions yet again. It will be interesting to see when they stop voting with the unions. I look forward to the day that we have a bill come before this House that in committee we can actually sit down and talk about and actually vote on in support of all Queenslanders and not just those 17 per cent of the workforce that those opposite tend to focus on.

I will finish my contribution by thanking our secretariat and all those who took the time to communicate their views. I apologise to those people who were not union members, who did not support the union position, who did not support the government position, because it was a *fait accompli*. It did not matter what they said. They put wonderful, brilliant arguments forward but it was all for naught. It was all a waste of their effort. I hope this will not deter them from putting their views forward in the future. Of course, I also thank all of the members of the committee for their efforts. I look forward to working with them in the future for a much more balanced outcome on our bills.


 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (2.58 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. This bill will restore Labour Day to its rightful place in May. It will also streamline the process for high-risk work licences, reducing red tape and cost to government, business and workers. This is yet another commitment that this government is delivering on. We are delivering on our commitments and we are delivering for Queenslanders. This bill delivers on our election commitment to restore the Labour Day public holiday to the first Monday in May. It will also maintain a public holiday in the second half of the year by moving the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the first Monday in October. This will take effect in 2016. The Labour Day public holiday will be restored to its rightful place in 2016. The Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations made an announcement on 17 March this year that the changes would take effect in 2016. This provides the community with sufficient notice, so there should not be surprises here for anyone.

We have heard some statements from those opposite about listening to the community. I have to say that I do not think it is a good idea to take advice from those opposite about listening to the community because we all know that they do not have their finger on the pulse. Let us look at the evidence. A survey was undertaken in 2011. There was a strong community response to this survey. Some 24,505 people responded to this survey, with 19,393 or 85.4 per cent of those responding

supporting shifting the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second half of the year. Furthermore, of those who supported the shift, 82 per cent agreed to move the holiday specifically to the first Monday in October. This was a clear indication of community views. It is a clear set of numbers. It is a result that even those opposite should be able to understand. Of course, in 2012 what we saw was the then LNP government make changes to the Holidays Act to move the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May to the first Monday in October for 2013. There was no public or stakeholder consultation undertaken. There was no opportunity for people to have their say. It was a decision based on ideology, not a decision that was based on the best interests of Queensland.

The very strong response to the survey in 2011 was to have a public holiday in the second half of the year. This bill recognises that desire from the community. It should also be noted that the Queensland Tourism Industry Council reported to the committee that it was the strong preference of its members to shift the public holiday in June to October. The QTIC conducted an extensive statewide survey to come to this position. Tourism is vitally important to this state and it is important that we take this into account. As I said, this change was an election commitment that was announced in May 2013. The total number of public holidays has not been increased. Therefore, there will be no direct financial impact that relates to the shifting of these public holidays. The Labour Day public holiday has been observed on the first Monday in May since the turn of the century. It is an important annual event that remembers those who struggled and succeeded to ensure decent and fair working conditions in Australia. One of the first May Day marches in the world took place in Queensland during the shearers' strike on 1 May 1891 in Barcaldine. The history of this day and the struggle for decent and fair wages and conditions is also Queensland's history. This bill will return Labour Day to its rightful place in 2016.

I also briefly want to make a contribution in support of the provisions of the bill that will enable an online application service for high-risk work licences to be streamlined. It is important that we embrace technology, and this bill will do just that. These changes save both time and money for workers as there will no longer be a requirement for them to attend an Australia Post outlet. They will now be able to apply for a licence 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This will particularly assist those workers in rural and remote areas. It will also save the government money by reducing administrative costs and reduce delays in the processing of applications. These changes will reduce duplication and red tape and save both the workers and government time and money. It is a very sensible reform. As a member of the Finance and Administration Committee, I note that support from submitters in relation to the changes for high-risk work licences during the committee process was unequivocal and that the committee supported these amendments. I want to thank all members of the committee and the secretariat. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (3.02 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I want to acknowledge and thank my fellow members of the committee, the secretariat for the work that they do, the departmental officials who provided us with briefings and those who took the time to make submissions and appear at the public hearings. As I said, this will be a brief contribution. Having served on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in the previous parliament, this is the second time that I have considered changes to the public holidays legislation in Queensland and many of the comments that I made in my contribution at that time stand. In touching briefly on high-risk work licences, I simply say that obviously those changes were welcomed in a bipartisan fashion by all six members of the committee. I think we can all agree that everything we can do to streamline processes and make it easier for people to go through bureaucratic processes is absolutely a good thing. With respect to the changes to the public holidays, my good friend and colleague the member for Coomera, the deputy chair, has touched on the changes that are going to be made. I would simply say that it appears that the only thing that this government wants to do is change absolutely everything that the LNP did when in government, and it is a sad day when the Labor Party wants to come into this—

Mr Rickuss: I take offence at that. They're not changing the voting system!


Miss BARTON: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. It does appear as though Labor does not want to change the voting system in the House, though of course it remains to be seen what will happen tonight as to whether or not those opposite are still prepared to take the vote of the member for Cook.

With respect to the other changes that we have seen in this House, it appears that the Labor government has absolutely no plan and it has no agenda. Its entire focus is on undoing a great many of the really positive reforms that we saw when we were in government. One of the very positive reforms that we saw was an even balance and an even spread of the public holidays in this state. The member for Coomera touched on when Easter falls. For those members who are interested, if they want to have a look at the committee report there is a fair amount of detail as to how public holidays fall in

Queensland. In particular, the non-government members highlighted the impact of the Paschal moon on when Easter falls and the fact that Easter often falls either in late March or early April. So what we will see is a significant number of public holidays in the first six months of the year and less in the second six months of the year. What we on this side of the House want to do is make sure that there is an even spread and an even balance so that there is a balance of work, life and play so that people can take the opportunity to go to special events in regional Queensland. There are some fantastic events in the member for Condamine's electorate and the member for Southern Downs's electorate. We took the opportunity to hear from the Goondiwindi District Historical Society, which took the opportunity to make representations to us.

As I said, it does appear that this is an entirely ideological change. As members of the committee have already highlighted, particularly the member for Coomera, a lot of other jurisdictions celebrate Labour Day in the latter half of the year. As someone who believes in free speech, I absolutely welcome the opportunity for the labour movement to celebrate what it believes are significant achievements and I absolutely applaud the fact that there are people who want to go and do that. But what I would say is that there is nothing barring them from doing that in October. We saw a great number of people enjoying the opportunity to have an October long weekend after some very fantastic football games with the AFL grand final and the NRL grand final. The sovereign's birthday has been recognised in this country since 1788 and I think it is appropriate that we continue to recognise the sovereign's birthday. We on this side of the House strongly believe in making sure that there is a balance of public holidays throughout the year, and that means making sure that it is not a top heavy first six months.

As I said, I intended my contribution to this debate to be brief and that I made a number of statements in my contribution on similar legislation in the last parliament. What I will simply say is that what we have seen today is the Labor Party continue to listen to the union movement which is not representative of the views and wishes of the people of Queensland. A number of people have approached me at my many mobile offices and people have come to my electorate office to express disappointment that we are going to again have a very top heavy first six months of the year when it comes to the public holiday spread in Queensland. I simply look forward to the remainder of the debate.


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.08 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, in particular the restoration of Labour Day to its rightful place in May. I know those opposite remain obsessed with my own and my colleagues' relationships with unions, and I will say it for the record again: I am a proud union member—always have been, always will be. Labour Day is an important opportunity to celebrate the achievements of dedicated women and men who worked tirelessly to improve working conditions, keep workers safe and create a better community. We do not just march to thank union officials and celebrate the achievements of Labor governments; we march to celebrate the countless stories of workers and their families fighting for what is right.

Today, I want to talk about some lesser known women—the women who are holding it all together in many of our mining towns that are struggling. Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with Vicky, Kathleen and Sallee—three strong and tenacious women from Blackwater. They had come to Brisbane that day to meet with senior executives of BHP to demand a better outcome for the town that they love. In their words, they came to look them in the eye and tell them what they had done to their families and their community. I seek leave to table the letters that these women wrote to BHP executives, because their own words are extremely powerful.

Tabled paper: Letters, dated September 2015, from Vicky Hamilton, Kathleen Miller and Sallee Collins, to the Chief Executive Officer, BHP Billiton, Mr Andrew Mackenzie [\[1372\]](#).

These women spoke about their home town of Blackwater—a town that has given so much to support an industry that they thought would support them back. Their husbands all worked in some capacity for BHP and they have all been swept aside by the decision to move to a non-permanent workforce. It is wrong and these women, whose husbands have been worn down by the fight, are standing up to it with the support of their union.

Next May, when Labour Day is back to where it belongs, I will be marching for these women and I know that thousands of my friends and colleagues in the labour movement will be right there alongside me, because every one of them has a story like these women from Blackwater. We show them all the respect they deserve by restoring Labour Day back to its rightful place.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.10 pm): As a member of the Finance and Administration Committee, I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which, in clauses 11 and 12, amends the Holidays Act 1983 and, in clauses 13 and 14, amends the Industrial Relations Act 1999.

Once again, this bill is not new legislation but contains the reversal of changes that were made by the LNP when it was in government. The purpose of these amendments is to change the date of two of our public holidays: Labour Day to return to the first Monday in May and the Queen's Birthday holiday to be moved to the first Monday in October. This change will mean that, once again, Queensland is the only state in the country to celebrate the Labour Day holiday on the first Monday in May. It will also mean that Queensland is the only state in the country to celebrate the Queen's Birthday holiday on the first Monday in October. These changes do not align Queensland with one single state or the ACT. The Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction that celebrates Labour Day on the first Monday in May. The Queen's Birthday holiday is celebrated on the first Monday in June in the ACT, the Northern Territory and every state except Western Australia. Once again, that means that Queensland will be out of sync with the rest of the country.

Historically, Queensland has had almost all public holidays in the first half of the calendar year. That has long been the subject of debate and how to share them across the year has been discussed at length. Some of these public holidays cannot be moved, such as New Year's Day, Australia Day, Anzac Day and the Easter long weekend. It is only Labour Day and the Queen's Birthday holiday that could possibly be changed. Common sense would suggest that these dates should be aligned with those of the other states for business, tourism and community fundraising opportunities.

This situation is compounded in the seat of Condamine, as all the show holidays fall in the first half of the year. Relocating the Labour Day holiday to the first Monday in May has widespread support among the union movement. All the unions that provided submissions to the committee supported the proposed amendment—all on historical and ideological grounds. Not one union seemed concerned about harmonising the holidays with those of other states to minimise disruption in the workplace or Queensland's economy.

This view was not shared by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, which indicated it supported the retention of the public holiday in June and a public holiday in October. The Queensland Catholic Education Commission advised—

The prime intent of our submission and the key point that we wish to highlight is the spread of holidays across the school year and the evenness of that spread. The early part of the school year, especially from late March to early May, is vested in a number of holidays. Very often those holidays are on a Monday. In the interests of student learning and teaching, we would like to see those holidays remain spread, with both the June and the October holidays recognised.

The Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland stated that it supports national consistency in regard to the public holidays in order to minimise disruption to business, particularly for those who operate across state and territory borders. The Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland stated further—

The practical implications of this Bill to our mind are that it takes the Queen's Birthday out of alignment with all other states in June ... we lose consistency with other states in May, because we are putting a holiday in May. The issue for us—and the reason that we favour the retention of existing arrangements—is that we lose consistency of those holidays with other states.


The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator suggested that due consideration should be given to align Queensland's public holidays with those of other states and territories, particularly New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT. The NHVR considered that coordinating public holidays across the country would best enable national delivery standards to be met.

The committee sought advice from the department on the impacts of the nonalignment with other states. The department advised that it had not done any analysis of the financial impact of celebrating public holidays on days from those of other states.

The committee received submissions from some regional council and event organisations. Long weekends provide an opportunity for many rural areas to hold large social and fundraising events as visitors have an extra day in which to travel to that event and back home again. The timing of these recent events, particularly any that involve livestock such as rodeos, campdrafts and pony club events, is important as heat stress can be avoided in the cooler months. The Queen's Birthday weekend is very popular for these events in the north of the state as the wet season is over for stock to be mustered and easily transported and the temperatures are lower. The Carpentaria Shire Council advised that the Normanton Show, Campdraft and Rodeo is traditionally held on that weekend, as is the Planes, Trains, Automobiles and Bikes Festival in Goondiwindi. The Gayndah Orange Festival has been held on the June long weekend for over 50 years as it coincides with the citrus season. These events provide an opportunity for communities to raise funds that are distributed in the local area as well as an important social outlet for all of those who attend. It would appear that tradition is important only when it is about Labour Day and the union movement. The majority of submitters, particularly the business community, the transport industry and education organisations, were opposed to moving the Labour Day holiday back to May. This amendment has virtually no support outside the union movement.

However, one thing that this government has demonstrated time and time again is that it is powerless to say no to its union bosses. This bill is another example of concerns raised by the community and industry running a poor second to the demand of the unions. Let there be no doubt as to who is running Queensland. Every decision that this government makes must have the union's blessing. This government owes its very existence to these union bosses and the funds that pour into its coffers from, for example, the CFMEU. The changes to the industrial relations, workers compensation and workplace health and safety acts have all been about increasing union presence on work sites and recruiting new members, giving in to their every demand—and this bill is no different. This amendment will not produce one extra job and has no benefit except for the union bosses to once again demonstrate their power over this government. There is no reason for this change. The non-government members oppose this amendment.

The next section of the bill contains an amendment to the Adult Proof of Age Card 2008, which would enable the Department of Transport and Main Roads to take, keep and use photos to be used for a high-risk work licence. These licences are required in certain classes of work, such as scaffolders, riggers, doggers and tower crane operators. At present, when an applicant has completed the necessary training, that person must then go to an Australia Post office, submit their application, pay their fee and supply a passport sized photo and have their identity verified. This amendment will allow this process to be done online, reducing delays and cost. The committee and all the submitters supported this amendment. This amendment is a practical and sensible one. Changing the Labour Day holiday back to May and moving the Queen's Birthday to October would disadvantage regional towns and communities and is totally unnecessary.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (3.18 pm): I stand to speak in support of this bill and I urge the opposition to support this bill and keep May Day where it is. In this speech, I am going to take an historical perspective. Firstly, I say that May Day and the achievement of an eight-hour day is a very important part of Queensland's history. The celebration of May Day in May is one of our longest standing commemorations of what we have achieved in Queensland. Secondly, May Day is part of the heritage that we all share. I am talking to the Liberals on the other side, so I hope they are listening carefully—ones who are left.

Colonial liberals—merchants, artisans, lawyers—and the working class worked together to push for political reforms in early colonial Queensland. Together they were the main opposition, what historian Ray Evans noted was called 'the Brisbane crowd'. Brisbane labourers, shop keepers and the like combined to build the political rights we enjoy in this parliament. They worked together to defeat the Militia Bill 1862. A three-year military conscription was proposed for adult male colonists with no exemptions. It was defeated through concerted public action by a coalition of radicals, workers and liberals, most of whom did not have the vote. Together these different classes of Queensland society attempted to make the upper house elective, led by liberal paper, the *Daily Guardian*, and future Liberal premiers Arthur Macalister and Charles Lilley. They worked together against the squattocracy in the case of the Pugh trial. In 1861 the editor of the *Moreton Bay Courier*, TP Pugh, was prosecuted for seditious libel of the Legislative Council. Once again the workers and the merchant class combined in actions such as street demonstrations to stop this sedition trial. In these three examples, the working class and the liberals were allied to fight for colonial democratic reforms.

I remind the small-l liberals still left on the other side of the House of another part of our common heritage. Part of Liberal and Labor ancestry are the Australian and Queensland Chartists. In England, Chartists were dangerous radicals who were jailed, but in Australia Chartists were a middle-class and working-class movement. They opposed the landowning squattocracy who restricted access to land. In Australia they pushed for the rights of small landholders to hold land granted by the government against the powers of the landed squatters. This grouping—liberals, Chartists and workers—came together to support the first important political and social reform we achieved in Queensland and that was the eight-hour day won by Queenslanders without this parliament—won before this parliament ever existed. It marked the birth of the labour movement and happened at the same time that the state of Queensland was born.


A Brisbane Labor League started as early as November 1856. The Labour Alliance Committee formed in September 1857 to push for an eight-hour day and the Stonemasons Union was formed in January 1858. By March of that year the stonemasons had won a 48-hour week: eight hours a day for six days a week. We achieved this before we even became Queensland and it is something that has endured these 150 years. From the mid 19th century this achievement was celebrated on May Day—on 1 May. To the small-l liberals: the eight-hour day was achieved by unions and workers, but it is a victory that also belongs to that early colonial coalition of liberals and working-class Queenslanders.

They worked together to push for democratic rights. Your political ancestors helped achieve the eight-hour day and other political reforms from early colonial Queensland. They were the shopkeepers, the artisans and the upwardly mobile working class, and they are both our political ancestors. The eight-hour day that we celebrate in May—where it should be—is your victory as well and we should all honour it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): I call the member for Lockyer.

Mrs LAUGA: Madam Deputy Speaker, I will take the spot if the member does not want it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already made the call. Member for Lockyer?

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.23 pm): I was in a slumber after listening to that riveting speech from the member for Murrumba.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take that as being parliamentary, member for Lockyer.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, everyone! The House will come to order. The member for Lockyer has the call.

Mr RICKUSS: Thank you very much. I have listened with amazement at some of the statistics that are being quoted from the other side. They are like a drunk using a light pole. They are not really using the statistics to shed any light on anything. The drunk is using the light pole to prop himself up; those opposite are using statistics to prop up their argument. It really is an abuse of statistics. The real problem is that those opposite are saying that Labour Day has to be May Day, but Labour Day in New South Wales is on 1 October, Labour Day in Victoria is on 2 March, Labour Day in Tasmania is on 2 March and Labour Day in South Australia is on 1 October. When is the Queen's Birthday holiday? I am sure my learned friend the member for Kawana could tell me this. It is on 2 June in New South Wales, 2 June in Victoria, 2 June in Tasmania, 2 June in South Australia, 2 June in the Northern Territory, 2 June in the ACT and 2 June in Queensland. That is where it should be—in June. It is our only winter holiday. That mob over there ignore north and west Queensland. They really do not like them.

An opposition member: They hate the bush.

Mr RICKUSS: I will take that interjection. The only public holiday that has a decent climate for most of Queensland is the June holiday. I am sure the member for Ipswich West and the member for Ipswich will support me when I say this: do members know what the biggest event held on the Queen's Birthday weekend is? The Winternationals drags at Ipswich.


An opposition member interjected.

Mr RICKUSS: No, not drag queens. That is Jim and a few of his mates over there, but we will leave that. No, the drag racing, the Winternationals, which attracts 40,000 people.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, just a moment. Can I call service and can we just be a little bit careful.

Mr RICKUSS: Thank you. They are interjecting terribly. The member for Ipswich and the member for Ipswich West I am sure will support us on this bill. This is an important event for Ipswich. It is a big boost to the economy of Ipswich. The drag-racing community comes from all over Australia for this weekend. They use it because it is a long weekend. What is going to happen if Monday is not a holiday? The member opposite shrugs his shoulders: Who cares? You just cannot believe it. This would be the biggest event on the Queen's Birthday weekend in Australia involving 40,000 people and they are totally ignored by this government. The western and northern councils that wrote to the committee were ignored. That seems to have been glossed over from the other side. It is really disappointing that this is ideologically driven. Those opposite talk about May Day, but no other state in Australia has Labour Day in May. What a farce this is. This is pure ideology. The CFMEU and the Ravbars are controlling the whole process.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (3.27 pm): The 1891 shearers strike is one of Australia's earliest and most important industrial disputes. One of Australia's first Labour Day marches was held in Queensland in 1891 when striking shearers in Barcaldine marched with flags and banners. Labour Day was subsequently first gazetted in Queensland as a public holiday in 1901. Labour Day was consistently celebrated in Queensland on the first Monday in May for over 110 years until the Newman government moved it.

I am proud to support this bill because in 2016, the 125th anniversary of the shearers' strike, Labour Day will return to its rightful place in May. The LNP's move of Labour Day to October was a disrespectful move: disrespectful to the shearers who started the movement, to the union movement, to the Barcaldine community and to Queenslanders. During the 1891 shearers' strike many shearers were outraged when Logan Downs station manager, Charles Fairbain, asked the shearers to sign a contract that would reduce the power of their union. The shearers fought to protect their pay, workers' rights, equitable agreements and they did not agree with the use of low-cost Chinese labour. Hardworking shearers like William Fothergill, William Hamilton and George Taylor, who left one of history's most important legacies to Queensland workers, must have been turning in their grave when the LNP moved their day, our Labour Day, which has been consistently observed on the first Monday in May for over 110 years.


The LNP government moved the Labour Day public holiday despite submissions opposing the change. In fact, they moved the public holiday despite submissions opposing the change from their own caucus. Speaking in 2013 about the community of Barcaldine, the former member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, said that moving the Labour Day date to October would be very detrimental to this small but vibrant community. I am very interested to know the position of the current member for Gregory, given that the Barcaldine Regional Council mayor wants Labour Day to return to May. Mayor Rob Chandler supports moving Labour Day back to May and said that the holiday has extra significance to residents and that the move back to May will reinvigorate the town's Tree of Knowledge Festival. Mayor Chandler said—

The Labor Day holiday in Barcaldine has always been on that first weekend in May but especially over the last 10 years, it's turned into a big weekend for western Queensland.

In my electorate of Keppel, I know that the community is looking forward to the Labour Day public holiday returning to its rightful place in May. Despite the fact that Campbell Newman and the LNP took it from us, we have continued to celebrate Labour Day in May. The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering on an election commitment to restore Labour Day to its rightful place in May. At Labour Day celebrations in Rockhampton and Emu Park this year, the crowd cheered when I told them that the government would be introducing this legislation to bring back our day in May.

In July, I met with Desley Rial and Ken Landsberg of the Yeppoon Show Society to talk with them about what the proposed change in holidays would mean for the Yeppoon Show. The show society representatives appreciated being consulted and they understand the importance of moving the Labour Day public holiday back to May and for the Queen's Birthday public holiday to move to October. In considering the two alternatives, the committee said it was of great importance to consider the cultural and community significance attached to the celebration of Labour Day in Queensland on the first Monday in May, with no corresponding significance attached to the celebration of the Queen's Birthday in June.

I look forward to celebrating Labour Day with my community in May 2016 and celebrating the 125th anniversary of the 1891 shearers strike. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.31 pm): I too rise to address the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Like previous speakers from the opposition, I oppose this bill and I do so for a number of reasons. I think it is important, especially for the constituents of Glass House, to understand a few things. When the changes were made a couple of years ago, no changes were made to the names of the holidays or to the number of holidays. There was still Labour Day and there was still the Queen's Birthday. All we did was shift those around to ensure that there was a more even spread across the year, which, for the people of people of Glass House, particularly our small business owners, proved to be a huge windfall. I will come back to address that in a moment.

The first reason I oppose the bill is on the grounds of consistency. Given that we all agree that one of the holidays needed to go from the first half of the year to October, to me and to those of us here on this side of the chamber the obvious choice was Labour Day. We have heard from those opposite that somehow we were upsetting a huge tradition and that we were offending the rights of workers and the unions, in particular. Well, nothing more need be said there. If that was the case, it is interesting to note just when Labour Day is held around the nation: in New South Wales, it is the first Monday in October; in Victoria, it is the second Monday in March; in Tasmania, it is the second Monday in March; in South Australia, it is the first Monday in October; in Western Australia, it is the first Monday in March; in the Northern Territory, it is the first Monday in May; in the ACT, it is the first Monday in March; and if this legislation does not go through, in Queensland it will stay the first Monday in October. There is great consistency in that Labour Day is shifted around, because, on the other side of the coin, the Queen's Birthday is celebrated on the second Monday in June in every state and territory with the exception of WA. For the sake of consistency, moving Labour Day to October and celebrating it in

October made eminent sense and to shift it back is nothing more than kowtowing to the unions, which is something that we know those opposite have not stopped doing since the day they walked into this chamber.

The second reason I oppose the bill relates to the windfall that it has afforded small business owners in the seat of Glass House. We have the pre-eminent drive-tourism market in South-East Queensland. Many people from across South-East Queensland come to places such as Mount Mee and the Blackall Range to enjoy a weekend away and our fine food and wines and holiday accommodation. I can honestly say that the feedback we received following this year's October long weekend was extraordinary. There was an extraordinary number of bookings. Places were completely booked out. The streets were packed. Money was spent in all of the restaurants.


An honourable member interjected.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection. It is still going to be there, which is fantastic, but what will be missed is the opportunity for businesses to pitch a seasonal long weekend: one in autumn, one in winter and one in spring. Next year we will go back to them all being in autumn. We will lose that winter opportunity. It is really frustrating for tourism businesses.

Mr Rickuss: Why do they hate western Queensland?

Mr POWELL: Why do they hate small business is probably more the question, member for Lockyer. The October Labour Day offered tourism operators on the Blackall Range an opportunity to package up seasonal activities in autumn and winter, which is a particular high point for the Blackall Range with its cooler climes, and then do so again in October. Last night I was on Bribie Island and I received the same feedback. October was the best season they have ever seen and they too want the opportunity to have Easter and Anzac Day in autumn, the Queen's Birthday weekend in June and Labour Day in October.

If the Labor Party truly meant to do what they keep saying they would do, which is to listen to Queenslanders, they would listen to the many councils that fed into the committee process. They would listen to the feedback from the small business operators in my electorate and from the neighbouring electorate of Pumicestone. They would listen to the CCIQ. They would realise that what they are doing is nothing other than tipping their hats to the unions again. This is payback to the unions for all of the funding, all of the investment and all of the manpower that they put into the election in January, which has meant that Labor is sitting on the government benches now. This is not about doing what is best for Queensland; this is about doing what is best for the unions. I implore them to reconsider and oppose the bill.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.37 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. For 121 years, in Queensland Labour Day was celebrated at the beginning of May. The May observance of the workers' day outlasted Federation, two world wars and well over one century of social and political change. Next year will mark 125 years since the great shearers' strike of 1891, which directly led to the founding of the Australian Labor Party. It has been 125 years since Queensland's first Labour Day march on 1 May at Barcaldine. From 1891 to the advent of the Newman government in 2012, this day at the start of May has been a time to remember those who struggled to secure fair wages and working conditions. Those conditions include workplace health and safety provisions, an eight-hour working day and the principle of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work for men and women.

One of the first acts of the Newman LNP government was to trash that great Queensland tradition. Not even the Bjelke-Petersen government, during its long years of rule in Queensland, had the gall to move Labour Day from its historically significant date. The word 'conservative' can be defined as follows: believing in the value of established and traditional practices in politics and society. The LNP's contempt for the Labour Day tradition in Queensland has laid them bare for what they really are. These people are not conservatives; they are right-wing reactionaries hell-bent on redefining our state in their own twisted image. Through all of the Newman government's mass sackings and slashing of conditions, including the shameful erosion of rights for injured workers, nothing more neatly symbolises the LNP's contempt for the working people than this one spiteful act.

This is a day that means something to Queensland. This is a day that means something to the large crowd of workers and members of the great trade union movement who proudly march down the streets of Ipswich at the start of May every year. Even when the LNP trashed Queensland's Labour Day tradition, union members in Ipswich and around the state continued to march in May, leaving us with a holiday in October bereft of history and meaning. Every worker in Queensland has benefited from the struggle of those we remember on Labour Day in May. That is why I am proud to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (3.39 pm): I rise to speak to our actions to meet our election commitments. Firstly, I want to address comments made by those opposite in relation to national sporting events. There is nothing to prevent interstate tourists attending events or visiting Queensland in June, if they have a public holiday related long weekend. If we had a public holiday on a particular weekend there would probably be a surcharge on hospitality making it more expensive for those visitors to attend Queensland. We should remember that those opposite have been seeking to take an axe to penalty rates as well. I am sure the 5,000 Winternationals visitors from interstate will continue to attend regardless of whether we have a public holiday here.

For the benefit of those who will be reading this speech later, I also want to commend the bill for its retention of a public holiday—

Mr Mander: There won't be many.

Mr de BRENNI: There will be some. I commend the bill for its retention of a public holiday on the first Monday in October and the restoration of a 100-year-old Queensland tradition by restoring Labour Day to its rightful place. I am always extremely proud to join the Labour Day match each year with tens of thousands of proud Queensland workers at each event.


This is a government that honours our election commitments. It was well known during the recent state election campaign that we committed to restore Labour Day to the first Monday in May starting in 2016. That day in 2016 will be significant. As mentioned, it will mark the 125th anniversary of the nationally significant 1891 shearers' strike. It also commemorates the first Labour Day held in May in Queensland.

In making our changes to public holiday arrangements we consulted and listened. When Labour Day was moved by the former government there was no consultation. Nobody was asked. No respect was shown. Our record on this issue demonstrates a Labor government record on consultation as in 2012 is a good one. When the previous Labor government moved the day, we did it after community input into a review.

I submit that there is no better community input into a review of the actions of government than a state election. The 2015 community review of the LNP gave it a massive fail. A fail for, as the minister said, a 'shameful ruining of a tradition that is over 100 years old'. They got a fail for consulting with the Queensland community.

The opposition misunderstands the context and importance of this tradition which is borne out by the 125th anniversary that will be celebrated next year. The former government's ignorance of this tradition or its indifference is breathtaking—breathtaking not just for workers but for any person with a sense of fairness.

Instead our government has kept our commitment to restore fairness and, in doing so, we did consult. We consulted business, industry, unions and others. We took their views on board in coming to our decision and we listened. I note that 80 per cent of the tourism sector supports our changes. I note that shire councils support the restoration of Labour Day. I note the chamber of commerce supports our solution to the problem left for Queensland by the former LNP government. I also note that the people of Springwood voted for the return of Labour Day to May. Through the consultation I have undertaken I can confirm that they are happy to observe the Queen's Birthday holiday in October. I commend the amendments to the public holidays and the new online process for high-risk licence applications enshrined in this bill.

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.44 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. In my contribution I will focus mainly on one component of the bill. That is the component that restores May Day to its rightful place, in May. In doing so, it overturns the ideological attacks from the failed experiment that was the Newman government.

The party that I am a member of, the great Australian Labor Party, was formed in this state 124 years ago because of a simple grievance. It was formed because as long as a government could take away the rights of working people with the stroke of a pen workers had no hope of negotiating fairly with entrenched employer power and entrenched upper-class privilege.


The Labor Party was born in Queensland out of an industrial campaign in 1891. From that time, we have celebrated the justice that was brought about from the collective. Those brave Queenslanders were prepared to forge the way for a better future for all workers in our state and through that the collective has grown. As fair workplace rights like the eight-hour working day expanded, the justness that was found in the labour movement was celebrated each year through May Day.

Despite the underhanded moves from the Newman government, our collective stood strong and grew stronger. Just as we saw this collective shine in our state 124 years ago, workers' fortitude and determination has grown stronger in the modern struggles through standing together.

I am a proud unionist and someone who has been an organiser for a trade union for a decade. I understand the historical and cultural significance of May Day. I understand the attitudes of ordinary Queenslanders who were once again short-changed by the autocratic rule of the Newman government. This ideological change was the insult to the injury that was the way that workers and ordinary people were treated under the Newman government.

Further, the Newman government dismissed the public holiday review through 2011. As the member for Stretton pointed out, there were some 24,000 people who engaged in that review. There was strong majority support to move the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second part of the year.

The argument from those opposite that this is ideological is spot on. It is ideological. It is what is right. It has been backed up by consultative reviews from former Labor governments. It is an election promise of the Palaszczuk government. I am a proud unionist and community representative who will see May Day returned to its rightful place in May. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.46 pm): I rise to address the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The objectives of this bill in Queensland include restoring the Labour Day public holiday to the first Monday in May and moving the Queen's Birthday holiday from June to October.

With Easter, Anzac Day and Labour Day occurring in close proximity on our annual calendar, there are a significant number of scheduled public holidays in the early part of each year. In government, the Liberal National Party took a common-sense approach by moving Labour Day to October and keeping the Queen's Birthday in June. This was done to ensure a better and more even spread of public holidays throughout the year. This had a justifiable basis creating a more even national alignment for public holidays with the Queen's Birthday being in June in every state except Western Australia whereas Labour Day is on several different dates, including in October, in some states.

The Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 is nothing more than payback to union bosses, including the CFMEU, Together union and ASMOFQ for their support at the January Queensland state election. Today we heard the Queensland health minister quote the federal AMA president, Brian Owler—the same Brian Owler who is the left-wing love child of federal Labor and health union thugs. The poorly performing Brian Owler is deserving of a long holiday and I am sure Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and the federal health minister, Sussan Ley, will give him and Bill Shorten a long holiday.


The day after the change of government in Queensland this year the Queensland Council of Unions' president, John Battams, was already issuing instructions to Premier Palaszczuk and Deputy Premier Trad on the timing of Labour Day, proclaiming that Labour Day would be returning to May.

Mr Dickson interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I take that interjection. Labor's move is nothing more than ideologically consistent with Labor's lack of vision, ongoing infrastructure freeze, wastage and inefficiency with respect to Public Service provision and higher transport and electricity costs for the taxpayers of my electorate and the people of Queensland.

Tourism operators have expressed the desire to have the Queen's Birthday public holiday in June to lure those from southern states during the winter months to Queensland for a long weekend. There were also a number of submissions from councils around the state which did not support Labor's changes. The Carpentaria Shire Council does not support moving the Queen's Birthday public holiday from June to October due to a number of local annual events being held on the June long weekend each year. The Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council submit that its preference is for Labour Day to remain in October.

I and my LNP colleagues oppose the public holiday aspects of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 as it is a retrograde move which is poor for business, tourism and Queenslanders in general. The Palaszczuk Labor government is beholden to unions and their shameful and dubious practices including potential criminality as is being revealed by the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption. The Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, like the Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and the proposed Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, are all legislative evidence of an ideological agenda as opposed to best practice public policy for my constituents in Moggill and for the people of Queensland.


 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise today to talk on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. It has been said many times that we should not change history, but perhaps we should all learn to better understand it before making rash decisions. I refer to the previous government who went on to change public holidays—in particular, May Day, Labour Day, in Queensland. It certainly raised questions for workers. Was this out of spite? Did the Queensland government change this simply as an attack on workers or unions? Many think so.


Going back in time to 1891—and many members on this side of the House have said it before—to that first Labour Day march held in Barcaldine when those striking shearers marched proudly with flags and banners, those workers started this march based on the premise of an eight-hour working day, known in many countries as International Workers' Day or May Day—eight hours work, eight hours leisure, eight hours sleep. As more workers won the reduction in hours by solidarity and industrial action, May Day was proclaimed a holiday in all states, and of course it became known as Labour Day.

That first May Day march was followed with a march in Brisbane in 1893. Public holidays have been reviewed by previous Queensland governments like the Bligh government who in 2011 released a discussion paper about getting the balance right. The committee review, and significant consultation with various industry providers, provided the opportunity for all to have input into that review. We know that a number participated in surveys and what did they show? They showed that Queenslanders valued their history. They thought that given the historical significance of Labour Day it should remain as May Day.

Quite clearly the previous Newman government did not value the opinions of those people who participated in those surveys. Clearly the Newman government did not consider the historical importance of those early days back in 1890. Well, in an act that can only be described as arrogant, that government tried to change history. They managed to do that for one single term in government. The stark difference is that we on this side of the House do value workers and their contribution to building Queensland or looking after Queensland whether it be in health, education, transport, tourism, emergency services or many, many other professions. This government, the Palaszczuk government, does value workers and does value Queensland history.

As a proud member of United Voice, I have participated in many a May Day march with ambulance officers, joining thousands of workers in Townsville. In fact, in recent years gone by we proudly led and won the best, loudest and proudest United Voice contingent of the May Day march. It is an experience to walk down the street in those marches—many on that side of the House might not know this—to feel proud and to interact with members of the community who value your contribution and role you play in the community whatever you do from school cleaners, teacher aides, security officers, hospitality workers through to emergency services or allied health staff. Yes, these are the workers of my union, United Voice, who I will once more join again when we have righted this wrong and return May Day to its rightful place in history. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.54 pm): Labour Day is in May and that is where it should stay. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (3.54 pm): I rise to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I think that those opposite need a history lesson, because clearly what is a unique history in Queensland—very few organisations can claim the history that the union movement can in this state—seems to have been missed when it comes to not only the member for Mansfield but also many members opposite.

Stonemasons working for John Petrie won the eight-hour day in 1865—he believed that quality was better than quantity. They commemorated their achievement, as we have done every year since 1865, with a march. Other unions joined in as they won significant reductions in working hours. By 1890, 11 unions had joined the stonemasons. On 18 August 1885 a meeting of union secretaries decided to form the Trades and Labor Council, which came into being on 1 September 1885. Very few organisations in Queensland have a history like that. The next year, in 1886, the peak council was sanctioned by the then Samuel Griffith Liberal government and the Queensland Trade Union Act was passed.

In 1891 the shearers striking in Barcaldine held a march on May Day, 1 May, and the first Brisbane May Day march was held in 1893. After about a decade of these marches, the eight-hour day's march was formally changed to the first Monday in May in 1901 and gazetted as a public holiday by the then Queensland government. So for over 100 years there has been no—


Mrs Stuckey: So what?

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection from the member for Currumbin. 'So what?' she says. The history of this state cannot be compared to any other organisation and what we get from those opposite which demonstrates why they are over there is 'So what?' Well, I will tell you so what. For hundreds of years workers have been proudly marching with their families alongside their unions and never have they been threatened to have May Day changed in this state. It took a vindictive, nasty, get-even approach by the then Campbell Newman government to decide that history does not matter anymore, 100 years of marching the streets of Brisbane does not matter anymore, the fact that this was gazetted back in 1901 does not matter anymore. But guess what? 'We'll change and celebrate somebody's birthday when it is not really their birthday, because that matters.' Honestly, the irony is unbelievable. It was nothing more than a get-even, vindictive, anti union, anti workers sentiment that comes continually out of the mouths of those opposite.

After the brief history lesson that I have given them, in 1995 I was very proud to be elected the Assistant Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions and in 2000 the General Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions. We saw the numbers soar during the Labour Day marches as we prepared them and organised them, and particularly so during the MUA dispute and against John Howard's Work Choices legislation. We saw record numbers of workers marching to support their unions, their rights at work and the maintenance of fair workplace laws. They not only march in Brisbane but also all over Queensland, and I know many members on this side of the House have marched proudly with their unions on those days.

As I said, if there was ever a sign of just wiping away history like they do not care, like it does not matter, it is the 'so what' attitude of those opposite. There is no reason why this should have been done. There was never an economic reason for it 100 years ago. The member for Mansfield is better than that. There was no economic reason for it 100 years ago. There has been no economic reason for it for the last 125 years.

There is a good reason why other states do not have Labour Day on the same day: because their history is a little different from Queensland. This is Queensland's history. It started in Barcaldine. It was sanctioned in legislation in 1901. It is written in the act. Go and have a look at it. Get yourself a good history lesson. Stop being so anti worker and anti union. Get with the pace. Labour Day will go back to where it belongs, and we on this side of the House are proud to support it any day of the year. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (4.00 pm): I had the great pleasure of representing the Premier in Barcaldine this year in May at the Labour Day celebrations. In my speech to the good people of Barcaldine, I reinforced this government's commitment to restore the Labour Day holiday to its rightful place in May. The roar from the crowd was unbelievable.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr RYAN: I note the interjection from the member for Capalaba because his father was there, too. He was joining the march in Barcaldine. There is a good reason to support this change from the perspective of the people of Barcaldine. I spoke with the Mayor of Barcaldine Regional Council, Rob Chandler, and the former member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, who was there joining in the celebrations in Barcaldine this year in May. Gary Peoples was also there. These are people who are well known to the other side of politics. The people of Barcaldine are absolutely committed to supporting this change to restore the Labour Day holiday to its rightful place in May, not just for historic reasons but for the very reason that it is good for tourism for that regional area and for all of Western Queensland—as we saw in the submission by the former member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, in respect of the amending bill introduced in 2012 to unfairly and unrightfully move Labour Day from May to October.

In rising to support this bill, I want to make my contribution not only on behalf of Western Queensland and the people of Barcaldine but also on behalf of working people. We have heard contributions from those opposite today trying to demonise unions, but in demonising unions they also demonise working people, irrespective of whether or not they are members of unions. The Labour Day celebration in May is all about celebrating working people and the struggles they have had throughout the history of this nation and this state. We celebrate the struggles that have made things better for working people, whether they are union members or not. Of course the majority of those successes and benefits that have been achieved have been delivered by the trade union movement, and we are much better for the trade union movement because of that. I want to make the point that in demonising unions they demonise working people, and I think that is a great affront to all working Queenslanders who are enjoying the benefits and conditions that they enjoy today because of working people and

unions that have gone before them. This is the right thing to do. Not only is it the right thing to do for Western Queensland; it is the right thing to do for working people. I encourage all members to support the amending bill before the House.


 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (4.03 pm): I rise to support the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

Mr Rickuss: That's a surprise!

Mr KING: Isn't it? I will give those opposite a history lesson, like Grace did. Since 1891 Queensland's Labour Day public holiday has been observed on the first Monday in May. Over 120 years we have celebrated May Day in May, where it has rightfully belonged—that is, until 2013 when the LNP government used its overwhelming majority to shift this holiday to October. The LNP claimed they shifted the holiday to balance out public holidays throughout the year and shifted the Queen's Birthday holiday back to June as well. The Queen's Birthday holiday had been previously shifted from June to October by the Bligh government in 2012 in response to preferences expressed by the Queensland community in a consultative review of public holidays. As the Queen was born on 21 April, unless we shift the holiday to this date it has little significance when it is celebrated, unlike Labour Day. This historically rich day celebrates the legacy of the working people of this state, a holiday which recognises the struggles and achievements of working people whom we on this side of the House actually like—achievements like the eight-hour day, collective bargaining, minimum wages, and workplace health and safety, none of which would exist without the hard work of the labour movement.

Towns like Barcaldine, which was the birthplace of the Labor movement, have traditionally held a major community event around the May Day holiday. I understand that the Barcaldine Regional Council was dead against moving the holiday to October. However, in a move that I believe illustrates the LNP's ideological obsession against the Labor movement and their disdain for workers, they shifted the holiday to October anyway. This is a contradiction to their friends of the bush image. Country towns are dying and to shift a major tourism event to a time of year when it is getting too hot to celebrate much at all while claiming to be supporters of country folk defies logic and shows hypocrisy.

This bill will shift the holiday back to where it rightfully belongs, which not only honours our election commitment but also corrects the balance of public holidays in this state. I congratulate the minister and the department for their hard work and efforts in compiling this legislation. I commend the bill to the House. As my colleagues have said, May Day should be in May.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.05 pm), in reply: Firstly, I thank my colleagues for their valuable contributions to the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. As I mentioned earlier today, this bill contains two major components. Firstly, it meets an important election commitment made by the Palaszczuk government to restore the days on which public holidays are to be observed for Labour Day and for the Queen's Birthday. Secondly, it improves the process for obtaining high-risk work licences issued by the Office of Industrial Relations to make it easier for workers to apply and to achieve operational and financial efficiencies for government.

The observance of Labour Day in May gives proper recognition of the struggles and achievements of the Queensland labour movement on a date of true significance. Entitlements such as the eight-hour day, collective bargaining, fair and safe working conditions, and minimum wages would not exist in modern society without the labour movement, and it is important for this to be recognised on an appropriate day of historical significance. It is also important to remember that Labour Day does not just commemorate historical struggles. It provides a day for Queensland workers to reflect on the hard work ahead to ensure that they continue to enjoy those entitlements—entitlements such as penalty rates that are sadly under attack by the federal Liberal government. Penalty rates have existed for decades to compensate workers for the effects that working unsociable hours have on health, family and social life.

Celebrating Labour Day is a reminder of the importance of winning workplace rights and ensuring workers entitlements now and into the future. The member for Broadwater spoke of the importance of honouring the tradition of the Queen's Birthday. It seems some traditions such as the Queen's Birthday are worthy of the respect of those opposite. However, traditions such as Labour Day, which are important to Queensland workers, are not worthy of such respect.

Those opposite have spoken of the importance of harmonising public holidays with other states to boost productivity and tourism. Let us look at the evidence, as the member for Stretton did, about the preferences of the community. In 2011 the Bligh Labor government released a discussion paper called *Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland*. The discussion paper made a number

of proposals including the movement of the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second half of the year from 2012, with a Monday in October each year being the preferred option. The discussion paper directed stakeholders to an online survey where they could vote for or against the proposals and make comments in relation to them. A total of 24,505 people responded to the survey. The results indicated that 85.4 per cent of respondents, or 19,393 of 22,705 people, supported moving the Queen's Birthday to the second half of the year.

The member for Lockyer cited an example of lost tourism—namely, the Winternationals, a drag-racing event at the Willowbank Raceway—as a reason why this legislation should not be supported. It would have benefited him to do some research. If he had, he would know that since 2014 this event had reverted to a Thursday to Sunday format. So the issue of the Monday public holiday is not applicable. It would be completely unaffected by the change of public holiday. It seems the honourable member is not completely across the details of the biggest event in his electorate. Inconsistencies between public holiday dates have existed for many years without measurable financial impact not only across the states but also across even local government areas within Queensland in relation to local show holidays.

The amendments that I moved during the consideration in detail stage of the debate provide for the change to the dates of the Labour Day and Queen's Birthday public holidays to commence from the date of assent. The original date for commencement of the bill was 6 October 2015, being the day after this year's Labour Day public holiday. As that day had passed before the bill could be debated by this parliament, it was appropriate to make this change.

The proposed new online process for applying for a high-risk work licence will leverage the existing Department of Transport and Main Roads scheme for taking, keeping and using digital photographs and signatures for transport licences. It will have a number of benefits for both workers and government. In particular, it is going to make it easier for workers to apply for a high-risk work licence, especially those living in rural or regional areas or those who might be fly-in fly-out workers. Of course, government will benefit by departments collaborating to use existing procedures and capabilities to process licences to improve the customer experience.

Those on that side of the House have put a lot of stock in consistency today, something they did not do when they were in government and have not been able to demonstrate here today in the House. Those opposite missed the point when they said that Queensland Labour Day does not line up with other states. Public holidays are celebrated across Australia on various different days. It is not unique for one state to celebrate a public holiday and other states to not celebrate on that day. It is the nature of living in a federation of states which celebrate their holidays on different days. I think the Australian community understands this and easily copes with those differences.

Queensland Labour Day is a day of historical and cultural significance to Queensland and particularly to Queensland workers. Since 1901 Labour Day has consistently been celebrated in Queensland on the first Monday in May. That is what I call a tradition. This is part of the significance. Overall, the provisions in this bill meet our election commitments made by the honourable Premier to honour the real Labour Day and to ensure that a public holiday to commemorate the hard-fought advancements of the labour movement is held on the first Monday in May. It is that simple.

The bill also improves the process for applying for a high-risk work licence to ensure this process is efficient and is practical for workers, employers and government. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 46:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Mr PITT (4.18 pm): I move the following amendment—

1

Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 6, lines 7 to 9—

omit, insert—

This Act, other than parts 3 and 4, commences on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

Tabled paper: Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes to Hon. Pitt's amendments [\[1373\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—



Mr WALKER (4.19 pm): This is the clause which is effectively the heart of what we have been debating today, the switch of the Queen's Birthday and the May Day dates. I do not know that much more can be said than has been said in the debate at broad, but I will try to summarise it nevertheless. I think it can be more neatly summarised by one of the speakers from the other side than anyone from our side. It was the member for Pine Rivers who said that it was an ideological matter. She conceded that this was a matter of ideology. It is wrong for this House to use a matter of ideology to change public holidays in this state. It is as simple as that. So this side of the House would oppose this clause.

Mr PITT: I cannot let it go unsaid. I thank the member for Mansfield for his brevity. I am sure everyone in the House does. Of course I will try to reciprocate. Very clearly, this is a very important matter for the Palaszczuk government. We took this as an election commitment. It was one of our first election commitments. I remember the Premier announcing this at Labour Day and saying that we would bring Labour Day back to May when we returned to government. That is what we have done with this bill. Clause 12 is, as the member for Mansfield quite correctly identified, the heart of the bill. For us and for many workers across Queensland it is more than just a day, it is more than just a tradition; it is a day of significance; it is a day that so many people have fought for many years to celebrate past wins. As I said in my summing-up speech, it is not just about the past; it is about where we go in the future. It is a constant reminder that no matter where we are positioned, people should always strive for better workplaces and better conditions to ensure that people in our community are not left behind. That is very much what Labour Day is all about. I certainly support clause 12.

Division: Question put—That clause 12, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 44:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seene, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 50, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.26 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.27 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.


AGRICULTURE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 14 July (see p. 1299).

Second Reading

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (4.28 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.30 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. We all know the importance of agriculture to the state of Queensland. Queensland has the largest area of agricultural land of any Australian state as well as the highest proportion of land area in Australia dedicated to agriculture. Agricultural industries are absolutely vital to the Queensland economy. About 30,500 businesses carry out agricultural activity in Queensland. The total value of Queensland's primary industry commodities as at April 2015 was forecast to be \$15.2 billion. Agricultural industries provide the backbone for a large proportion of many regional and rural communities throughout Queensland.

Approximately one in seven Queenslanders work somewhere within the agriculture supply chain. Obviously, with agriculture playing such a crucial role in our state's economy, we must do everything we can to ensure that the legislation that supports our food and fibre industries remains contemporary and accessible. That is why I am so pleased to be speaking in support of the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 today.

In my role as chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee I have had the opportunity to hear the views and concerns of agricultural stakeholders from around the state. I am well aware of the need for us to streamline the legislative processes that are dealt with in the bill to help create efficiencies and increase certainty for these stakeholders. The Agriculture and Environment Committee's only recommendation in our report tabled on 1 October was that the bill be passed. As chair, I am pleased to support this bill in the House today.

The bill makes amendments to a number of acts to streamline legislative processes and requirements, provide clarity and flexibility, and create the opportunity for efficiencies in agricultural practices. These relatively minor but important amendments range across a number of categories including biosecurity, new technology, animal disease risks, wild dog attacks on stock and the reduction of red tape.


With regard to biosecurity, the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 ensures that a timely response can be made under current legislation if there is an outbreak of an exotic disease such as foot-and-mouth disease. I am sure I do not need to expand on how devastating such an outbreak could be to our agricultural industries, our economy, our health, our lifestyle and our environment.

To assist stakeholders in embracing new technologies, the bill also makes changes to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act. These amendments will allow businesses working in the agriculture sector to make use of unmanned aerial vehicle technology to aerially spray crops for pests and weeds. This will help these businesses compete and expand in an evolving technological environment.

The bill also amends the Stock Act 1915 to increase flexibility for inspectors in managing animal disease. These amendments remove a requirement for inspectors to impose quarantine measures while still affording them powers to quarantine where it is appropriate to do so.

Given problems existing throughout Queensland with wild dog attacks on stock such as sheep, goats and cattle, not to mention attacks on people and their pets, I am sure stakeholders will welcome the bill's provisions to assist farmers in dealing with wild dogs. The amendments in the bill will close a gap that would have been brought about by the repeal of section 95 of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 on commencement of the Biosecurity Act. This will ensure farmers who destroy a dog attacking or about to attack stock do not risk committing an offence and are not subject to compensation.

Importantly, the bill also makes moves to reduce government red tape, though not in the wasteful manner of the Newman government, which devoted millions in taxpayer dollars to counting requirements in legislation. Through amendments to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act and the Animal Care and Protection Act, the bill removes redundant provisions and decreases the regulatory burden on Queenslanders. For all these reasons, I am proud to support the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.34 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill amends some 10 acts. It addresses some simple spelling mistakes and inconsistencies with Commonwealth legislation. On the whole, it is considered a bit of a tidy-up bill. I congratulate the previous minister for, I am sure, a lot of the work that went into this. That has resulted in this minister being able to bring this bill before the House. In a way, this is continuing to work collaboratively with both sides of the House. I acknowledge the hard work of the committee members, who did look at this bill and agreed to recommend that the bill be passed without any major amendments.

There are a few things that I want to add in relation to this vital bill, because obviously it is about agriculture. We all know—I am quite sure that the minister will agree with me—that at this time, when the state is suffering from such horrendous human catastrophe that is happening out west, some of the amendments, particularly around the wild dog provisions, will make landholders and agricultural producers feel more secure in the day-to-day management of their property.

The amendments to the Biosecurity Act are required to continue to allow landholders to destroy wild dogs attacking their stock on their land. This is of such vital importance—

Ms Leahy: They are a plague.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are a plague. They are at plague proportions. I have had the advantage of travelling through the Warrego and Gregory electorates and I have seen firsthand the devastation these dogs are having on the remaining stock. It is simply incredible. It seems that the drier it gets the greater the plague proportions of the dogs. Responses include fencing, prevention and getting rid of wild dogs, which are certainly one of Queensland's worst pest animals. In some areas they are having a devastating impact. We cannot underestimate the vital importance of this amendment for landholders. We need to ensure the livelihood of our agricultural producers and we also need to consider people's mental health.

While there has been some success in wild dog control in certain areas, we call on the government to reactivate QDOG, which was going so well under our government. In terms of the comments made in this place, it is so distressing when I hear some of the comments in relation to our government. The honourable member for Ipswich just talked about how we wasted money on red-tape reduction. From being out and about I can say that that is not what the people of rural and regional Queensland are concerned about. They are concerned about ensuring that we get the ridiculous red tape under control and do not go back down the track of previous Labor governments of letting red tape build up.


I refer, for example, to the native vegetation legislation and say that that is just bad legislation, it is bad regulation and we cannot have it. I have to support the fact that this minister has taken it upon himself to add this amendment to this bill because we need to do whatever we can to support our agricultural producers, particularly in the prevention of wild dog attacks and the destruction they cause given their numbers. This is obviously about reducing red tape, but most importantly it is about protecting our primary producers to enable them to run their properties the way they should. Should they have to destroy a wild dog that is eating their stock, then they should not be subject to criminal liability or have to pay compensation for the destruction of that dog. That is a purely common-sense amendment to the legislation.

I reiterate that I look forward to the minister reinstating QDOG and those meetings. After my indication to the minister through the estimates process, the minister gave me that statement and then following the estimates process on 27 August he made a further statement. I thank the minister for announcing that he will be working in and around that QDOG space. I am not sure if it will remain to be called QDOG, but the minister is well aware of the problems of wild dogs.

This bill also contains amendments to the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act and in relation to standstill zones. The current EDIA Act provides for the minister to issue a notice under subordinate legislation to establish a restricted area. There is an amendment in this bill where the minister is moving that power to the chief executive. This bill also amends the Stock Act, providing inspectors with greater flexibility on a case-by-case basis without imposing absolute quarantine over an entire area or over an entire category of stock. Again, these are common-sense amendments to that legislation because they allow the people on the ground—the inspectors—more flexibility.

It seems very petty to raise this issue, but given that the Labor Party constantly seems to have an aversion to thinking that this side of the House even acknowledges females, I was extremely disappointed to read throughout the explanatory notes that inspectors and the chief executive were constantly referred to as 'he'. I note that Beth Woods is a very good choice as the future director-general. However, she would be a 'she' when throughout the explanatory notes there is reference to 'he'. I am not normally petty like that, but I know that if I had done that I am quite sure I would have had every single Labor female member telling me that I should not be just talking about males and that it should be he/she. Given that I am the first ever female that has been appointed to the position of shadow agriculture minister or agriculture minister in the state of Queensland, I am very proud of the fact that I have that position and I think that it is about time that in the agricultural space we start referring to 'he' and 'she'. I am sure the minister would agree with me given his party's stance in relation to that issue.

The bill also enables amendments to the Agriculture and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act which will enable drones. This is bringing into the sphere of agriculture an ability for agricultural producers to use drones for the spraying of chemicals. Again, this is just common sense to bring us in line with other states and the Commonwealth to ensure that those drones can spread chemicals. Obviously there are concerns around oversprays and things like that, and I am sure the department will be looking into those. I ask the minister: should a drone have an overspray over fences, what would happen in those cases? I understand that the committee addressed that issue and the deputy chair of that committee will speak further on that issue. Those amendments are needed to ensure that our farmers and our agricultural chemical companies and spray operators are able to keep up with the latest technologies. We have some amazing operators who are working in this space and this amendment to that legislation will really assist them.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (4.45 pm): In opening my response to the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I am not sure why we did not hear a second reading speech from the minister. I do hope that we can get an appropriate summary considering the resources of the staff. I do not think we have ever had a piece of legislation debated without a ministerial introduction, so what a great day for politics, Minister!

The Agriculture and Environment Committee is appointed with the responsibilities of agriculture, fisheries, sport and racing; environment and heritage protection; national parks and the Great Barrier Reef. The committee examined the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, which was tabled on 14 July by the minister, and the subsequent committee report was tabled on 2 October. It was agreed early that the bill was to make miscellaneous and non-controversial amendments to 10 acts administered within the portfolio's jurisdiction, those being the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994; the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966; the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001; the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008; the Biosecurity Act 2014; the Brands Act 1915; the Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988; the Forestry Act 1959; and the Stock Act 1915. The bill also seeks amendments to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Act (No. 2) 2013. The Office of Best Practice Regulation assessed the amendments in the bill as being machinery in nature or unlikely to have any adverse impacts and did not require the department to complete a regulatory impact assessment.

With reference to the amendments to the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994, the bill seeks to clarify and validate the application of legislation made under the Commonwealth act as law in Queensland. It was unclear whether the Queensland act also applies to other legislative instruments made under the Commonwealth act as law in Queensland if they are not specifically prescribed. Amendments to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966 require

changes to Queensland's licensing framework to accommodate Commonwealth licensing and rating arrangements for aircraft operations, and we reference the removal of impediments and enable the use of new technologies to aerially distribute agricultural chemicals.

The bill will also now allow for persons to apply for these licences where they intend to use manned or unmanned aircraft in the use of chemical distribution, something that is an increasing technology and business practice across Queensland. The issue of loss or damage to stock or crops as a result of chemical overspray was clarified, as alluded to by the shadow agriculture minister, and of course we thank the department for its engagement on many issues during discussions on the bill. Those who have contact with crop management know chemical overspray can be devastating, so we were content that the department would provide us with the obligation to investigate any use of chemicals in such incidents not in accordance with label instructions under the act and issues arising out of chemical overspray can be resolved in civil jurisdictions.

Amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 will update the reference to the scientific use code and provide clarity that an entity who is authorised to administer restricted or controlled substances to kill an animal is not liable under the act. Changes to the scientific use code reflect a change in the name of the code that occurred recently, so the Animal Care and Protection Act refers to the change of name of the code that has occurred. There was also duplication for persons who approached the department to become prescribed entities to euthanise an animal in that it was very inefficient and a huge waste of government resources. We clearly acknowledged that and support the amendment. Entities mostly had already had authorisation under the Health Act to obtain and use these substances to euthanise animals but previously were subject to an offence under this legislation.

So the proposed amendment includes, under the categories of people exempted from the offence, those who have an authorisation under the Health Act 1937. Amendments to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 will assist suppliers of permanent identification devices for maintaining obligations on those implanting microchips in cats and dogs and, importantly, with the wild dog problem increasing, enable landowners to destroy dogs attacking or about to attack stock on their land. The amendments also protect the landowner from criminal liability or having to pay compensation for the dogs' destruction.

The Biosecurity Act is set to commence on 1 July 2016 and, as it needs to be proclaimed before that date, a number of deficiencies in the act are proposed to be addressed in this bill. Amendments to the very important Biosecurity Act will appropriately provide for restrictions on feeding animal matter to certain animals; clarify the appropriate instrument to authorise activities that are subject to biosecurity zone regulatory provisions; provide for the immediate suspension of the auditor's approval where there is a serious risk to trade in a particular commodity; and provide other minor amendments.

Currently, we have two feeding bans across Australia, including Queensland: the ruminant feed ban and the swill feed ban. These bans are in place to ensure that Australian meat and meat products continue to have strong access to domestic and international markets. These bans prohibit the feeding of any animal meal or fish meal to all ruminant animals to prevent the spread of the disease commonly known as mad cow disease. Australia is free of this disease, but we need a second line of defence should that disease enter this country. The swill feed ban operates in parallel with the ruminant feed ban. We need to protect our strict quarantine laws to prevent the introduction of some exotic diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease. These viruses can be found in even small amounts of meat or dairy products. If those meat or dairy products are fed to pigs, poultry or ruminants, we could see the adverse situation of unwanted diseases being found in our country.

Both the ruminant feed ban and the swill feed ban are currently implemented under the Stock Act 1915. The Stock Act 1915 is to be repealed when the Biosecurity Act commences. Section 46 of the Biosecurity Act attempts to combine the acts, which is problematic because of the effects of the exceptions and whether the exceptions have been agreed to at a national level. So section 46 is proposed to be replaced in its entirety by clauses dealing separately with ruminants, pigs and poultry and provide more broadly for the exceptions to be dealt with by the chief executive. The proposed amendments in clause 48 of the bill will allow a biosecurity instrument permit that is not available to be applied for in circumstances where a biosecurity certificate is more appropriate to be issued to authorise activities that are subject to biosecurity zone regulatory provisions. These proposed amendments assist in obtaining a permit for an activity in movement control orders or biosecurity zones to manage a pest, disease or contaminant at no cost.

An amendment to the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981 is proposed for a more timely notification of restricted area and standstill zones. The committee heard from the department that these amendments will ensure a more efficient and timely implementation of restricted areas and standstill

zones to stop the spread of exotic diseases into or within an area. The amendment will provide that notifications for each of these areas can be made by the chief executive officer instead of the minister. This is a welcome amendment.

The amendments to the Forestry Act 1959 will provide that a person who damages or destroys a forest product in carrying out their biosecurity obligation or if directed under the Biosecurity Act will not be liable for certain offences under the Forestry Act. As I have alluded to previously, the Biosecurity Act is due to commence in July 2016. When the act commences, it is possible that a person might have to interfere or destroy a forest product in order to carry out their obligations. A good example for me and for other members of this House is if a person has to burn off in a forest area to eradicate prickly acacia. Currently, under sections 86 and 88 of the Forestry Act, that person would be held liable for damages to that forest in carrying out their obligations. These amendments will assist such a person in carrying out the important work of making sure that we deal with biosecurity issues.

Clause 98 of the bill amends the Stock Act to provide inspectors with greater flexibility to deal with stock disease incidents. It will allow disease incidents to be managed flexibly on a case-by-case basis without imposing an absolute quarantine over an entire area or over an entire category of stock.

Amendments to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2013 will allow for the ongoing management and administration of forest reserves. We have spoken about these forest reserves in this place. It is very important to note that there was to be a deadline of 7 November 2015 to ensure the effective management of 38 remaining forest reserves. I welcome the government's commitment that we can maintain a maintenance structure as these reserves transition into new tenures.


Amendments to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Act, the Biosecurity Act, the Brands Act and the Chemical Usage (Agriculture and Veterinary) Control Act will change conditions for state employees where they are not covered by the provisions of the Public Service Act. The amendment will also retain cover for those persons who do not fit the definition of a 'state employee' under the Public Service Act, but such protection would be reasonable for a person acting under the direction of an inspector. I think that is an important move. Clause 16 amends the four acts that I have mentioned to make them consistent with the objectives of the amended Public Service Act 2013.

Clauses 16 and 73 of the bill contain amendments to the company director liability provisions. They will reduce the liability on executive officers of corporations where the corporation commits an offence under the act for some offences and reduce the range of offences for which liability applies. The significant difference is that the executive officer no longer must prove they took reasonable steps to avail themselves of a defence. Instead, the prosecution must prove they did not take reasonable steps. Clause 73 also provides that an executive officer is liable for certain other offences under the chemical usage act but only if they authorised or permitted the corporation's illegal conduct, or were knowingly involved.

The committee reviewed the fundamental legislative principles and reviewed clause 44, which replaces section 46 of the Biosecurity Act with four new provisions—sections 46, 46A, 46B and 46C—that relate to the feeding or supply of restricted animal materials. Clause 52 of the bill omits the requirement to give a show cause notice under section 484 if the chief executive officer amends approvals under section 454(3)(b). That is to ensure that audits are carried out and conducted appropriately. The committee considered these clauses and found that they were reasonable and gave sufficient regard to rights and liberties by allowing recourse to both internal and external review. I note the committee's response on the limitations on the power of the chief executive officer to suspend and the fact that an auditor's right to natural justice is not extinguished by the Biosecurity Act.

The committee considers that clause 53, which provides for the immediate suspension of relevant authorities in certain circumstances, is sufficiently constrained and is justified in the interests of the biosecurity issues confronting Queensland. Clause 10 amends the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1996 and enables conditions on a pilot chemical rating licence or an aerial distribution contractor licence.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the members of the committee for their deliberations. I would also like to acknowledge the committee secretariat and the departmental officers for their diligence in assisting the committee in its deliberations.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I would like to thank the work of the committee and also Rob Hansen and Megan Johns for their support. Agriculture is an important component of the Queensland economy. In 2014-15 to April 2015, it was valued at \$15.2 billion. My electorate of Mackay relies on the surrounding agricultural industries for employment and income.

Like other industries in Queensland, the agricultural industry is under pressure to continue to diversify and also renew practices to keep up with economic demands to produce more product from the same amount of land. The Premier's recent trade mission is evident of the ever-changing nature and complexity of agriculture. During that trade mission, in Japan the Premier witnessed the signing of an agreement between Asahi Holdings and QUT. This venture will increase the production of sugar and ethanol without greatly increasing the input of sugar. This is an innovative and simple milling process. At the recent estimates committee hearings Minister Byrne also shared with the committee the innovation and development of new varieties of fruits.

Legislation needs to be modernised, simplified and aligned with Commonwealth legislation to allow primary producers to get on with their business of farming without overburdensome red tape or redundant legislation sitting in the background. The bill makes minor changes to legislation that ensures the future security of the agriculture industry across Queensland. Ten acts will be amended to address inconsistencies with Commonwealth legislation and to help clarify and interpret the application of current legislation.

The acts provide for both biosecurity and the protection of animal welfare. As farmers modernise their practices, the types of machinery, technologies and implements have also evolved. This is evident with the use of aircraft, both manned and unmanned, on farms. Amendments to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966 will bring into line Queensland's licensing framework with current Commonwealth licensing and rating arrangements for aircraft operation. At present there is an approved unmanned drone for agricultural use. It is the Yamaha RMAX helicopter. The current Queensland licensing application for aircraft refers to Commonwealth authorisations which no longer exist.

In Queensland in recent times we have unfortunately seen outbreaks of some exotic diseases in the agricultural industry. The Palaszczuk government takes biosecurity of our agricultural industry very seriously. When there is an outbreak of disease there is a need for a quick and urgent response. The provisions of the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981 need amending. The amendments ensure that a notification of a stated area to be a restricted area for a stated exotic disease can be processed with urgency. Currently, there is a requirement for the notice to be drafted by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. This process can be timely. The amendment allows for the issuing of a biosecurity notice outside of normal business hours.

With the Biosecurity Act commencing within 12 months, the bill also provides a timely opportunity to refine a few aspects of the act before it commences. This will provide a seamless transition. The bill also has provisions regarding restricted animal material. For example, it ensures that Queensland continues to support and enact its commitments to the nationally agreed feed bans for ruminants and other animals.


The Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994 needs amending for the use and the transportation of chemicals in Queensland. Chemicals are required to be used in a variety of contexts, including herbicides on weeds and veterinary medicines on animals. The changes will clarify the validity and application of legislative instruments made under the Commonwealth act as laws of Queensland.

The care and wellbeing of animals is a concern for us all. Unfortunately there are times when animals need to be euthanased. The amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 will give protection to those workers who need to administer chemicals or drugs to animals. These are in three categories: one, an inspector; two, a prescribed entity—being the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, those who run animal shelters and officers of local government; and, three, veterinary surgeons, including veterinary surgeon students. Workers in these categories need change to legislation to remove the offence of administering a poisonous or harmful substance with the intent of killing or injuring an animal when administering a drug in the course of their duties at work. The legislation also removes the timely duplication of applications and authorisations to perform their duties.

Amendments to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 amend, clarify and simplify the terminology relating to identification microchips in cats and dogs. The bill removes inconsistencies that are restrictive to the sellers of permanent identification devices. The bill requires that the device implanted by an authorised implanter be a device that stores the unique identification number for the prescribed permanent identification device. Unfortunately, when dealing with cats and dogs not all pet owners are responsible. There is a problem for landowners in some instances who need to deal with the problem of stray dogs attacking their stock. Landowners need the protection of the amendments in this bill to allow them to destroy stray dogs that have or are about to attack their stock. The bill will insert

provisions to protect the landowner from criminal liability or having to pay compensation for the destruction of the dog. The bill also includes provision for protection on stock routes from attack by stray dogs.

The bill also widens its definition of animals protected under the term 'stock' to include cattle, sheep, goats, deer, llamas and horses. The only animals not included are bees, pigs and captive birds. The bill also recognises that landowners may not always be capable of destroying the potential attacking dog or that there may be, in fact, more than one owner. This bill gives clarity to the protection of multiple owners and agents acting for the owners. The amendments in the bill are minor but necessary for the security of our agricultural industry and the protection of the animals. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.06 pm): I would like to make a small contribution to the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I thank my colleagues on the committee; Rob Hansen, the research director; and the other directors and assistants. They did a wonderful job. I would like to thank the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for their assistance during the inquiry. They certainly did give us a great rundown of what it was all about.

We had the job of examining the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994, the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966, the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008, the Biosecurity Act 2014, the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981, the Forestry Act 1959 and the Stock Act 1915—that one goes back a while. The amendments to the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act bring it in line with the Commonwealth act as much as possible, which is very important.

In relation to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act, some of my colleagues have already spoken about drones. The regulation of air space comes under the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. The new technology of drones spraying crops is certainly changing agriculture. I believe that there is technology performing farm work in many areas. We will see a huge change over the next couple of decades; there will most probably be tractors without drivers. We have to keep up with the times. It is interesting that there is only one licence for a drone and that is a Yamaha RMAX helicopter. I am sure that there will be a few more come on board in the near future. It will be interesting to see the future of aviation in relation to farming. We will not need pilots in planes. They will not run into powerlines because drones will have it all pegged out in shorter, smaller operations. It will be a lot safer for everybody—unless somebody loses control of the drone.

The bill amends the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act in relation to permanent identification devices or PIDs. It would be great if everybody could use those devices, as they make life a lot easier for everybody, especially councils, if dogs are easily identified. Coming from a background of being on council, I know how important it is to have such devices on animals. It makes it a lot easier if you can scan the device to get the owner's address and then return the dog to its owner or ring up the owner and get them to come and pick up the dog. Anything we can do to make it easier for council operators to identify dogs and cats is a good thing.

As one of my colleagues said, a lot of people do not look after their dogs, but allow them to roam and attack other people's animals. You see a lot of that in city areas, as well as areas that are growing into rural areas. People must have the ability to protect the animals on their property. This legislation does a lot in that regard. Section 95 of the Land Protection Act currently provides some protection for landowners in that situation, although some of the wording is obsolete. For example, 'urban district' is no longer identified in Queensland legislation. We have to change the act to reflect the use of zonings such as 'rural property'. Little things such as that need changing to bring some acts up to date.

The bill allows the landowner to extend the destruction power to an agent or another person who can assist in that destruction. People may not be at home when dogs are attacking their animals. I have had experience with dogs killing cattle on my property. Those dogs really have to be stopped. A bull terrier will tear the ears off and the skin from the noses of cattle and those animals then have to be destroyed. It is not a very pleasant thing to do, but neither is seeing an animal in such agony. The worst thing about it is that, at the end of the day, it does not make for good neighbours. I have seen situations where people have fought over their dogs. I know of a bloke who reckoned his dog was a vegetarian, which made me and a lot of other people laugh. Things such as that do happen.

The most important changes in the legislation are to the Biosecurity Act. Coming off the land, I know how important it is to keep exotic diseases out of this country, especially mad cow disease. We must ensure that animal products such as meat meal and fish meal are not fed to animals, especially cattle and sheep. We must ensure that that does not happen. The industry is worth so much to this


country, as is the export of meat and livestock. We have to keep exotic diseases out of the country. For example, if cattle are poisoned with botulism it can kill them very quickly, so we need this legislation to be passed. Exotic diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease can cripple our industry overnight. We would lose all of our markets and the value of the cattle would drop overnight. It is very important to ensure that we keep such diseases out of the country.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr SORENSEN: It is a big point. The Australian meat industry is clean and green, so it is important to make sure that—

Mrs Frecklington: That is why we have the best beef in Australia.

Mr SORENSEN: That is for sure. I recommend the bill to the House, because it makes some good changes to the legislation. We must work with other states and the Commonwealth to make sure we keep those diseases out of the country. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.14 pm): Today I am pleased to speak in support of the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. As the minister outlined in his explanatory speech, the bill reforms a number of acts. The amendments will streamline legislative processes and create efficiency for industry stakeholders. The bill will also make amendments to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2013 to ensure the continuation of existing provisions for managing forest reserve lands. Agricultural industries are integral to Queensland's economy. In April 2015, the total value of Queensland's food and fibre primary industry commodities for 2014-15 was forecast to be \$15.02 billion. Food and fibre is a significant contributor to the state's economy and a major source of employment across the state. It is estimated that approximately one in seven Queenslanders are employed within agricultural industries across the entire supply chain.

Mrs Frecklington: And seven out of seven eat it.

Mr MADDEN: I take that interjection. Those figures demonstrate the significant role that agriculture has in Queensland's productivity and profitability. The bill makes reforms to the legislation governing agricultural and veterinary chemicals, animal welfare management and biosecurity, as well as forestry. With agricultural production, agricultural and veterinary chemicals are integral for many primary producers, so it is essential that the legislation regulating the use of such chemicals is as clear and non-cumbersome as possible. This government has made a commitment to animal welfare standards. Amendments are necessary to create a legislative framework that is accessible and straightforward and adequately balances the competing interests of each animal and industry stakeholder.

These amendments will clarify the interpretation and application of existing legislation and address the inconsistencies with Commonwealth legislation. The amendments will reduce the obligation for suppliers of permanent identification devices for cats and dogs and will create efficient and flexible administrative processes in dealing with disease and biosecurity risk. The Queensland government considers biosecurity risk to be a significant threat to our state's health and economy. It is important that Queensland continues to be vigilant and responsive to biosecurity threats and it is essential we have legislative measures to support this position.

This government has made a commitment to ensuring that Queensland's animal welfare practices are consistent with world's best practice. Animals are required to be humanely killed and the Health Act 1937 authorises persons to administer drugs to animals for this purpose. It is generally an offence under the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 to kill animals by feeding or administering harmful substances to them. This prohibition prevents cruel acts of poisoning and other harmful consequences occurring. Amendments contained in this bill will ensure that all persons who are authorised under the Health Act to administer substances to animals are not guilty of an offence for humanely killing animals in this way. The amendments in the bill also maintain the right for producers to destroy dogs attacking or about to attack their stock, without fear of civil liability. It is essential that we support our primary producers and help them protect their livelihoods from threats by such pests.

Agvet chemicals are used in a wide variety of contexts, including the use of herbicides on weeds and veterinary medicines on animals. The national review of the agvet chemical legislation has been ongoing for some years. Certain unrelated amendments to the Queensland agvet legislation have been envisaged for some time but have been postponed in the past pending the outcomes of a national review. Given further delays in finalising the national review, it is proposed to progress these and other amendments now, given the opportunity to do so with a miscellaneous bill.

The Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994, the agvet act, gives effect to certain legislative instruments—for example, orders—made under the Commonwealth Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994. Amendments to Queensland's agvet act will remove doubt and clarify the validity and application of legislative instruments made under the Commonwealth act as Queensland law.

Exotic pests and animals are a significant threat to livestock industries, the economy and human health. They have the potential to devastate entire industries and the livelihood of the many producers who support these industries. The feeding of restricted animal material, or RAM, to ruminants will exacerbate the spread of these diseases, including mad cow disease. For a number of years, Australia has placed bans on the feeding of RAM to such animals.

The amendments to the Biosecurity Act in this bill serve to clarify which animals can be fed RAM or swill under strict conditions and circumstances and those that cannot. The amendments only go so far as to enforce the national ruminant feed ban without unnecessary and unintended consequences on the feeding of non-risk animals such as captive birds of prey.

Upon commencement, the Biosecurity Act will repeal a number of acts. Despite the upcoming repeal of these acts, it is critical that a small number of problems in them are addressed now to protect Queensland's food and fibre industries. The Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981 will be repealed by the Biosecurity Act. Once the Biosecurity Act commences the chief executive will have the power to make biosecurity emergency orders to holistically deal with exotic disease incidents.


Biosecurity measures must be flexible and responsive. A rigid and unyielding biosecurity framework will not adequately support our various food and fibre industries. Interim amendments to the Stock Act 1915 are crucial to maintain this flexibility, even though it will be repealed by the Biosecurity Act.

The amendments to the Stock Act will provide inspectors with the discretion to impose other measures rather than issue quarantine notices when stock are diseased or suspected of being diseased. These amendments will support other primary producers, promote business continuity and ensure the reduced disruption of livestock operations in circumstances where disease risks can be adequately managed without the need to impose a quarantine notice. In the past, civil liability for state employees has been largely governed by the provisions contained within each act.

This government will continue to work with producers and stakeholders across the entire supply chain to create a profitable food and fibre sector. Legislative improvement creates opportunities which previously did not exist. These opportunities are what drives growth and opens up new channels for development, making Queensland a robust and resourceful place to be involved in the food and fibre sector.

Finally, this bill includes some amendments to legislation within the portfolio of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Work on finalising the land tenure status for a number of forest reserves is ongoing. The amendments to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2013 contained in this bill will ensure the continuation of existing provisions for the managing of the remaining 38 forest reserve lands until such time as final land tenure for them can be finalised.

I have pleasure in commending the bill to the House. I congratulate the committee on their hard work in finalising this bill.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.24 pm): It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Of course, the seat of Gregory is all about agriculture. It depends on agriculture. Members only need to look at the seat of Gregory to see the high-intensity industries such as the feedlot industries and the horticultural industries and cotton industries on the eastern side of the electorate.

Mr Crandon: Around Emerald.

Mr MILLAR: Around Emerald, absolutely. I take that interjection. In the western part of the electorate we have the vast Mitchell grass, gidgee and mulga country that supports our cattle and wool industries. Yes, it is in drought at the moment and things are tough, but I can tell the members in this House and the people of Queensland that once it does rain and the drought breaks those areas will be wealth-creating regions for the rest of Queensland. They are certainly ready to go when the rains come. We pray that they come very soon. We are heading into our fourth season without a wet season. It is certainly biting hard.

The Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is dear to me being the son of a farmer, a grandson of a grazier, a great-grandson of a grazier and a great-great-grandson of a grazier. I guess agriculture has always been in my blood and will always be in my blood. I believe that agriculture is one of the mainstay commodities of the Queensland economy. As the Asian economies move towards middle class and higher class we need to be able to take advantage of their economies and make sure that our high-end agriculture—which it is; it is the best agriculture in the world—can certainly meet those market demands.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the former minister for agriculture, John McVeigh, who has certainly been involved in a lot of these issues that we are discussing today. I had the great pleasure of working with John McVeigh. He certainly was passionate about agriculture. Like me, he is a son of a farmer. He comes from agricultural industries on the Darling Downs. His chosen profession was agriculture. He did such a great job with that.

I remember the three things that the former minister was very passionate about. The first is biosecurity. Something he knew from his experience, not only as a professional in agriculture but also as a former employee of DPI and coming from agriculture, is that biosecurity is incredibly important. Issues such as FMD are important. The issue of wild dogs is something that he was very passionate about.

I also acknowledge the shadow minister for agriculture, Deb Frecklington. She is another person from the land and with a long history on the land. She is passionate about this. She is doing a great job in advocating on behalf of the agricultural industry.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the member for Warrego. We joined this parliament together. We represent two of the big five seats—Warrego and Gregory. We have such vast electorates with such vast agricultural industries. If we go towards Chinchilla and the eastern part of Warrego we find that it has the same issues I have such as high-intensity agricultural industries like feedlotting and horticulture. If we head out to the western part of Warrego we find the fantastic mulga country. It is very important to us.

I also mention the member for Burdekin who has the sugar industry in his electorate. The member for Burnett has that industry in his electorate as well. There are plenty of people with experience in agriculture on our side of politics. I acknowledge the Minister for Agriculture for bringing the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to the House.

I wish to speak to the amendments to the Exotic Diseases in Animal Act 1981 and welcome them. They will provide what I see is imperative, essential and urgently needed which is much more timely notices of restricted areas and standstill zones in the event of an animal disease outbreak. This is essential if we are to keep our state clean and free from exotic pests and diseases. Queensland has a reputation right around the world as one of the safest and cleanest areas for agricultural production and we must protect that.

Our clean and green reputation is our marketing edge on other countries and even on our interstate rivals as we move to capitalise on the growth in the Asian markets, especially the high-end markets, that our products—whether they be beef, dairy, grains, horticulture or sugar, just to name a few—need to take advantage of. We need to protect our clean, green image that we have.

The current EDIA Act requires the minister to issue a notice under subordinate legislation to establish a restricted area and a standstill zone, which requires a notice drafted by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel and approved by the Governor in Council. This is not only time consuming but unnecessary. It also has the potential to put our industry at further risk because of the unnecessary time and red tape it takes to get this done. When we have an exotic disease incursion in Queensland, we need to move quickly. You only have to look at issues such as FMD to see why we need to move quickly. The changes will allow notifications to be made by the chief executive at short notice to better deal with any major animal disease outbreaks. This is needed if we are to deal—and I hope we never have to—with an outbreak of FMD, where restricted areas and standstill notices would need to be implemented immediately with no time delay.

Queensland is a state that has coastlines that have close exposure to our neighbouring countries such as Indonesia. Amendments are not restricted to weekday business hours. Disease and pest incursions do not stick to a working week and do not stick to a nine to five day. For example, the major horse influenza outbreak in 2007 was detected at a large horse sports event at Warwick on a Saturday. It was not on a Monday. It was not at 9.30 in the morning when we are ready to go. It was on a Saturday.

During any disease outbreak, it is vital that prompt action and especially movement restrictions are in place as quickly as possible because any delays can potentially make eradication far more difficult and costly.


I want to quickly move to one of my pet issues, and that is wild dogs. They are having a major impact on my electorate in Western Queensland. We need the wool industry back in Western Queensland. We need the rebirth of the wool industry back in Western Queensland. We need to get on top of wild dogs, because wild dogs are having a devastating impact on the wool industry and small towns and communities—places like Muttaborra, Aramac, Longreach, Blackall, Yaraka, Stonehenge, Quilpie, Windorah and then, if you move across to the member for Warrego's electorate, Charleville where they are having a major impact on the wool industry. I remember back in the eighties and nineties there were six shearing contractors in the town of Muttaborra alone. I remember that well—when playing for the Longreach Rams in Rugby Union, we used to go up to Muttaborra and it was like playing the All Blacks.

Mr Costigan: How times have changed!

Mr MILLAR: Times have changed but we do need a wool industry. Amendments to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 will enable landholders to destroy dogs attacking or about to attack stock on their land. I think that is important. Section 95 of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 currently authorises a landholder or an authorised person to destroy a dog that is attacking or about to attack stock on the property if the dog is not under someone's control. It protects the landowner from criminality liability and having to pay compensation for the dog's destruction. I think that is very important.

For far too long we have had dogs stray from owners and wreak havoc on properties and destroy stock not only out in Western Queensland but also in coastal areas. As the member for Whitsunday would have seen, dogs are now able to bring down calves and even small cattle. We have to have responsible dog owners. I know we have a lot of responsible dog owners in Queensland, but not everyone is a responsible dog owner. There are those people who have little regard to what impact their dogs might be having on properties close by. What is devastating—and I can tell members this from experience, and I hope they never have to see it—is to see sheep and lambs destroyed by dogs, going out the next morning and finding that dogs have attacked nine, 10 or 11 sheep and taken down 20 lambs and seeing them on the ground. It is a heartbreaking and cruel way for those animals to die.

We need to do everything we can to make sure that we get wild dogs under control and allow cattle producers but also wool producers and lamb producers to be able to confidently know that their stock are in a protected area—that they are not being attacked by feral animals and they are not being attacked by wild dogs. What is even more heartbreaking than anything else is that those dogs that do attack those sheep are dogs that come from town. They are domesticated animals that owners are not keeping on the chain at night that do have an impact on nearby properties close to town. I commend the changes to that legislation to make sure that property owners have the right to be able to destroy a dog if they see it on their place uncontrolled. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (5.34 pm): In rising to participate in this debate on the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, I would like to address the amendments in this bill that seek to continue provisions for the management and administration of forest reserves in Queensland. The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2013 is being amended by this bill to ensure that forest reserves can continue to be managed into the future.

The forest reserve tenure was created in 2000 as a transitional tenure to support the statewide forest planning processes, which involved the transfer of state lands such as state forests into the protected area estate. Through this process, various lands across the state were transferred into forest reserve tenure, which allowed time for further assessment of the uses and values of these lands prior to their transition to a final tenure—usually to a class of protected area such as national park.


The NCOLA legislation of 2013, which, as I have indicated, is being amended by this bill, contains provisions which automatically repeal sections in the Nature Conservation Act 1992 relating to the management and use of forest reserves and removes references to forest reserves from other relevant Queensland legislation. However, these provisions must continue beyond their scheduled date of removal in early November 2015, as there are still 38 forest reserves in existence.

In 2013 when the NCOLA was passed, it included provisions to repeal legislation used to manage forest reserves. These provisions were drafted to commence by proclamation at a later date in anticipation that all remaining forest reserves would be subsequently moved to a final tenure and the

forest reserve legislation would then become redundant and could be removed. Over 180 forest reserves have been dedicated since 2000, and most of these have been converted to another land tenure. However, it has taken longer than originally anticipated to finalise the transfer of the remaining 38 forest reserves, and we must ensure that appropriate legislation for managing these lands remains in place. This will be achieved through this bill.

Without the amendments contained in this bill, the existing legislative framework for managing forest reserves will be repealed as a consequence of the automatic commencement of provisions in the NCOLA legislation. Removal of this framework would result in a situation where the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service would continue to be responsible for managing this land. However, the specific legislation established to manage forest reserves would no longer exist. If this were to occur, ongoing management by QPWS rangers would become legislatively complex and inefficient. For example, without the existing provisions for managing forest reserves, QPWS would need to apply for a permit under the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 before any controlled burn could be undertaken—currently such activities are exempt in recognition of the efficiencies of QPWS staff managing such activities on these lands.

Similarly, the law of trespass would have to be used to try to control access and use, and existing mechanisms available to manage commercial and other uses of the land, such as commercial activity permits and agreements, would disappear, leaving tourism operators and other such users without formal agreement to access these areas. I am sure that all members of the House would agree that allowing such a situation to occur is not in the best interests of the agencies charged with managing these lands or the community members who use them. To prevent this situation from occurring, this bill will repeal the relevant provisions from NCOLA, thereby ensuring an appropriate legislative framework remains in place to manage the remaining 38 forest reserves until they are transferred to another tenure in the future. These amendments will result in no change of management on these forest reserves. The bill simply ensures a continuation of the existing legislative framework which has been in place over the last 15 years. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (5.38 pm), in reply: I thank the members for their contribution this afternoon. As pointed out by many speakers, this bill has been prepared over a considerable period of time. The amendments that have been brought forward today have been widely supported. The report from the committee clearly indicates that the bill should be passed. It is not a controversial bill. It would not make a difference whether it was the LNP on this side of the House or the ALP. This is a bill that is necessary. It is not one that is going to show up on the front page of the *Courier-Mail*. Hence, I do not see the purpose in standing for an hour as a minister to basically make the same speech as has been made by members around the chamber and summarise nicely the introductory speech.

Mrs Frecklington: We love listening to your dulcet tones, Minister.

Mr BYRNE: I know the member opposite loves the sound of my voice but, frankly, there are some who may not at two o'clock in the morning. The fact is that I have acted in members' best interests in not making them have to listen to me for an hour summarising exactly what everybody has said in this chamber.

This bill is necessary. It is widely supported. It does all the right things. It is not controversial and there is no political or ideological divide. This is the business of this parliament, about getting on and improving conditions and circumstances for our constituents and for the industries that rely on us. I am very pleased about the work of the department, about the contributions of the members this evening and the work of the committee more particularly in having a look at this bill and sending back the bill as it is with one recommendation, that recommendation being that the bill be passed. There are a number of matters raised that I should probably illuminate, one being the wild dog issue.

As with most things in agriculture, there is not a huge divide between the Labor Party and perhaps elements of the former National Party. I am happy to provide any number of briefings on any subject to any member of the opposition or the crossbenchers on any of the policies and issues we are carrying forward. The member for Nanango raised QDOG. As rightly pointed out, I gave a commitment and we have recently held the inaugural meeting of QDOG. We intend to proceed pretty much as I have stated previously on wild dog actions. The response to that, the way in which we are approaching dealing with wild dogs, is probably not within the long title of this bill. I will be happy to inform the House at some time in the future, hopefully sooner rather than later, about what our plans are for wild dog management. I can assure honourable members that we have not been silent in the background. The processes and mechanisms that have been set up by this government to deal with wild dogs have been fully consulted

on with a large variety of stakeholders who are all very supportive. Those members who come from Western Queensland would recognise the work that has been done and the situation we are presented with. They can be assured that this government is certainly not in any way, shape or form stepping away or denying the problem, nor the best way in which we can approach that.

I will say this. When I came to this job I was concerned about the success of many governments and their approaches to wild dogs. That is one of the questions I asked most directly of my department early in the piece. After years of effort—and erstwhile effort by many players—to try to address this issue, it seemed clear to me that those efforts had not matured in a way in which many in Western Queensland would expect. One of the key things I have been asking of my department that I expect to see from QDOG and other entities that are going to support us in this is proper, adequate performance metrics that can tell us something about whether we are succeeding or otherwise. Frankly, without those sorts of metrics, we are going to see an outcome that spends money and does not necessarily address the problem. I suspect that past governments of all persuasions have, with the best intentions, committed resources to this issue and have not necessarily delivered those things that many in our community expect. I can assure honourable members of this: I have a very clear focus on what sorts of things we should be looking at. That does not necessarily mean a body count of dead wild dogs; it means perhaps the reinvigoration of the wool industry that was mentioned by one of the earlier speakers.

We are committed and we will be doing everything we can in a collaborative fashion with additional funding and the cooperation of the federal government. I am more than happy to provide extensive briefings to any member of the opposition and the crossbenchers on that issue or any other issue. As they will see with this bill and most other bills that are associated with us, it is evidence based, it is necessary and it will deliver those outcomes that we all expect and what our constituents expect. I note the point and the comment about the 'he and she' in the greens. I was not aware of that. I am surprised some of my colleagues did not alert me to it. I will try not to be a part of that again and will use the appropriate language in any future greens that come before the House. On that note, I commend the bill to the House.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 75, as read, agreed to.

Clause 76—

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (5.45 pm): I rise on a small point in relation to clause 76 to seek clarification from the minister. I know that he is really keen to continue the discussion in relation to this bill. Clause 76 amends the Exotic Diseases in Animals Act and relates to the provision of more timely notification of restricted areas and standstill zones. I understand why we need such promptness in relation to this, which is of vital importance, and the member for Gregory spoke on this extremely eloquently. I was a little bit distressed, though, when I heard one of the minister's colleagues say that sometimes these exotic diseases happen outside of business hours. I appreciate that the minister is very hardworking and I am quite sure he does not work from nine to five. I ask the minister to clarify how often these issues occur. Is it something that he could continue to deal with, given that it is a rare occasion and it is going to be handed to his chief executive? Whilst we do need to ensure that there is a timely manner to all of these things, the minister is delegating his authority to his chief executive—he or she—on such an important issue. I appreciate the issue of it occurring outside of business hours. I know how hard every member of this House works. So I was surprised to hear that comment from one of his colleagues in relation to it being outside of those hours. Is this a relatively common occurrence? I would not imagine it is. Hopefully, it is not a relatively common occurrence and I would assume the minister would want to have carriage of that matter. I know it is a technical point, but I was seeking further clarification.

Mr BYRNE: I thank the member for Nanango for the question. This amendment makes it a lot easier to go through those declarations. Previously, there were all sorts of requirements to get drafting instruction. In fact, we had to have availability of ministers and drafters to actually prepare the material. This amendment subverts all of that. It is about timeliness, speed and 24/7. It is a very positive thing. I do not think the member needs to be concerned about what has been said. This is about getting rid of what I call red-tape bureaucracy that slows things up.

Clause 76, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 77 to 94, as read, agreed to.

Clause 95—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON (5.49 pm): Whilst I appreciate that this is your bill, Minister, I do note that your ministerial colleague may be more relevant in relation to this. These amendments to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Act are aimed at covering the ongoing management and administration of forest reserves until the transfer of those remaining forest reserves to another tenure is finalised.

Minister, this may seem a very small point to you, but it is extremely important to me and those on this side of the House because we are the champions of primary industry. Minister, will you give an undertaking that access to these reserves will continue for beekeepers? I understand that the previous Labor government, I think under Premier Bligh, was hell-bent on locking beekeepers out of state forests. It was a policy that was driven by blind ideology and there was no common sense to it. Beekeeping, as you would be well aware, is a benign activity in terms of its impact to state forests, and it is increasingly important for the pollination of native flora and commercial agricultural groups.

Minister, I am seeking your clarification on this point. Will access to sites that have been used by our much loved and much needed beekeepers to maintain primary industries continue, and will reasonable access still be granted to those really hardworking contributors to primary industry in Queensland?

Mr BYRNE: I can assure the member for Nanango that the bill seeks only to maintain the existing legislative framework for managing forest reserves which has been in place since 2000. It makes no changes to land tenure and simply enables the continuation of arrangements that are in place for the managing of these lands now which would otherwise be automatically repealed on 7 November 2015. Other issues relating to forest transfer processes are not necessarily relevant to this debate or these amendments.

Clause 95, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 96 to 99, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. WS BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (5.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. WS BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (5.52 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 7 May (see p. 515).

Second Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (5.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill delivers on another Palaszczuk Labor government election commitment which will improve safety for Queenslanders by restoring critical work health and safety protections removed by the former LNP's Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014.

The Palaszczuk Labor government believes in genuine consultation, cooperation and respect between employers and workers. We also recognise the long-term benefits of providing safe and productive workplaces where everyone shares the responsibility for improvements in work health and safety practices to prevent work related injury and disease.

There is considerable evidence that the effective participation of workers and the representation of their health and safety interests are crucial elements in improving health and safety performance at the workplace. Worker involvement in work health and safety is accepted at an international level because of strong ethical and practical reasons, particularly as it is the workers who generally bear the burden of failure to manage risks at work. Worker representation provides a means for facilitating consultation, involving workers and giving them a voice in health and safety matters.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 recognises that workplaces have better health and safety outcomes when workers have input before decisions are made about health and safety matters that affect them. The amendments in this bill align with one of the objects of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, which is to provide for fair and effective workplace representation, consultation, cooperation and issue resolution in relation to work health and safety. So far in 2015 there have been 16 work related fatalities in Queensland, which is still 16 too many. It is pleasing to note that, based on preliminary national comparative data published by Safe Work Australia, the number of traumatic fatalities at the workplace in Queensland has reduced by almost one third between 2012 and 2014, down from 45 to 30. In addition, there is also a positive trend in the incidence of serious work related injuries which have reduced by 22.5 per cent between 2009-10 and 2013-14.

Queensland's four priority industries also experienced significant reductions in serious work related injuries, with manufacturing down 36.4 per cent, construction down 29.6 per cent, rural down 13.7 per cent and transport down 13.2 per cent. While this trend is positive, it is of no comfort to those who have lost loved ones or who have to support a seriously injured worker on a daily basis. We should continue to be striving for no fatalities. Zero harm is the best way to go.

This bill restores the right of work health and safety entry permit holders to immediately access a workplace where they suspect a safety contravention is occurring. Work health and safety entry permit holders play a valuable role in securing health and safety at the workplace, as they are generally experienced in work health and safety matters and provide substantial support to worker representatives. Training provided to entry permit holders enhances their ability to contribute to workplace consultation arrangements through advice to workers and identifying suspected safety breaches.

In a practical sense, entry permit holders have experience across various workplaces and it is the information they gain from that experience that assists workers and representatives to identify and manage potential hazards, engage and consult with an employer and effectively resolve issues that arise. For this purpose it is essential that entry permit holders are able to access the workplace to support workers and observe relevant parts of the workplace or activities occurring. This is why the model work health and safety laws provide for entry permit holders to enter a workplace for health and safety purposes. Importantly, the existing provisions have a number of limitations and safeguards to protect against inappropriate use and behaviour by permit holders. The use of this entitlement comes with great responsibility as there are many safety issues every day in workplaces which require investigation, and entry permit holders play an important and proactive role in achieving healthier and safer workplaces as is provided for in the objects of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

The bill also restores the right for health and safety representatives to direct unsafe work to cease. Restoring the right for health and safety representatives to direct unsafe work to cease is also critical to ensuring worker safety at the workplace. Workers have always had a statutory protection to cease unsafe work, however, the ability of a health and safety representative to direct the cessation of unsafe work provides an important safety protection for all workers, including young workers and workers from non-English speaking backgrounds who are less likely to be able to adequately identify potential hazards. When the model work health and safety laws were developed there was strong support for cease to work provisions, including specific provision for health and safety representatives to direct that unsafe work cease. This approach draws on the knowledge and training of the health and safety representatives in health and safety generally and in circumstances where workers may be placed in high-risk situations.

Their experience on a day-to-day basis in the workplace means that they are a trusted source of information and support for other workers. In addition, they are more likely to have influence with relevant workers and have an established relationship with the employer to assist with consultation and resolution of issues. This makes them best qualified to make a decision about whether a work practice should cease. These provisions are also accompanied by safeguards. Should a health safety representative give a direction to cease work, they must consult with the employer prior to giving the direction and attempt to resolve the matter through the issues resolution process required by the act. Finally, where a direction has been given the act entitles the employer to direct a worker to undertake suitable alternative work if available and protects the payments workers would have received had they continued to carry out their normal work. No-one can deny that when there is a genuine, immediate and imminent risk to a worker's safety work in the affected area should cease immediately, and this bill restores this important protection.

This bill also amends provisions in relation to allowing health and safety representatives to request the assistance of any person by removing the requirement for at least 24 hours notice if the assistant requires access to the workplace to enable the assistance to be provided. An assistant may be a person with additional knowledge of work health and safety within the workplace or someone who does not work at the business. The aim of this power is to enable the health and safety representative to access advice if this is required to assist in carrying out their powers and functions. For example, a health and safety representative may require assistance about how to perform inspections at the workplace or technical advice from a manufacturer of a particular machine guard.

Debate, on motion of Mr Pitt, adjourned.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.00 pm): I move—

That so much of Standing and Sessional Orders, including standing order 87, be suspended so as to:

1. enable this House to reconsider the amendments to chapter 19 of the Standing and Sessional Orders moved by the Leader of the Opposition on 5 May 2015;
2. immediately allow the Leader of the Opposition to move a motion without notice for the reconsideration of the amendments to chapter 19 of the Standing and Sessional Orders; and
3. ensure that debate of the motion in (2) take precedence over all other business and be concluded by the end of this day's sitting.

It should now be very clear to many members of this parliament what this is all about. This Premier came to power a little over seven months ago promising a new era of openness, accountability and integrity. Indeed, on a number of important issues of integrity, accountability and consistency the Premier has failed.

We have to move this motion tonight, to seek in effect a suspension of the standing and sessional orders, in order to put a motion that was previously considered by this parliament on 5 May this year. The rules of this place clearly state that we are unable to debate the same motion twice in one session without special leave of this parliament if that motion has been considered and defeated.

The reason we are doing this is that we have heard a refrain from the Premier, the Deputy Premier and others in recent times that the behaviour of the member for Cook and his suitability to be a member in this place are beyond the control of the Premier or the government. Whilst the member for Cook is able to remain in this place until the next general election and the people of his electorate get the chance to have a say or until he is found to be in contempt of this place by the Ethics Committee for some particular offence, he can continue to vote in this place. In the absence of any other measures that can be taken against the member for Cook, it is absolutely inappropriate that his vote be accepted. In order for us to properly consider this matter we need to be able to put the motion which was resoundingly defeated by the government out of self-interest on 5 May this year. The Premier cannot have it both ways. The Premier cannot on the one hand say that she is powerless to do something, while at the same time proclaiming integrity and disgust, and on the other hand not be prepared to give this parliament another chance to consider this matter.


It is extremely important that this parliament votes for the suspension of standing and sessional orders so that I may be able to move the motion which was previously considered by this parliament on 5 May this year and defeated by those members opposite acting in concert with the member for Cook.

This will provide an opportunity to see if there is true integrity on the part of those members opposite when it comes to this important issue of appropriate conduct and the way this parliament may wish to be able to act and to address these issues of concern in the absence of any other measures available to it.

If we are successful in our efforts to suspend standing and sessional orders, the motion I would then move would clearly outline what is proposed, and the debate of it would take precedence over other orders of the day and be dealt with immediately. That is only appropriate. It is appropriate given the significant amount of concern which is focused on this issue by the member for Cook's own electorate and by the public at large, as has been reported in the media in recent days.

One has to ask: what does the government have to fear by putting this motion to the reconsideration of this parliament? If it is so sure, then let it debate this matter in a fulsome way and give its clear and absolute justification. There are people calling for us to do this in this parliament tonight. Most notably, the elders in the Cook electorate are calling for an action of integrity.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. This is a bad case of 'back to the future' from the opposition—one dry gully after another. I was looking forward to this sitting week. I really was. Sitting weeks are a chance to debate ideas, to battle on policy grounds, to test the facts and to improve the lot of Queenslanders. But it takes two to tango. The government came into this sitting week full of policies and action. The opposition came with a repeat of a procedural nonsense.

There is one simple reason that standing and sessional orders should not be suspended: we as a parliament have better things to do. This is just another poor effort to rejig the failed amendments to standing orders from earlier this year. Those opposite have no new ideas. These evening debates are an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition, every sitting night, to present an idea or a policy—a contest about the future. We all know that they need some ideas. We see that every question time. They have scrapped Strong Choices and have no plan for the economy.

The opposition have brought about a motion that essentially has already been before the House. The opposition could have come in here and moved a motion to confirm that they oppose asset sales. They did not. They could have come in here and pledged to never again waste \$70 million on their LNP spin doctor mates on privatisation. There was nothing of that sort again. Would it be a motion to join with the government to address the unemployment rate that they left Queensland because of their economic mismanagement? No. It was none of that at all. Instead we get another barely reheated, failed motion on standing orders. That will get jobs going! That will turn around the unemployment rate! A motion on standing orders is all we get from the opposition.

This parliament has better things to do. This government has better things to do. If the only idea the opposition can come up with is to move procedural motions and frippery, then let it be on their heads. Where is the LNP's plan for jobs? Where is the LNP's plan for the economy? Where is the LNP's plan for future growth? Where is the contest of ideas? The only contest we see across the chamber is the Liberal Party versus the National Party.


The government is going to get on with Advance Queensland, with advocating for future infrastructure projects and with delivering on Gold Coast Light Rail stage 2. In my portfolio I have been delivering on our commitments. I have maintained and boosted drought relief to farmers. I have uncovered the 26 per cent cut to biosecurity by those opposite that they never mentioned when they were in government. We have invested in the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance in collaboration with industry. With the Premier and Deputy Premier I have been advocating for greater access for agricultural products to the rest of the world. We should know and talk about the opportunities there.

I have rolled out and enhanced our three-year \$80 billion Get in the Game program—one refined and improved by this government. I have tackled the problems of the greyhound industry—the greyhound industry left behind by those opposite—and laid out the financial state of Racing Queensland and where it is heading and what we are going to do to fix it thanks to those opposite. I have supported banana growers through the difficulty of Panama disease. We are delivering more money on wild dogs and feral animal management and control.

On the way into this chamber this morning I was thinking about what the opposition might bring on tonight. The parliament has given members of the opposition this wonderful opportunity every evening to have a motion of their own—a platform that is entirely theirs, entirely in their domain, entirely

in their capacity to enliven, to invigorate this parliament to show us the intellect and rigour that they bring to the chamber. And what do we see? And what do we get? Not a peep! They complain about us not having the sitting weeks and when they come to parliament they have this opportunity to really put something forward. And what do we get? A procedural motion that they have already been defeated on in this House. So we should not support this motion to suspend standing orders at all. It has already been before the House. It is back to the future from an opposition that has got no substance whatsoever—completely incapable of bringing forward an agenda that will convince Queenslanders to vote for them. They should be very worried about the prospect of an election because they have nothing to convince Queenslanders of their merits.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, member for Nanango, not one of your interjections was taken. You were persistent. If you continue with that behaviour, I will be warning you with the result that you will be invited to leave the chamber. That ruling applies to all members. When the Leader of the Opposition spoke, he was effectively listened to in silence. I would urge members to follow that lead unless they are being deliberately provoked.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.11 pm): The suspension of standing and sessional orders needs to be supported so that this House can deal with an issue that the government has failed to deal with. There is no better example of the hypocrisy of those opposite than to have heard the contribution by the minister, the member for Rockhampton, because he sat in this House in the 54th Parliament and voted against the changes that this motion is seeking to overturn. He showed hypocrisy today talking about other extraneous matters. This government is really only full of self-interest and self-preservation, which proves that that is the driving force behind the motivations of this government. The minister is more interested in talking about other matters whilst at the same time this government does not even want to come to parliament and sit in the parliament.

Let us look at the matters that have arisen since that debate on 5 May. On 30 March this year, in response to the revelations at the time about the member for Cook, the Premier said that she was willing to put her premiership on the line, yet here we are some 6½ months later and despite the tough talk and the strong rhetoric at the time that is all it was. The member for Cook's voting record shows that he is still a de facto member of the Labor Party and this government and the Premier still rely on his vote to retain stewardship of the treasury benches. The reason this House needs to deal with this issue is all about standards. It is because we should take a stand about the behaviour of members of this parliament in the community. We have committees of this parliament to ensure that the ethics of members are upheld. You yourself, Mr Speaker, had some strong comments to say about the allegations about the member for Cook on 30 March this year when you said—

My view is very clear. Mr Gordon should resign for the good of Queensland, for the good of his electorate, for the good of himself and especially for our parliament so the parliament is able to focus on the business before it without any distractions.


You have also been a strong advocate, Mr Speaker, about the need for members of this parliament to maintain high standards—something the community expects. We also surely have a moral obligation to take a stand and show the people of Queensland that the constant speculation and allegations of poor behaviour by the member for Cook have continued to dog this parliament and this government. Every vote that this government accepts from the member for Cook is tarnished with the allegations that continue to dog him. That is not good enough. In a week when we are dealing with important issues of domestic and family violence which deal with societal attitudes about women and the treatment of women in our community, it is incumbent on us as a parliament to send a message that the kind of behaviour we have seen reported is not good enough.

Let us not kid ourselves: this is a matter of the political survival of this government. The vote tonight will be a true test of the leadership of the Premier. If she is truly willing to put her premiership on the line, if she truly finds the behaviour of the member for Cook unacceptable, if the Deputy Premier truly finds the behaviour of the member for Cook disgusting, then they should vote with the LNP tonight and suspend the standing and sessional orders so that they do not need to rely on the vote of the member for Cook to pass legislation and indeed command the confidence of the parliament. Every member of the parliament has a right to vote in this House and represent the community. That is not the issue here. The issue is the reliance of this government to command the confidence of the parliament and pass legislation in this House and in doing so happily accept the vote of the member for Cook.

This is as much about the government's actions as it is about the actions of the member for Cook, and the Premier has failed this test of her leadership time after time. The Premier can go missing, the Premier can get other ministers to do media conferences, the Premier can go on holidays during

estimates hearings and the Premier can dodge answering questions in this parliament, but the issue is clearly not going away and the people of Queensland expect something to be done. In a hung parliament nullifying the vote of the member for Cook is a statement of an ethical position which both sides should be able to do, just as they did in the federal parliament with Craig Thomson. The true hypocrites in this debate are those members opposite in the government who will say one thing out in the media and then come in here and do the exact opposite.

The Premier took out a full-page ad in the *Cairns Post* earlier this year stating that the member for Cook was not a suitable person for parliament. Hollow words, Premier. The allegations keep mounting. The people of Cook are becoming tired of the constant speculation about the local representative and the Premier has failed her own test of leadership. Tonight we heard from the Leader of the Opposition that the Yarrabah Mayor, Errol Neal, and the Kowanyama Mayor, Rob Holness, have said that the scandal was shameful and embarrassing. There has been allegation after allegation and the Premier is more than happy to continue to take the vote of the member for Cook. This Labor government is typified by what the former Labor premier Jack Lang said to a young Paul Keating: 'Always back the horse named self-interest, son. It'll be the only one trying.'

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (6.16 pm): I rise to oppose this motion and the opposition leader's cavalier move to suspend standing orders, including the rule against repeating the same question. The opposition is seeking to suspend standing orders including standing order 87, which states that the same question should not be proposed again or in full. For the benefit of members, the standing order states—

Unless the Standing Orders otherwise provide, a question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

This motion and these amendments in the name of the Leader of the Opposition were plainly dealt with and defeated earlier this year, so this motion in its entirety is out of order. Political parties should not be seeking to change the voting system or procedures on a political whim, yet here we are a year later being asked to change it based on purely political motives. This just goes to show that the opposition stands for nothing and is both morally and intellectually bankrupt—completely bereft of any meaningful policy ideas or even procedural reforms. Here we have yet another example of an increasingly desperate opposition leader who will say and do anything just to try and slide back into power. It is another grasp for power by 'Last-Resort' Laurie—'Last-Resort' Laurie who has thrice been rejected as Premier by Queensland voters.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer to the standing orders and convention with regard to using correct titles in this place.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, would you please ensure that you use the correct titles in accordance with standing orders.


Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Having been rejected three times, the opposition leader is now seeking to change parliamentary voting procedures and perform a backflip—a backflip with a triple pike that would put even Olympic diver Matthew Mitcham to shame. The chutzpah of the opposition is breathtaking. On the substance of the amendments, the opposition has now been reduced to doing a complete about-turn—one that an Army drill sergeant would be proud of—on what it argued in government was a better outcome. Of course, the former Newman government never missed an opportunity to take a cheap shot at anyone and everyone. Again, while we are primarily contesting the suspension of standing orders, the Treasurer has previously pointed out the rank hypocrisy of the opposition.

During that debate on the change of voting procedures, the member for Mermaid Beach and former leader of the House said that the current voting system is not a political plaything and was meant to last in this parliament and endure for years and years. When the former leader of the House was saying this, he could not have foreseen that he would be describing his own party's actions and this somewhat embarrassing about-face less than two years later.

This opposition leader has shown little regard for due process. His crass attempts to become an unelected caretaker premier only seek to highlight his vaulting ambition and unbridled desire for the top job. The opposition members have been only too eager to engage in silly games and character assassination. We saw this during the estimates process, where the opposition leader and other non-government members treated the hearings with disdain, sensationalising the hearings for political purpose rather than seeking any genuine answers. Significant periods of time were taken up by non-government members repeatedly asking questions that fell foul of the standing orders and which, time and time again, had to be ruled out of order. Now, through this motion, the opposition leader is

seeking to baldly and brazenly upend all good process and undo the very rules that his party put in place when it was in government to restrict MPs' right to vote and effectively disenfranchise voters. One would think that the father of the House would have more respect for parliamentary democracy than attempt to trash all parliamentary procedure and shift the goalposts of Westminster tradition in this way. I urge the House to reject the attempts by the member for Southern Downs to subvert our democracy.

Members of this parliament are elected to represent their constituents' views in this, the people's house. The Leader of the Opposition should stop flip-flopping and shifting in the breeze like a weathervane for pure political expediency. Parliamentary procedure should not be a political plaything and this attempt at cheap political point-scoring should be seen for what it is and it should be rejected outright.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.21 pm): I rise on this very unusual occasion to speak in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition to suspend the standing rules and orders of this Legislative Assembly for tonight's debate. It is necessary to take this very unusual step owing to the unforeseen difficulties of this parliament presented by the current voting procedures in the House that, without doubt, have been tainted by the actions of the member for Cook. That is why we need this opportunity to bring forward this motion on changing the voting system. As we know, the previous parliament voted to change that parliamentary voting system through changes to the standing orders. That occurred at a point in time when no-one could have envisaged that there would be difficulties in taking a tainted vote in parliament. We need to repropose this matter, because it was not on the agenda when that voting system, which the Labor Party agreed to—it went through the CLA and the Labor Party agreed to it—was voted for in this House.

But matters have changed. Even the Clerk and all of his officers never envisaged the problem that we have with a tainted vote in the parliament. Mr Speaker, everyone from your good self right across to the Premier and to the opposition have said that there are difficulties. On the LNP's side in opposition, we have great difficulty with the possibility—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I have been quite patient with some of the other speakers who have been at pains to be clear in responding to your directions earlier today in relation to the ruling on this debate. You gave an instruction about making sure that the nature of this debate was very narrow and related to the suspension of standing orders. The Leader of Opposition Business has not made an attempt to make the distinction about how there are different matters. He is effectively making the speech that he made earlier this year.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I call the member for Mermaid Beach.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The reason for this very unusual motion is quite clear. Quite clearly, the dynamics in the House have changed and have even changed since May, when the matter was brought forward in debate in this House. There have been, I think, three or four further allegations stemming from the original allegations. This matter needs to be repropose. The only way that we can repropose the matter is through the parliamentary system by seeking leave in this House—which, contrary to the assertion made by the member for Springwood, is totally within parliamentary processes and procedures.

Members are well aware of the changes that have occurred. The media has brandished them right across Queensland. The people in the member's own electorate and the Premier herself have been made aware of these matters. That situation has changed considerably the dynamics of the situation since we dealt with the matter in May. The proposed changes would give us the opportunity, in the voting regime of this House under the standing orders, to restore confidence in the honesty and integrity of this delicately balanced House. We on this side of the parliament are loath to take a tainted vote. That is what we would repropose should we have the opportunity to debate this matter again. We are clear in the fact that, on the important legislation that comes into this House on matters that affect Queenslanders—from domestic violence right through to all the other issues about which legislation is brought into this House—under the current circumstances of the member's place in this parliament we would not be taking a vote from the member. For us to commit to have that voting system introduced, we need the opportunity to debate this matter again.

If the Premier is fair dinkum in her calls for honesty and integrity—as, no doubt, Mr Speaker, you are very keen to see the honesty and integrity of this House upheld in every way—then the Premier should support the opportunity for us to debate this matter again, given the change in circumstances that we have had since we debated the matter in May, so that we can put in place a system that reflects and upholds the high levels and high ideals of integrity of the members of this House. Under the current

system, this government is denying the opportunity to put in place a fair and equitable system of knowing which way the minor parties are going to vote before the government votes on matters, before the opposition votes on matters. It is only fair, just and reasonable. Any attempt to hide from the debate on this matter is purely a deliberate act of defending the indefensible in terms of hiding the ability to use the member for Cook as a support for the government for each and every issue that it needs to get through this House.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (6.27 pm): I rise to oppose the motion and the outrageous attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to suspend standing orders, including the rule against redebating the same question. Tonight, the Leader of Opposition Business has described this motion as unusual. He is quite right. It is unusual. In fact, it is more than unusual. Earlier today we saw the member for Southern Downs not even able to get right the drafting of his motion, in which he verbalised me as the author of the proposed dodgy amendments. But having allowed that correction to occur—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I do note that, if you cannot get a fairly simple motion right, you cannot be trusted to run the state. Tonight, we are seeing a political try-on and a stunt. There is no question about that. Political parties should not be seeking to change voting systems on a mere political whim. This whole motion is predicated on setting down a path that is based on purely political motives. I thought that the LNP members were supposed to be the conservatives relishing and respecting tradition. But they have learned nothing from the Newman era. They remain the wild-eyed radicals who throw the rule book out the window whenever they see an opportunity.

So quite apart from the substantive motion, the opposition is seeking to suspend orders, including standing order 87, which states that a question or amendment shall not be proposed which has been already resolved during the same session. I will let members in on a secret. Here is some more information so that members can understand where these traditions come from. This standing order has been developed out of longstanding traditions in Westminster parliaments. The background to the rule is no more an authoritative source than Erskine May. It notes the following Westminster tradition, which was established as long ago as 2 April 1604—not 1904; 1604—

That a question being once made, and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again, but must stand as a judgment of the house.

Erskine May goes on to state that proposing a negated question for the second time for the consideration of the House would be contrary to the established practice of the parliament. So if the opposition wants to turn 400 years of parliamentary best practice on its head, we see what its agenda is.

I turn to parts 2 and 3 of the motion. They are asking the parliament to drop everything and waste our valuable time debating this issue when there are many important pieces of legislation to deal with this year. We have already heard that there is a suggestion that the parliament does not meet enough and those opposite are using the time on frivolous matters. Apart from having a rather glaring typo on his first draft, more than that, the Leader of the Opposition clearly had not thought through the implications of his motion. It was just a thought bubble, just a stunt like we see each and every day in question time.

Secondly, taken to its logical conclusion, ensuring the 'debate of the motion in (2) take precedence over all other business and be concluded by the end of this day's Sitting' means no more government business today, no dinner break and 20 minutes for each speaker of the parliament. We will be here until the wee early hours. Those opposite were today saying there are too few sitting days and not enough parliamentary scrutiny and accountability and now they are seeking to tie up the parliament into the wee early hours to deal with this matter for purely base political reasons.

Let me for a moment go back briefly to the substance. Any amendments should be sound reforms developed through robust processes. As the Leader of Opposition Business admitted and acknowledged in his contribution, in the last parliament, the 54th Parliament, the current rules were worked through the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. If they are genuine about these matters they would seek to have them discussed and debated through that process, but no, this is throwing out 400 years of parliamentary practice and is just a political stunt and a political try-on. It could have gone to a proper forum first to have a mature discussion but no, it is a try-on for the six o'clock scream. Here we are yet again. I am getting used to having to stand up in these debates and talk about the vandals opposite who throw out our Westminster traditions and have no respect for them. We understand that they draw more from Bjelke-Petersen and Newman traditions than they do from any Burkean traditions. These people opposite are absolute wreckers.

Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

AYES, 44:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

NOES, 44:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.


Mr SPEAKER: The numbers being equal, I cast my vote with the noes. The reason I cast my vote this way is because I believe this matter is being pursued for political expediency, not genuine parliamentary reform. I have listened to the debate this evening and I am aware of other matters.

Resolved in the negative.

Sitting suspended from 6.38 pm to 7.38 pm.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Referral of Auditor-General's Report and Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (7.38 pm): I advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Attorney-General's report to parliament, Report 2: 2015-16, *Road safety—traffic cameras*, be referred to the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee.


The committee has also resolved, pursuant to standing order 136 to (1) vary the committee responsibility for the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 from the Finance and Administration Committee to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee and to vary the time for that committee to report on the bill to 6 November 2015 and (2) vary the committee responsibility for the Retail Shop Leases Amendment Bill 2015 from the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee and vary the time for that committee to report on the bill to 5 February 2016.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2123, on motion of Mr Pitt—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (7.41 pm), continuing: The current 24-hour notification requirement restricts timely access to advice in the workplace. It could assist a health and safety representative being better placed to manage risk if they are able to call on the assistance of a person who has specialist knowledge. Existing safeguards in the legislation mean that an employee can refuse access to a person assisting a health and safety representative if they have reasonable grounds to do so. For example, if the person assisting had previously acted improperly at a workplace by intentionally and unreasonably delaying or disrupting work or otherwise acting in an improper manner, access could be refused.

In addition, the bill amends the current incident notification provisions to implement the government's election commitment to include an additional requirement for an employer to notify the regulator when a worker is absent from work for more than four days due to a workplace injury. This will provide the regulator with increased intelligence around workplace injuries, in particular, musculoskeletal disorders and mental disorders, which are not captured by the existing notification provisions. Both of those disorders are national priority areas in the Australian Work Health and Safety

Strategy 2012-22 and result in significant cost to individuals, business and the community. Musculoskeletal disorders alone continue to be the most commonly compensated work related injury across Queensland and across the nation. This additional data will assist in developing interventions to reduce those types of work related incidents and will also assist Queensland to achieve its milestone under the Australian strategy of 30 per cent reduction in musculoskeletal disorders.


The matter of incident notifications is also subject to a recommendation arising from the Finance and Administration Committee's consideration of the bill. At this time I thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its report, tabled on 13 July 2015, regarding the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I also thank those who made submissions to the committee about the bill and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. During consideration of the bill, the committee was unable to reach agreement to recommend that the bill be passed. However, the committee made one recommendation that the Office of Industrial Relations work to improve ease of access and reporting systems for employers, including self-insured employers, and develop education and communication strategies to ensure employers are aware of the requirements and are also aware of the reasons for them. This recommendation is supported and I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response [1374].

The government has already taken action to streamline the notification process for self-insurers and make its electronic reporting systems more user friendly. In addition, it is planned to conduct further education and awareness programs to promote the use of a one-stop shop website for employers as part of the implementation strategy. It is also important to acknowledge that, while the amendment may impose an additional notification requirement, it is unlikely to make any significant impact as employers should already have systems in place to notify work-related injuries. In addition, employers now have the option of lodging a claim and notifying an incident at the same time, either online or over the phone, through the workplace health and safety one-stop shop. To assist further, this provision has a six-month transitional period to allow employers to make any relevant adjustments to their incident notification processes.

This bill is not just about ensuring work health and safety protections; it also implements election commitments to improve electrical safety in Queensland. Specific amendments include reinstating the electrical safety commissioner, the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee, which were all abolished in 2015. As I outlined in my speech when introducing the bill to the parliament, the electrical safety commissioner's role is to manage the Electrical Safety Board and its committees, and to provide advice to the department and myself as minister on electrical safety matters. It is important to note that the commissioner must have an electrical trade or qualification, along with professional experience in electrical safety, to ensure that they can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to this important role in Queensland. As members may be aware, the Electrical Safety Act 2002 has broad coverage and covers electrical safety not only in the workplace but also in the broader community. The role of both the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee will be to assist in the promotion of electrical safety in the workplace and also in the broader community. This could include for purposes such as recommending and advising on educational strategies, as well as safety standards, to improve the safety of electrical equipment.

This bill is about ensuring the health and safety of workers and making sure genuine cooperation and consultation occurs between all parties at the workplace, including the representatives of workers, to enable improved health and safety outcomes. Labor and this government believe that every worker has the right to go to work expecting to go home safely to their family and their loved ones at the end of the day. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (7.46 pm): Today we have already seen legislation brought into this House, that is, the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, at the behest of the unions and, once again, the government delivered on that agenda. Of course, this bill falls into exactly the same category. It is probably the worst example of a line of legislation that we have seen coming from the government that fits that description. The key changes in the bill are the changing of the right of entry from requiring 24-hours notification, the watering down of penalties for the breach of that right of entry condition, the reinstating of the ability for health and safety representatives to direct workers to cease work they deem to be unsafe, the reintroduction of additional reporting requirements for an employer when an employee is absent from work for more than four days due to a safety related issue, and the reinstating of the position of the electrical safety commissioner. In relation to each of those matters, the opposition will be opposing the provisions.

Of course, the bill is not at all about safety. It is another example of payback to the union bosses for their support, both financially and with people power, during the recent state election campaign. The government will not like to hear it, but the fact is that the ALP is run by factional war lords and union thugs. That is not our comment; it comes from former Brisbane Labor deputy lord mayor David Hinchliffe. In March 2014, he said, 'The ALP is run by factional war lords and union thugs'. That was from one of their own. In passing, he also had some rather unkind words to say about the current member for Woodridge.

Queenslanders are becoming increasingly concerned about the close ties with and influence of the union movement over this crisis plagued Labor government. In a *Courier-Mail* poll held earlier this year, 47 per cent of those surveyed believed that Labor was too close to the unions, with 37 per cent being undecided. Of the people surveyed, about one-third of Labor voters also believed that the relationship was too cosy, and that was before the recent trade union royal commission hearings in Brisbane that exposed the CFMEU in Queensland for, amongst other things, destruction of evidence.

When I look across the other side of the chamber and see 41 out of the 43 members of the government as card-carrying union members it is not surprising that this agenda is being followed. Anyone who thinks that the government is governing in the interests of all Queenslanders only has to look at the speeches of members of the government in the address-in-reply debate where the thankyou to the unions and their bosses outnumber the thankyou to their parents and children.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! The member for Logan might like to return to his seat if he wants to interject.

Mr WALKER: The previous union encouragement bill was payback to the public sector union bosses from Together and the Queensland Nurses' Union. This particular bill is payback to the CFMEU and, to a lesser extent, the ETU union bosses.

The government is giving the CFMEU a blank cheque to do whatever they like and, in effect, is condoning the sort of behaviour we saw from five officials at the Common Ground project. Those five officials received a significant fine in a federal court judgement earlier this year. The CFMEU and five of its officials were fined \$545,000 for unlawful coercion at a taxpayer funded housing project for the long-term homeless.

This is what the FWBC, Fair Work Building and Construction, said in relation to this matter in June 2015. It stated—

In its penalty handed down on Friday, the Federal Court said that the conduct 'was a deliberate stratagem on the part of the CFMEU ...' The Court went on to say that 'An industrial organisation, be it an employer organisation or an employee organisation, which persistently abuses the privilege by engaging in unlawful conduct cannot expect to remain registered.'

According to the Court, their actions 'impeded, hindered or denied' Grocon employees, subcontractors and delivery people from accessing the site. They did this through 'verbal threats and statements' as well as physically blocking the main gate with vehicles. When a sub-contractor asked: 'what are the consequences to my business if I bring my boys on site?', one of the respondents in the case replied, "You want to know what the consequences are? You would be committing industrial suicide."

In its penalty judgement, the Court said 'there can be no doubt' the CFMEU's behaviour in this case 'was neither unique to that site or to those times. Rather it displayed a paradigm example of behaviour described by the Honourable Terence Cole RFD, as Royal Commissioner, in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry.'

The Court referred extensively to the Cole Royal Commission Report, quoting: 'Many union organisers and delegates display a disregard or contempt for the rule of law. They are used to taking unlawful industrial action for industrial ends ...

Yet this legislation plays into the hands and is at the request of the CFMEU—the union just referred to. Further to that, it was also reported in the *Brisbane Times* recently that the CFMEU allegedly broke the law 822 times after shutting down two sites in Brisbane. The *Brisbane Times* stated—

Fair Work Building and Construction says the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union and 21 of its officers and agents committed the offences as part of a prolonged campaign to force the sites' head contractors into signing an enterprise agreement.

The sites, a \$60 million Queensland University of Technology project and a \$770 million redevelopment of the Enoggera Army Barracks in Brisbane, were shut down for a combined 97 days in 2013.

Once again, it is the sort of behaviour into which this legislation plays. In government, the LNP conducted a thorough 18-month review of workplace health and safety laws and had two ministerial round tables with employers, unions and legal bodies around the table. This bill is another rush job with a lot of consultation for the unions and little or no consultation with employer groups. We can compare that quite specifically with what the explanatory notes say under the consultation section that 'There has been no formal consultation'.

The government claims that this is simply implementing an election policy, as the Treasurer just said. There is a lot in this bill that was not mentioned in that policy. Now they are trying to sneak this through this parliament as quickly and quietly as possible.

Any changes that increase the powers and abilities of the CFMEU should be deferred until the federal royal commission into union governance and corruption has finalised its report. In the latest hearings of the trade union royal commission there were some very interesting revelations into the way in which the CFMEU has been doing business in this state. It even occupied the Premier's mind. She said on 23 September, 'What is being revealed is outrageous.' She also said, 'Just because there is one rotten apple doesn't mean the whole barrel is full of rotten apples.' Yet, the Premier was determined to prejudge the royal commission when she demanded that Mr Hanna be kicked out of the Labor Party. That was something that was spoken about in this House during the last sittings.

The Brisbane week of hearings was jammed packed full of interesting allegations. Firstly, we heard that a truckload of documents was destroyed—seven tonnes of them—at the time the commission requested them. Seven tonnes of documents were destroyed.

Mr Rickuss: How many envelopes make up seven tonnes, Ian?

Mr WALKER: That is a lot of documents. All the training coordinators—even Mr Ravbar's daughter—helpfully came in to shred documents. Some \$150,000 worth of free work was done to former CFMEU president Dave Hanna's new house at Cornubia. It was said that subcontractors paid for the IVF treatment of a union man's partner. This is the 'spermgate' affair. Let us not forget that Michael Ravbar currently sits on Labor's national executive.

This was a week of allegations that led to at least one Labor man speaking out. That was former Queensland Labor premier Peter Beattie. He said that Queensland Labor should issue the CFMEU a show-cause notice as to why they should remain in the party. There is no bit of paper being handed to the CFMEU by this government, other than this bill which plays directly into its hands. It is far from a show-cause notice as to its status. Once again we see this government run by union bosses and factional leaders. The Premier has failed a test of the strength of her leadership in dealing with this matter.

The Australian Mines and Metals Association made a submission to the committee considering this bill. It stated—

Allowing unions to give reduced (or in fact absolutely no) notice of entry will provide an environment rife for misuse of entry privileges. Evidence to the current Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption is already uncovering misuse of entry permits, false declarations and the holding of permits by persons with criminal convictions. In the words of counsel assisting the Royal Commission, "abuse of right of entry permits by some union officials is widespread".

What is the former LNP government's record on workplace safety? We invested an additional \$2.8 million into injury prevention in 2014-15—doubling the capacity of the Injury Prevention and Management program. We increased the coverage of Safe Work Week and Safe Work Month activities across Queensland.

We increased the coverage of the Zero Harm at Work Leadership Program to cover 300 participants. We invested \$1.38 million into an advertising and awareness campaign on electrical safety in ceiling spaces following the coronial investigation into the former Rudd Labor government's home insulation program—a program that members might recall well and that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and the member for Ferny Grove were instrumental in supporting.

We launched the first statewide strategic management of asbestos policy in Queensland. In terms of safety, what did this achieve? The release of last year's statistics were all positive. Electrical fatalities were down by 50 per cent and general workplace fatalities were down by 21 per cent. General workplace injuries were down by 8.2 per cent and serious injuries were down by 6.1 per cent. Transport injuries were down by 6.5 per cent. Manufacturing injuries were down by 9.1 per cent. Serious construction injuries were down by 5.4 per cent. While there was more to be done, that is hardly a record of a government that was not doing effective work in the area of workplace health and safety. Yet, this attempts to undo all of that work.

Let us look at the key issues within the legislation. The first is the change to the right of entry. Presently, 24 hours notice is required before a union representative goes on site for a workplace safety matter. I should say that that of course does not prevent a worker at any time stopping work if they believe that the work situation is dangerous. They are lawfully entitled to do that. Nor does it stop them from calling in the government's own independent workplace safety officers to have a look at the situation. Workers are never in a position of harm without these provisions. Workers are quite satisfactorily looked after by other provisions of legislation within the state's legislative framework. As I

mentioned before, Queensland construction sites are being held to ransom by militant CFMEU officials who have scant regard for the rule of law and are all about bullying, intimidation and standover tactics rather than actual issues of workplace safety.

During the committee review, the following submitters had these things to say about the right-of-entry changes in the bill—and these submitters, I must say, are largely within the construction area, which is where the problem chiefly exists. The Housing Industry Association said, ‘There is no evidence to suggest that such rights lead to better safety outcomes.’ The Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry supports maintaining a 24-hour right-of-entry notification because it provides consistency with other provisions in the act and in the Fair Work Act. The Master Builders Association was particularly vocal. It said—

Master Builders and its members routinely face—
routinely face—

unlawful right of entry to building sites by permit holders who simply refuse to follow the rule of law in Queensland.

...

The Government should ensure that the rule of law is respected by all parties and the system needs to encourage consultation and cooperation without safety issues being used as an industrial weapon.

...

A return to the old failed laws and allowing unfettered access for militant unions to act unlawfully is a seriously retrograde step that will do nothing for improving safety and will further damage the industry’s reputation.

I know that in an ordinary context hearing those words come from people on our side of the House is likely to draw a reaction from the other side. But in the current context, when we have a royal commission which is looking at these matters—and it is clear that the matters are not fantasy land; they are really happening and they are serious—this government is playing into the hands of the union movement by giving them back these rights which are obviously being used unlawfully and to great detrimental effect for the building sector of our economy.

Some of the submitters did claim that the changes in the bill will do nothing more than simply realign Queensland with the national model WHS laws—as they were originally. But what that submission misses is that in 2014 the state ministers agreed to recommend changes to COAG for approval which are currently being finalised. Those changes to the national provisions reinstate a 24-hour right of entry, which is where we were before this amendment. As the department confirmed in the public hearing on 3 June—

In terms of the union right of entry for 24 hours, back in 2014 there was national agreement on that matter.

When it comes to unlawful industrial action on Queensland work sites, as Master Builders contend in their submission, for the 2013-14 financial year Fair Work Building and Construction investigations into allegations of strike pay, unlawful industrial action, right of entry, coercion and freedom of association breaches increased by 177 per cent, resulting in the number of briefs referred to the FWBC legal team increasing by 325 per cent. For the September 2014 quarter, Queensland had the highest number of working days lost of any state or territory, accounting for 50 per cent of the total working days lost in Australia—50 per cent of the total working days lost in Australia. Thanks to the CFMEU, we have taken away Melbourne’s title as the capital of militant union activity on our construction sites. It shows the success of the policies and the action taken by the former Victorian coalition government, but it is not a title that Queensland wants to have.

So what do the Queensland Labor do in response to that? They give the CFMEU unfettered right-of-entry powers and water down the penalty provisions for abusing those powers. No-one takes seriously the Treasurer’s crocodile tears when it was recently reported in the *Courier-Mail* that he was concerned by the actions of the CFMEU officials I referred to earlier in the ruling by the Federal Court. If he were concerned, he would not be bringing this legislation to the House. He would not be making these changes—which, as I said, are nothing about safety but are all about payback to the CFMEU union bosses, those very people who have been adversely named by the federal Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption.

When the workplace health and safety laws were amended previously, evidence was given by the department that 57 breaches for entry by union officials had occurred and none of them resulted in a finding of imminent risk. So of the 57 breaches that the union officials had given, none of them it turned out were in fact due to areas of concern which posed an imminent risk. We maintain that, if there is a safety issue on site, it should be the government inspectors who are called to respond and investigate, not the union officials, as those inspectors are the people who can look independently at the alleged issues. As the HIA said, ‘... the only evidence available on this topic of 24-hour access would point to not changing the current provisions.’ So much for evidence based policymaking.

The next provision of substance is the watering down of penalties for breach of the right-of-entry conditions. That is another concerning element of the bill. It is talked about as a realignment of penalty provisions with the national model laws. The bill removes the penalty for failing to provide notice of entry to inquire into a suspected contravention of the WHS Act, consult and advise workers and make copies of documents relevant to a suspected contravention. It also decreases the maximum penalty for contravening WHS entry permit conditions from 200 penalty units to 100 penalty units.

In a climate in which it is clear that abuse of these provisions is happening, why would a government move to decrease the penalty? It defies all logic. It does not make sense. Yet here we have a government giving to the union movement on a plate lowered penalty provisions in respect of an area which is presently rife with abuse. When asked if any workplace health and safety entry permits had been revoked in Queensland due to an abuse of the conditions of entry, the department in its response to the committee said—

To my knowledge, there has not been a revocation in Queensland. There has not been a permit holder's permit removed.

So we have gone from a situation where the penalty provisions and system in place for revoking permits clearly is not working effectively anyway to actually completely watering them down even further. That does not bode well for our interstate and international reputation of investing here in Queensland.

The Master Builders representative giving evidence at the committee hearing said it very well when he was asked about the changes in penalty provisions. He said—

I can hardly contain myself in wanting to tell you how disgraceful it would be to reduce penalties knowing that it is the way in which the CFMEU operates in this state, knowing the level of disruption that you are giving a free ticket to, knowing that the evidence is so compelling and so overwhelming that right-of-entry breaches have become the standard way to get onto projects rather than giving the appropriate notice. Any incentive that encourages that behaviour verges on the irresponsible.

That is from the Master Builders Association talking about the proposal that this government has put before the House and it deserves serious consideration coming from a body of that credence.

Evidence was also provided as to the cost to the industry for unlawful industrial action in Queensland, and that verges on the millions of dollars. In the case of the Queensland Children's Hospital dispute in 2012, some 700 workers were on strike for nine weeks. It cost the state government at least \$7 million and the principal contractor, Abigroup, pursued the matter vigorously in the courts.

The third provision is reinstating the ability for health and safety representatives to direct workers to cease work they deem to be unsafe. The bill reinstates the power for a trained health and safety representative to direct a worker in their work group to cease work if they have a reasonable concern that to carry out the work would expose the worker to a serious risk to their health and safety, emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard.

As submitters have mentioned to the committee—and as I mentioned earlier in my speech—there is already a statutory right for an individual worker to cease work themselves if they believe there is a safety issue on site. The Civil Contractors Federation submitted that the current legislation provided for appropriate safeguards. They believed that the powers for HSRs under this provision were extremely broad and subjective. Submitters such as the Australian Sugar Milling Council also suggested that this provision was unnecessary.

The fourth provision is reintroducing an additional reporting requirement for employers when an employee is absent from work for more than four days due to a safety related issue. We do not support the additional reporting requirements provided for in the bill to force employers to notify the regulator when a worker is absent for more than four days due to a workplace injury. This is nothing more than an utter duplication of a process that already exists. As the CCIQ stated in their submission—

... this amendment is unnecessary as it amounts to a duplication of functions as WorkCover already collects information pertaining to a worker's extended leave of absence.

They went on to say that this requirement was actually abolished by the Labor Party in 2011—in fact by the former minister for industrial relations, the current member for Woodridge. So, on the one hand, Labor admonishes the LNP for, as they say in their 2014 policy document, 'reducing the protection of Queensland workers and increasing the risk of being injured at work' and promises to reinstate this requirement, but they fail to mention that they were the ones who ripped it out of the act in 2011. Let us have a look at what the member for Woodridge said in the debate in 2011 when he was then the member for Greenslopes. He said—

The bill will not increase red tape; the bill will slash red tape as part of this significant reform process. It is not only a significant microeconomic reform in our nation's and state's history but also a significant reform to how work health and safety operates in Queensland.

During the committee consideration, organisations lined up to bag this unnecessary proposal, even one of the union groups. Master Builders said—

It is 10 years old. You shouldn't be doing it. It is more red tape, and it will not add anything to safety management because all the data is now currently being collected properly by WorkCover.

And the individual who said that would know as they are also a board member of WorkCover Queensland.


In its submission to the committee the Independent Education Union of Queensland and Northern Territory said that—

In light of technological advances that can make the reporting very simple, we suggest that a more effective, less burdensome, approach might be to invest in systems that support automatic, electronic lodgement of incident reports and/or compensation claims.

As a final point on this issue—and as was mentioned in the submission by HIA—no other state requires notification for such absences. Queensland is leading the way in terms of increasing unnecessary red tape. Queensland is leading the way.

Finally, I turn to the provision regarding the reinstatement of the position of the electrical safety commissioner. This is simply payback to the ETU union bosses for their support during the recent state election. There is no cost-benefit analysis of this change in terms of a process of comparing costs against outcomes. As some submitters contended, it does nothing to improve safety outcomes, but in terms of this bill it is not the main focus of our argument and it pales in comparison to the outrageous changes to the right-of-entry provisions and the watering down of penalties for breaching the conditions of an entry permit. While we support the retention of a strong Electrical Safety Office, we have reservations that this position, which we believe will command a salary in the order of \$330,000 a year as opposed to the current chair who earns about \$300 per meeting, will add any great safety benefit to the current office. The bill says that the appointment will not be made under the Public Service Act. I would like to know what the government's rationale is for this. Is it so that the Labor government can just appoint one of their ETU Labor mates like Mr Williams? We know that the ETU have been gloating since the election in January that they donated \$2 million towards Labor's campaign.

The opposition will be opposing the measure for the reasons that I have outlined. It once again smacks of a government which is repaying its debts to union bosses. It hands back to the unions powers and privileges that, in such a climate as that which has been uncovered by the royal commission, absolutely defy understanding in any logical or fair look at how this legislative regime should operate in reality.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (8.11 pm): I rise as chair of the Finance and Administration Committee to speak on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The bill implements the election commitments which were made by the Palaszczuk government as part of the Improving Safety for Queenslanders at Work policy, in particular, to restore elements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 which were changed following a review of the model work health and safety laws in 2012. It includes restoring the right-of-entry powers, allowing workplace health and safety entry permit holders to gain immediate access to a workplace to inquire into a suspected contravention of the act, and empowering trained health and safety representatives to direct workers to cease. Of course, we also committed to amending the current incident notification requirements to include an additional requirement for employers to notify the regulator when a worker is absent for more than four days during a workplace injury and to improving electrical safety by reinstating the electrical safety commissioner, the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee, which were abolished in 2012.

I would like to thank all of the stakeholders who submitted to this inquiry. There was a huge body of work which was done across both sides of the argument. A lot of people went to a lot of trouble not only to give us written submissions but also to appear before the inquiry and to come back to us a number of times. I thank them and respect their views. I also thank all of the members of the committee for their work on this bill. It was certainly one about which we had very robust discussions and on which we were possibly never going to agree. However, we were pretty pleased with ourselves that we did agree on one recommendation, and I am very grateful to the Treasurer for acknowledging that and for acting upon our recommendation. I will speak to that a little bit further on.

I would also like to particularly acknowledge the departmental officers who are responsible for this bill and also for the substantial body of work which has been going on behind the scenes over the years in work health and safety. In fact, that is part of what I want to talk about today. These are officers who were excellent, who provided the committee with enormous detail and came back to us time and

again and about whose work I certainly—and I will allow the non-government members to comment—came to consider that if they were giving us a submission, it was very much an evidence based submission.

The work on work health and safety and on providing a nationally harmonised approach to work health and safety began in the mid-1980s. I think it is really important to talk about that when we deal with some of the things the opposition is talking about. The development of consistent work health and safety regulation began in the mid-1980s, which led to the development of national standards and national codes of practice. Then in July 2008 COAG signed the Intergovernmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Occupational Health and Safety. The national occupational health and safety review was conducted by a panel of independent experts who consulted hundreds of individuals and organisations across Australia.

The first draft of the model Workplace Health and Safety Act was based on the decisions in relation to national review findings and we had a review for public comment for six weeks in 2009. The model Workplace Health and Safety Act formed the basis of the workplace health and safety acts across all Australian jurisdictions to harmonise workplace health and safety laws. There were literally thousands of people and organisations who were consulted in the process of delivering these nationally harmonised laws. Then in May 2011 the Bligh Labor government introduced the Work Health and Safety Bill. I just want to quote what the then minister for industrial relations actually said about the bill and the importance of having a nationally harmonised approach. He said—

Currently, all states and territories have responsibility for making and enforcing their own health and safety laws. These multiple OHS regimes can result in workers and others being exposed to inconsistent safety standards across jurisdictions and industry sectors, cause confusion, complexity and duplication for businesses and lead to duplication and inefficiencies for governments in the provision of policy, regulatory and support services. The changes to occupational health and safety legislation will most definitely not be at the expense of the safety of Australian workers.

That was Queensland introducing a bill which was going to harmonise with the rest of the states with clearly defined benefits after thousands and thousands of people and organisations submitted and after years of review. Quick as a flash, when the LNP government came to power in April 2012 they decided that was not good enough for them. All of that evidence, all of those people—that was not good enough for them. So—and of course it is always the member for Kawana when you get to these sorts of stories—they changed it because they knew better. They amended the Electrical Safety Act 2012 and the Work Health and Safety Act to require at least 24 hours notice by WHS entry permit holders, they increased penalties for noncompliance, required at least 24 hours notice before any person assisting a health and safety representative could have access to the workplace, removed the power of health and safety representatives to direct workers to cease unsafe work, increased the maximum penalty and a range of other things. They knew better than anybody else. We know that they always stick up for business, despite the fact that it was very clear that reducing the duplication would be beneficial to businesses but no, in that case that did not actually matter.

What we are talking about here is actually, again, righting the wrongs and fixing up what they did. We actually have a bill before us which looks at going back to the nationally agreed workplace health and safety laws so that we can have a consistent framework for the health and safety of workers and workplaces. That is what we are proposing here tonight. I would like to go to some of those points. The proposed new section 5(e) re-establishes the role of Commissioner for Electrical Safety and specific committees to promote community awareness about electrical safety. You just have to stop yourself from gasping when you hear what members opposite have to say. The report states—

... the majority of stakeholders either supported the changes to the Electrical Safety Act or did not comment on this aspect of the Bill.

The member for Mansfield actually implied that it is all about jobs for Labor mates, yet there was such little comment on this and such strong support from the people who did comment. The department gave a glowing reference for the role of the previous commissioner. The department stated—

The previous commissioner played an important role in representing the department, was well respected in the electrical industry and was seen as an independent advocate for electrical safety. A key role of the Commissioner is one of leadership with both the electrical safety committees and the broader community in the area of public safety. This improvement in electrical safety could not have been achieved through compliance and enforcement by the department alone and can be directly attributed to the work of the commissioner and committee such as the two proposed to be re-established.

The ETU said that the Electrical Safety Board and various committees led to a decrease in the number of electrical incidents and the number of fatalities and that what the LNP government had done meant that the electricity industry became more reactive than proactive. Clearly the government members supported that and it was overwhelmingly supported by the stakeholders who made submissions to the inquiry.

Then we go to the issue of the replacement of section 36. It is looking at the definition of 'serious injury or illness' being amended—

... to include an additional requirement to notify the regulator of an injury or illness causing a person to be absent from the person's voluntary or paid employment for more than four days.

In light of this it is important to talk about the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy, which includes national targets to reduce the number of worker fatalities by 20 per cent, reduce the incidence rate of claims resulting in one or more weeks off by at least 30 per cent and reduce the incidence rate of claims for musculoskeletal disorders resulting in one or more weeks off work by at least 30 per cent. This is where the approach of the department in Queensland is so important, because what they are talking about is using evidence and data to reduce the number of injuries at work, and surely that is what we are all about. The committee report states—

The department advised that the WHSQ and the Electrical Safety Office conduct their activities based on the evidence obtained from this type of statistical information and detailed information ...

They say that the additional data collected from this amendment being passed will help to reduce these types of work related incidents, and they are talking in particular about contributing to achieving the milestone of a 30 per cent reduction in musculoskeletal disorders. Surely we want objective and evidence based ways to reduce the number of injuries.

Based on a number of submissions, it was clear to the committee that various organisations were not clear on what a 'serious injury' is and how that information could be provided. Both sides of the committee agreed that there seemed to be an issue about 'additional burden', and that is why we made the unanimous recommendation that—

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General work to improve ease of access and reporting systems for employers, including self-insured employers, and develop education and communication strategies to ensure employers are both aware of the requirements and the reasons for them.

As I said, I was very, very pleased to see that the Treasurer and minister support this recommendation and have in fact already commenced work to streamline the notification process for self-insurers, make electronic reporting systems more user-friendly, and will conduct education and awareness programs to promote the use of the One-Stop Shop website for employers. We were certainly very impressed and totally supportive of the fact that we need to give priority to creating evidence that will help us to reduce the numbers of injuries and claims.

I turn to the powers and functions of health and safety representatives which allow HSRs the power to direct work to cease in certain circumstances and removes the 24-hour notice requirement. Obviously we were very strongly supportive of this amendment. We think that the LNP is literally living in a fairyland where all people are good, everybody has the same capabilities, everyone is strong and resilient with great communication skills and is an assertive and proactive person who is not scared of losing their job, but that is just not the real world. We note that if an individual considers they are working in a hazardous situation they certainly might choose to cease work of their own volition. However, we consider that the ability of an HSR to direct that unsafe work cease is a really important safety mechanism, particularly where there are vulnerable groups like people for whom English is a second language, young people, people with disabilities or workers whose are new or unfamiliar with their work environment.

We heard from a number of submitters, including the ALA, who said that many workers fear that if they do cease work of their own accord as a result of what they perceive to be a hazardous situation they may lose their job or be disciplined in some way, and to say that that does not occur is being a Pollyanna and is not acceptable. We say that an HSR is trained and elected by their peers and is therefore trusted. Again, the department give us significant evidence to show that where employees can elect their own HSR, allow them to inspect workplaces and enable them to take action, it will be a safer workplace altogether.

I will go to the section which gives WHS entry permit holders the right to gain immediate access to a workplace for suspected contraventions. Again, I think the LNP is living in a fairyland where all employers are good employers. We acknowledge the concerns that were raised by a number of submitters of alleged misuse by permit holders to gain access to work sites for industrial purposes. Equally, we acknowledge the concerns raised by a number of submitters about alleged work health and safety breaches by employers. However, it seems to be the position of those opposite that all employers are good employers, and that certainly cannot be the case. A number of submitters talked to us about


their fears and the situation that, when employers are given 24 hours to clean up a hazardous work situation, they did so before anyone could come in and address the potentially hazardous work situation. The report states—

Government Members abhor the misuse of work health and safety regulations by any rogue parties—whether employer, employee or union official—for industrial purposes, and consider that strong penalties should be enforced on any non-compliant parties in order to deter any potential breaches.

But this particular amendment was not about that. It is our view that, although there has been a decline in the number of serious incidents over successive years, one serious injury or one death is one too many and that the prevention of these incidents must be the primary consideration in examining this amendment. We were not given any evidence during our inquiry which justified an employer needing 24 hours before they could allow a union official to attend a potentially hazardous work situation. There was just simply no evidence to support that.

I will turn to the issue of maximum penalties. I heard the chest beating from the member for Mansfield about how 200 or 300 penalty points is the best. That all sounds very good, but there is no evidence that it deters bad behaviour. Let us have some evidence based penalties and let us deter bad behaviour and breaches, but let us have something that works. While you might say that you are really tough if you make it 300 penalty points, there is no evidence to support that. In fact, there is significant subjective evidence to support that the revoking of WHS permits would be much more effective. We discussed the fact that they take an awfully long time to happen and that more work should be done about deterring bad behaviour.

I was very pleased to be part of examining this bill and restoring Queensland to a position where we are part of a nationally agreed and evidence based approach to increase workplace health and safety for workers in Queensland. I think we all agree that every worker and their family has the right to know that when they go to work they are going to come home safe and sound back to their families, back to their friends and neighbours, and that their government is going to do the best that they possibly can to make sure that that occurs. I feel very confident that I can say to the workers in my electorate that we are doing the best we can to look after them.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (8.29 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I speak as deputy chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, which has tabled report No. 5 of the 55th Parliament.

The bill was introduced to this place on 7 May. It is probably right to say that the report date was a rushed date. The report was tabled on 6 July. We had a little more than eight weeks to consider a lot of material that came to us. I think we had something like 32 written submissions, and numerous people came to provide witness statements to us. Of course, the department did a fantastic job of pulling the material together for us. We kept going back to them asking for more, and they kept getting it back to us in very quick time. All committee members appreciated that.

What does that tell us? It is now a bit more than 14 weeks since the report was tabled. The committee had eight weeks to consider the bill. It was a bit of a rush. We had to do a whole heap of work in a very short period of time. Now, 14-and-a-bit weeks later, we are debating the bill. 'Don't worry about the workload for the committee or the secretariat! Let's just bash this thing through and then let it sit there for 14 weeks before we bother looking at it.'

Anyway, it is terrific news that the one recommendation we were able to make was accepted by the Treasurer. I really do appreciate that from the Treasurer. I do note that in his response to us he suggests that we could not reach an agreement—that the government members of the committee supported the bill being passed while the non-government members considered that significant amendments would be required before they could support the bill.

It goes without saying that there were holes in it everywhere. There still are holes in it everywhere. Why try to fix something that ain't broke? That is the question I keep asking myself when I see these things come along. The statistical data provided to us by the department clearly pointed to the fact that our workplace health and safety legislation was working, that the practices we had in place were working. We had improvements across-the-board, from serious injury to the other end of the spectrum. It was working.

In a nutshell, what do we have? We have a bill born out of a promise to a union before the last election. It is payback. You could read 'CFMEU' all over it. Yet again we saw the same theme that the Finance and Administration Committee keeps on seeing coming through the system. We keep seeing this theme of the union. We spoke earlier about the fact that 17 per cent of the workforce is in a union. The rest of Queensland is on the other side of the equation. We are talking about Queensland here. We have about 4.7 million people. Seventeen per cent of the workforce is in a union.

What is the bill all about? I have here a note that has some very fine writing on it. I can hardly read it. I was looking for bigger writing but I could not find it. The bill will be restoring right-of-entry powers, allowing workplace health and safety entry permit holders to gain immediate access to a workplace to inquire into a suspected contravention of the Workplace Health and Safety Act; empowering trained health and safety representatives to direct workers to cease unsafe work; amending the current incident notification requirements to include an additional requirement for employers to notify the regulator when a worker is absent for more than four days due to a workplace injury—by the way, that is in direct contradiction to the national harmonisation laws and at odds with the former state Labor government's policy on those issues, so it is very interesting for that to jump in there on top of everything else; and improving electrical safety by reinstating the electrical safety commissioner, the Electrical Safety Education Committee and the Electrical Equipment Committee, which were abolished in 2012. That is the bill in a nutshell. That is why we are here.

The big issue is the right-of-entry provisions. That is the one the CFMEU got all hot and bothered about. They wanted to get back in there and get stuck into our employers. Let us be clear. We have workplace health and safety legislation that is not failing and is not broken. Indeed, we have seen massive improvements, as I said a short while ago. But the CFMEU wanted immediate access to those work sites. Why? It was to create havoc and for no other reason. We saw it before the legislation was changed. In fact, the builders of the children's hospital faced hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional costs because the CFMEU went in there, created havoc and basically shut them down. They wanted to be able to flex their muscles, to make it difficult for employers.

Have the CFMEU been abiding by the law over the last couple of years in relation to the 24-hour rule? It is interesting. They want the law changed. They want us to take it back to there being no 24-hour requirement, but it really did not matter. We were provided a table by the department that sets out complaint after complaint to the regulator in relation to the CFMEU mainly. In the column 'industry sector' we see 'manufacturing, construction, construction, construction, construction, construction'—all the way down the page. What does the next page say? 'Construction, construction, construction', all the way down. There are two entries for water transport, then 'construction, construction, construction, construction'. Are members seeing a theme coming out of this? The CFMEU.

There is no doubt that they are the ones who flexed their muscles before the election to make sure they would get the 24-hour restriction scrapped. In the meantime, it did not make much difference to them anyway. Earlier I was glancing through the table and saw entry 30, event ID 199907—

Construction: Advised once Inspectors got to site that Permit Holder had entered in relation to EB/IR issues. Police called and escorted permit holder from site.

That is one example of what the CFMEU were prepared to do. They were prepared to break the law. In fact, one of the witnesses at one of our hearings said words to the effect, 'You've got to do what you've got to do. If it's against the law, okay. You've got to be in there to fight the fight.' That is the attitude of the CFMEU. Okay, where do we go from here?

Mr Ryan: Sit down. How about you just sit down?

Mr CRANDON: I was going to consider sitting down, but now that you have said that I might go on for a while. It is getting on.

I commend the work done by the shadow minister, Ian Walker, and his presentation here this evening to cover off in detail on all of these issues. For all of those who were not listening, I would strongly recommend they read what the shadow minister said. It would be well worth reading. If members were not here or if they were not listening to it on TV, for goodness sake go and read it because there is no doubt that it would be well worth reading.

I am going to finish, but once again we see that all of the evidence supports retaining the 24-hour notice. Once again in our committee system we are talking about this issue of evidence. That is what we are there for. We do not have an upper house. The Finance and Administration Committee is going around Queensland at the moment on another inquiry talking to people about four-year terms and what have you and I can assure members that people in Queensland are very aware that we do not have an upper house but that we do have a committee system. The sad thing is that our committee system is still being controlled by what the minister wants because what the minister wants is what the union wants. The minister made a promise to the union, so when it comes to making their final decisions those opposite do not worry about the evidence. They do not worry about that huge amount of evidence that is presented to them time and time and time again.

Our committee has completed 12 or 13 reports and time and time and time again with all of the evidence—the huge amount of evidence that comes to us—government members on that committee come to us and say, ‘Oh yeah, but we made an election commitment to the unions and so we’ve got to abide by that. It doesn’t matter what the evidence says. We’re going to abide by that.’ That is not what our committee system is meant to be about. Our committee system is meant to be a system where we can genuinely and honestly go out to the people of Queensland and ask them their views and ask them to present their evidence to us and weigh that evidence up and then present to the parliament our findings based on that evidence—not on what the CFMEU wants, not on what the unions in this state want. Government members listen to them. We said, ‘Don’t listen to them. Please just for once don’t listen to them. Listen to the evidence and let’s move forward from here.’ They are also ignoring the fact that the department provided us with evidence that the current legislation is working. The current legislation has seen massive reductions in safety breaches and massive reductions in injuries.

Mr Rickuss: This is not about safety though, Michael.

Mr CRANDON: No, this is about the CFMEU. I take that interjection: it is not about safety; it is about the CFMEU and its members getting on to building sites. I think we had water mentioned twice, I think we had manufacturing mentioned once and all of the rest was construction—pages and pages of it. But let us ignore that. As I said, let us forget about it. The current legislation is working, but who cares? It does not matter. We are going to go with the union yet again. I will conclude my contribution by giving my thanks to my committee colleagues, and we do work together. We do have the honest debate. We do have the healthy discussions and so forth. One day they are going to come across! One day we are going to get them on our side! One day it is going to happen! I live in hope! I also want to thank our secretariat because, during that eight-week period—and this is the point I was making when I first started—we were under massive stress and had a huge workload. This inquiry had to be done in eight weeks and now here we are 14 weeks after the end of it to debate it. I also thank those people who made submissions on short notice—

Mr Rickuss: And the royal commission got a bit hot on the CFMEU at that time, Michael.

Mr CRANDON: That might have had something to do with it. I take that interjection; it probably had something to do with it. It was running a bit hot, wasn’t it? Once again, I do apologise to all of those submitters for their evidence being ignored and I also apologise for the significant delay in bringing this legislation to the House.



Mr CRAWFORD (Barron River—ALP) (8.44 pm): I thank the member for Coomera for his kind words for our committee work. Perhaps one day he will live in hope—who knows—but he might come over to our side instead! I place on the record that I have never been told by a minister and I have never been told by a union which way any of the bills will run in our committee process and I certainly rebut that comment.

I am not about to cover the various parts of the bill that we considered. I think we have heard enough about that. I want to talk about how my career over the past has contributed to my decision tonight to support this bill in its entirety. For most of my adult life I have either been a paramedic or a firefighter and over that time I have attended so many workplace incidents it is not funny—incidents that involve people who have been murdered by robots, people who have been killed by forklifts, people who have had trees fall on them, people who have been killed by trains and by trucks. You name it, if it has wheels and if it goes to work it will kill you. I have attended to people who have been burnt to death, people who have been stabbed and police officers and paramedics who have been assaulted, stabbed and spat on. I could go on and on and on. What drives me is that whilst one person goes to work and does not come home we cannot say that we have an adequate system, because we do not. As a government we must put in any measure we can to ensure that people who go to work come home. Nobody goes to work to die, and I credit that comment to the member for Kallangur because I heard him say it before I got up. Sorry if I stole your line.

Mr King: That is all right.

Mr CRAWFORD: To look in the eyes of a worker’s family member and tell them that their husband is dead is one of the hardest things I have ever done, and I have done that. That is what drives me tonight to support this bill, and I trust my colleagues on this side of the House will do the same. I commend the bill to the House.



Miss BARTON (Broadwater—LNP) (8.46 pm): Tonight I rise to speak in the debate on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I want to acknowledge my colleagues on the Finance and Administration Committee and the departmental officials who are not

only here tonight but who took the time a couple of weeks ago to brief us on the various aspects of the bill. I also want to acknowledge those who took the time to make submissions and also appear before the committee.

I know I said this in this House only a couple of hours ago, but what we continue to see is this government come into this House with the sole view to say thank you very much to the union movement, to pay it back for the work that it did in the lead-up to the 2015 election, to thank it for the various donations that it gave it. What we have seen time and time again through the various work that we have done on the Finance and Administration Committee is overwhelmingly the evidence and the submissions made by industry groups, by employers, by those who are not associated with the labour movement and those who are not associated with the union movement just ignored. Honestly, unless you are a member of the union movement, this Labor government does not care what it is that you have to say. It comes in and says that it wants to be a consultative government, that it wants to listen to the people of Queensland. When did it listen to the CCIQ? When did it listen to the Housing Industry Association? When did it listen to the Civil Contractors Federation? When did it listen to the Master Builders association? The member for Coomera was talking about a day well into the future when members of the Labor Party might actually come across and use common sense. My grandfather used to always say to me that the thing about common sense is that it is just not very common and I have a funny feeling that we will see pigs flying through the chamber before we see members of the Labor Party use and understand evidence and actually think about what it is that they are going to do and the impact that that is going to have on the people of Queensland.

As I said, this legislation is entirely about thanking the union movement. At a time when the CFMEU is being dragged through the media for the corruption, for the absolute farce that it is, for the thuggery that it is, for the bullying that we have seen and for the misuse of union funds—and this is not the first time that we have seen media reports about unions misusing their members' funds for rather inappropriate things—it strikes me as being rather ironic that the Labor Party would want to come into this place and say to the people of Queensland, 'It's okay, because we've listened to the CFMEU.' In this legislation, we have seen a Labor government bring back red tape that the previous Labor government got rid of. I will acknowledge that, when the current health minister was the minister for industrial relations, he had the foresight to remove certain elements of red tape. I dare say that, now he has returned to this House as the member for Woodridge rather than the member for Greenslopes, it must be rather embarrassing for him that, as a result of the negotiations with the union movement, he is forced to do something that is the antithesis of what he clearly believes. So he either misled the House in 2011 when he said that he believed in cutting red tape or he is about to mislead the House later tonight, assuming that he votes for the legislation. At the end the day, we have seen this government say to the union movement, 'What you want is gospel and what anyone else wants just doesn't matter.'

Another thing that we have seen time and time again—and it is not just in this legislation but in previous legislation that has been introduced into this House—is this government believing in giving the unfettered right of access and entry to unions so that they can enter work sites. I think we would all acknowledge that, regardless of the colour of our political persuasion, every single person who goes to work should be safe and they deserve to go home safely to their family. That is why when we were in government we worked very hard to make sure that the number of workplace injuries were down and the number of workplace incidents were down. I think all members of the House would be absolutely committed to making sure that we continue to reduce the incidence of those injuries. I would like to acknowledge and put on the record my thanks to those people in the department of justice who, over the past number of years, have worked incredibly hard to make sure that the rate of incidents and injuries are down. That is why, when the committee members were conducting its inquiry into this bill, we indicated that, over the past three or four years, the number of workplace injuries was down. That was able to occur without an unfettered right of access, without giving the CFMEU carte blanche to march onto a building site, to storm in and demand that people put down their tools.


I believe that, if someone thinks that their work site is unsafe, they should have the right to say, 'I am not comfortable. I don't think this is safe and I am not going to do this.' The individual worker has the right to do that. The individual person is best placed to make that decision—not some union official who is not on the work site, not some union official who is taking his direction from someone like Dave Hanna or Michael Ravbar; the person who is there at the coalface is best placed to make that determination. But what we have seen time and time again and what we will continue to see time and time again under this Palaszczuk government, which cares only about what the unions say, not about what the workers say, or what the people of Queensland say, or what the employers who make sure

that workers have jobs say, is that it thinks that union officials are best placed to make decisions for workers in Queensland as opposed to believing in the freedom and the right of the individual worker to make a determination about their own safety.

The other matter that I was particularly aggrieved about when the committee members were considering this legislation is the fact that we are reducing penalties when there is a breach of someone's right to enter a workplace. The Labor members of the committee acknowledged that the penalties that are in place are not a sufficient deterrent. We received evidence from the department that show that it is taking an incredibly long time to be able to manage an allegation that someone has misused their permit. So we have CFMEU officials who have had very serious allegations made about them continue to be able to breach the law and the penalties that are in place, the Labor members of the committee acknowledge, are insufficient. So their solution is to halve them. It strikes me that the most sensible thing to do would be to look at increasing penalties, to look at what it is that we could do to make it a deterrent—so that when people make a decision to use their right and their power to enter a workplace they do so in the full knowledge that, if they are breaching the rules, if they are breaking the law in terms of how they are entering that work site, they know that if they do that there are severe penalties. The message that this government is sending not only to the union movement but also to the people of Queensland and to the employers is, 'It doesn't matter if you break the law, because we're just going to give you a rap on the knuckles. Even though we don't think the penalties are strong enough, our solution is to halve them.'

Given that the Treasurer has adopted the recommendation that we made in terms of streamlining some of the online processes, it also strikes me as rather ironic that on the one hand the Treasurer is more than willing to cut red tape and regulation around online reporting but on the other hand wants to make it more onerous and increase red tape in terms of what needs to be reported in the first place. It just not make any sense whatsoever. But again, as was told to me many times when I was a young child, the thing about common sense is that it is just not very common. I think we would all agree that there is no common sense coming out of the government at the moment.

What we have seen and what we will continue to see is a repayment of thanks to the labour movement. Each and every day the CFMEU is out there working to stop workers having a job, because it is stopping employers from commencing projects. There are building companies that are going to go to the wall because of the way in which the CFMEU is treating them. As I said, regardless the colour of our political persuasion, I think we would all agree that, when it comes to the safety of workers on building sites, or in any other field, the safety of the worker is paramount. But it is a very sad day indeed when the parliament of this state thinks that it is so much more important to pay credence and heed to the wants and the needs of the CFMEU and the other unions in this state as they thank them and repay them for their donations in the lead-up to the election rather than think about the jobs of Queenslanders, rather than think about the infrastructure opportunities and the projects that we might be able to get off the ground. I hope that not only do the Labor members hang their heads in shame when they think about what it is that they are doing and the message that they are sending but also they finally have the guts to take action against organisations like the CFMEU, which is destroying the job opportunities for Queenslanders right across this state. When the members opposite think about the message that that sends—the Labor Party just want a love-in with the CFMEU and cares only about what the CFMEU says—I think that is a very sad and sorry state indeed. I look forward to voting against this legislation as it progresses through the next stages of this House as I join members on this side of the House in thinking about the safety and the jobs of workers in Queensland.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (8.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill. We just heard in the contribution from the member for Broadwater that this bill was entirely about this, it was entirely about that. The one thing that she did not mention was safety. That is what this bill is about. It is about making sure that working people come home safe to their family and have safe workplaces.

I want to focus on those provisions of the bill that enable WHS entry permit holders to enter a workplace immediately if a contravention occurs. I also want to focus on the provisions that reinstate the power for a trained HSR, who has a reasonable concern that carrying out the work would expose that worker to a serious risk to their health and safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard, and also those provisions in the bill that allow HSRs to request the assistance of another person, removing the requirement for at least 24 hours notice if the assistant requires access to the workplace.


When it comes to the provisions in this bill that enable a WHS entry permit holder to enter a workplace immediately if they suspect a contravention has occurred, I really think those opposite miss the point. Prevention is always better than cure. Preventing incidents is a lot better than having an

investigation after an incident has occurred. This bill will allow permit holders to enter a workplace and investigate unsafe work before a worker suffers an injury or worse. We need to do all we can to ensure safe workplaces and make sure that everyone who goes to work comes home safe to their families.

Clearly there has been an improvement in the statistics of workplace health and safety. This is a great thing. This improvement is a credit to employees, employers and the department. However, while it is true that there has been a decline in serious injuries in recent times, serious incidents continue to occur causing serious injury and death. Even one injury or one death is one too many and it is incumbent on all of us to do all we can to prevent serious incidents and to save lives.

I wish to speak about the component of this legislation that empowers HSRs to ensure safer workplaces. These amendments will mean that Queensland is aligned with the national model legislation. Empowering HSRs also overcomes a legitimate fear of some workers that if they stop work of their own accord due to a safety issue they might be subject to disciplinary action or lose their position. It should be noted that HSRs receive mandatory training in their role. These are people who are trained to ensure the health and safety of their fellow workers. Sometimes, however, they will require assistance from someone with a particular expertise or specialist knowledge and this bill will enable that to occur. There is an example provided by the department in the FAC report of the chemical plant where there are a lot of manufacturing workers who might require some advice from a chemist or chemical engineer on the compounds they are storing and how they are storing them because they are unsure. We also heard from the department during the briefing that they had not seen any abuse of the assistant provisions prior to the 24 hours notice being introduced. Of course, there are safeguards in place where the assistant could have their entry refused.

It is vitally important that those who actually do the work get a say in who their health and safety representative is and this bill will do just that. An HSR elected by their colleagues is likely to have their trust. The removal of the right of HSRs to cease unsafe work by the former LNP government was justified on the basis that workers have a common law right to cease work. In practice, this argument falls apart and I have experienced this firsthand both as an employee and as someone who has represented injured workers. My first job was at the old Franklins supermarket just before I turned 15. I can tell you that the reaction of a 15-year-old to being asked by a manager to stand on an eight-foot-high ladder in a busy shopping centre with no co-workers ensuring the ladder did not move is a lot different to how I would react twenty years later. We do not need the first experience of our young Queenslanders in the workplace to be sustaining a serious injury at work. Young people, people with disabilities, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and workers who are new or unfamiliar with their working environment are potentially less likely to have the same understanding of the legislation and their rights. We need to make sure every worker in Queensland is protected no matter their age, no matter their background. The former LNP government watered down the protections for working people in Queensland. This bill will ensure safer workplaces in this state. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (9.03 pm): I rise tonight to make a contribution to the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 as a member of the Finance and Administration Committee. The first section of this bill amends the Electrical Safety Act 2002 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and will re-establish the role of Commissioner for Electrical Safety. The commissioner would advise the minister on electrical safety matters and manage the activities of the Electrical Safety Board and its committees. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General advised that the previous commissioner played an important role in representing the department, was well respected in the electrical industry and was seen as an independent advocate for electrical safety. Further to this, they stated that the improvement in electrical safety would not have been achieved through compliance and enforcement alone and could be attributed to the work of the commissioner and the committee. Whilst most submitters supported the reinstatement of the commissioner, the Civil Contractors Federation and the Australian Sugar Milling Council were concerned that the amendments could create some unnecessary bureaucracy. They also stated they were not convinced that the amendments would provide direct and immediate improvement in workplace safety and could add cost and complexity to the working environment. Representatives of the Electrical Trades Union stated that the removal of the commissioner had resulted in the government's response to safety becoming more reactive than proactive. The ETU believed that the active involvement of the Electrical Safety Board had led to a decrease in the number of electrical incidents and the number of fatalities within the industry. The Australian Lawyers Alliance and Master Electricians Australia supported the re-establishment of an electrical safety commissioner, Electrical Safety Education Committee and Electrical Equipment Committee. The committee noted that the majority of submitters were in favour of the proposed amendments and actually supported those changes.

Amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, clause 16 and new section 36, include a requirement to notify the regulator of an injury or illness that caused an employee to be absent from work for a period of four days. In 2012 the Australian Strategy was formally endorsed by all workplace ministers with one of the aims being to reduce the incidence rate of claims for musculoskeletal disorders resulting in one or more weeks off work by 30 per cent. Several of the submitters expressed concern regarding the amendment and the shortened reporting time frame, with the Australian Industry Group stating that it would create an unnecessary regulatory burden and establish duplication of reporting without any definitive benefits.

The Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland noted that the amendment was directly at odds with the former Labor government's policy. Section 36D was previously removed by the former minister for industrial relations, the Hon Cameron Dick MP, due to the red-tape ramifications of reporting information that had already been collected by WorkCover and the requirement had no benefit to the improved safety performance within business. The Queensland Tourism Industry Council highlighted that this amendment will result in Queensland being different to other harmonised jurisdictions and felt there should be an allowance for an extended reporting period for small business and those not deemed at a high risk.

The QTIC expressed concern about the difficulties they face in keeping their numbers abreast of legislative changes, stating that they have 22 sector associations and 3,000 direct individual businesses that they are the peak body for. In their submission they stated that there is becoming an increasing reliance on third-party bodies like the QTIC to take up a far greater percentage of education awareness on behalf of government to ensure that all operators understood. There are concerns that the department needs to recognise and needs to implement some strategies to assist with the communication and education difficulties that are being experienced.

The Civil Contractors Federation considered that the inclusion of the four-day absence would place an unnecessary burden on an employer where normally such an absence would not have been regarded as a serious injury or illness. For example, an employee may be absent due to an influenza infection for more than four days. The department acknowledged that while influenza was not a reportable illness, a case of Q fever contracted by an employee working in an abattoir or in the livestock industry would be. The Queensland Nurses' Union supported the amendments as the continual work demands placed on their members, for example nurses and midwives, places them at a high risk of musculoskeletal disorders and diseases.

The department acknowledged that the amendments will result in an increased number of notifications, estimating an extra 1,800 to 2,000 claims per year. This will mean that the department will need to streamline the reporting process to eliminate dual reporting, including accessing data from WorkCover which, due to privacy concerns, cannot be shared. The department stated that the one-stop shop gives employers the option of lodging a claim and notifying of an incident at the same time. However, it needs to be made much more user-friendly.

Clause 17, amendment of section 6, grants a health and safety representative the authority to cease work in certain circumstances and removes the 24-hour notice period to enter a site with an assistant. Whilst this amendment was supported by the union submitters, industry did not support the change. One of the contentious parts of this amendment is that an HSR is allowed to bring an assistant onto the work site.

The Master Plumbers Association of Queensland queried the qualifications of the assistant being called in and considered that any union official could come onto the site to investigate a safety issue despite having no qualifications to investigate and then use the situation to facilitate industrial action. The Master Builders Association and the Australian Mines and Metals Association expressed concern that allowing an HSR to bring an assistant would result in union officials entering work sites to hold talks with workers under the guise of assisting the HSR. Further, they stated that there are no measures in the proposed provisions requiring the assistant to limit their focus whilst on site to the matter that they have been requested to attend. The department advised that the assistant is usually someone with specialist knowledge, such as a chemist or engineer, and the person conducting the business can refuse entry to the assistant on reasonable grounds. The non-government members remain concerned that there are not enough safeguards in place in regard to the potential misuse of an assistant.

Clause 23, replacement of section 119, notice of entry: this amendment gives work health and safety permit holders immediate access to a work site. There were several submissions opposing this amendment and they stated that it would result in misuse by union officials to gain access to construction sites for industrial purposes. The National Electrical and Communications Association said the disruptions that occurred in 2012 resulted in businesses having to capitulate or face bankruptcy in the face of project delay and contractual penalties and delayed milestone payments. The Master

Plumbers Association of Queensland said their members routinely face unlawful right of entry to building sites by permit holders who simply refuse to follow the rule of law and believe the amendments will result in outcomes other than what was intended. The Crane Industry Council of Australia strongly opposed the proposal to restore the right of entry powers allowing union representatives holding work health and safety entry permits to gain immediate access to a workplace, believing that health and safety have simply become a bargaining tool by some unions. The department explained that where an entry permit holder has misused their entry powers, the act provides the regulator, an employer or other person affected by the misuse with the capacity to apply to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to revoke or suspend the work health and safety entry holder's permit. Whilst there have been reports, the department could not provide a case where the permit had been revoked.

The CFMEU was very strong in their support of the amendments and provided a lengthy submission—114 pages, in fact—listing alleged breaches of safety, most of them contested. One factor that was very apparent throughout the committee process was the unhealthy relationship between those in the construction industry and the CFMEU. By its very nature, the building industry is where work health and safety will be one of the primary concerns and differences of opinion are sure to arise. Over 90 per cent of the 120 individual cases or disputes on right of entry reported to the Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland over the past 12 months were in the construction sector. It would be in the interests of both parties to act in good faith and to find some common ground to work through these issues.

The Master Builders Association put forward a compromise position. The proposal was that the government should maintain the 24-hours-notice requirement for work health and safety entry purposes, but can provide an exception for immediate entry for work health and safety permit holders in the event of a notifiable incident, as defined under section 35 of the Work Health and Safety Act. If somebody has been seriously injured or a potential exposure has occurred, the work health and safety permit holder can have immediate access to represent their members and ensure everything is being managed effectively. This would remove any perception that the employer is trying to keep the unions away from a work site and from becoming involved in genuine health and safety issues. All other concerns regarding safety can be managed by giving the appropriate and current 24 hours notice. This was rejected by both the CFMEU and the government members. The committee did not reach agreement and the LNP does not support this amendment.

Clause 24 amends section 123. This amendment would reduce the maximum penalty rate for any breaches of work health and safety entry permits from 200 points to 100 points. There were very different views on this amendment. There was strong support from the unions and equally strong opposition from the business sector. The Master Plumbers Association, the Building Service Contractors Association, the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the Housing Industry Association and the Master Builders Association all objected to this amendment in their submissions. They affirmed that the penalty is a necessary mechanism for redress and discouragement of any abuse of right of entry provisions. The Master Builders Association stated that right of entry breaches have become the standard way to access projects, rather than giving the appropriate notice, adding that any incentive that encourages that behaviour verges on the irresponsible.


The LNP members of the committee believe that if the current penalties are not deterring breaches of right of entry permits, then reducing the penalty is certainly no way to correct the problem. The Master Builders Association suggested that there be a sliding scale of penalties, starting with fines and the complete revocation of the permit for the most serious cases of abuse of the entry permit. The department did not believe this was necessary, as an employer has the option of having a breach of entry heard by the Industrial Relations Commission. This seems to be a very slow and cumbersome process, with no clear time frames for the process. This is compounded by the fact that the permit is not suspended while the process is under investigation, allowing the permit holder to continue to potentially disrupt the site.

The government members, in their support for this amendment, state that the amendment is consistent with the national work health and safety laws. If it is considered so important by those opposite to align with the national laws, then one would have to question the other amendments in this bill that do exactly the opposite. We do not support the amendment and no government that is serious about jobs in the construction industry could support this amendment.

New section 4(2)(a) relates to rights and liberties. This new section would enable the work and safety representative to direct a worker to cease work immediately if there is an imminent risk to the worker's safety and health. The health and safety representative would then consult with the employer as soon as possible after the direction has been issued. The committee agreed that, in an instance such as this, the safety of the worker must take priority and supported the amendment.

Whilst the committee was able to reach agreement on some areas of this bill, there are other sections that we as a party could not support. This is another bill that is brought into this parliament with the sole purpose of repaying the debt owed to the union bosses. There is not one aspect in this bill that in any way, shape or form would inspire business to grow or encourage the employment of additional staff. It is quite the opposite, in fact. This is another setback for employers and WorkCover premiums. The Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will increase the cost of premiums. It is estimated to cost an additional \$90 million, which will flow on to business. Almost all the legislation coming into this House from this Labor government will upset business and add to the cost of doing business in this state, the most destructive of which are always supported by the union movement. This government and the government members on this committee have continuously ignored all of the concerns raised by the business community to appease their union masters, regardless of the cost to the state's economy. Business opposed the removal of the 24-hour notice period for access to a work site by an industrial officer. That was still passed. Business opposed union access to the private details of employees for purely recruitment purposes. It still passed. Business opposed the removal of the five per cent common law threshold. It still passed. And the list goes on.

This government is at the complete behest of their union masters and the funds that flow from their coffers. It is unions and particularly the star of the show, the CFMEU, that are currently running the agenda in this state. This is another in a growing list of impediments to business, economic growth and employment in the state and it needs to stop. Whilst there are some parts of this bill that the committee did agree on, the amendments to clauses 23 and 24 are not in the interests of anyone except the union movement. I urge everyone in this House who has the best interests of the state and its economy at heart to vote against these amendments.

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (9.19 pm): I rise to speak to this government's action on restoring fairness in Queensland workplaces as the rollout of the comprehensive raft of industrial relations reforms continues. These reforms are of particular benefit to the 25½ thousand employed persons within the electorate of Springwood. It is more than that. Working people are fathers, mothers, sons and daughters. They are friends, family and they are mates.

Those opposite have talked tonight about evidence. When Springwood residents and Queenslanders voted for a change of government this year they voted to restore rights for workers. The evidence is clearly in. The Palaszczuk Labor government has made an unequivocal commitment to stand up for our community—a commitment to do everything we can to bring our loved ones home safely from work.

Unfortunately, preventable accidents do occur. This point is made in moving detail on each and every Workers Memorial Day—as it was on 28 April this year. Since the beginning of this year over 41 Australians have been killed at work. Last year 185 Australians were killed at work. The year before that it was 186 workplace deaths.

Workplace deaths are a blight on any government's record. That is why we are acting swiftly to reinstate provisions that operate to reduce injuries and deaths at work. At this point I remember standing outside this place before being elected and listening to injured workers tell a gathering of working people what they had lost in terms of their rights if they were injured on the job. They consistently talked about how vulnerable workers had become under the LNP government. One has to question just how arrogant a government could become.

Importantly, this government is restoring the trust of workers. We are doing this not just because it is the right thing to do and not just because it is what we promised we would do but because it makes solid economic sense. We are creating an environment where workers feel secure, where they are safe and if they are a government employee they need not look over their shoulder daily to see if the government is coming after them.

Measures outlined in this bill will make workers safe, make them feel secure and make them confident consumers. The measures that will deliver this security are measures such as restoring the responsibilities of health and safety representatives to direct unsafe work to stop. Measures such as restoring the responsibilities of workplace health and safety representatives to enter workplaces quickly to investigate and rectify risks are proven methods internationally to reduce injuries. Reducing injuries reduces costs for businesses.


Introducing practices that increase costs for businesses and costs for workers and families are often insurmountable. The opposition says that they stand for business. How clearly they showed Queenslanders that they are only stood for their own ideology. They showed businesses that invest in safety that they place their ideology over that investment.

Good businesses were shown contempt—businesses that lead our economy and set the standards; the ones that drive growth. Since our government committed to restoring workplace health and safety rights, we have seen consumer confidence rise to the highest level in almost two years according to the Westpac-Melbourne Institute consumer sentiment index. The state's consumer sentiment rose by over 12 per cent in August. That is the highest consumer sentiment of any mainland state.

These results reflect the positive reception the budget and measures such as these workplace health and safety reforms have received from business and industry groups along with consumers. Queensland workers are more confident consumers under a Palaszczuk Labor government thanks to measures like those outlined in this bill.

We are creating a climate of certainty in workplaces throughout the state. Since the introduction of the Appropriation Bill I have personally visited 142 small and medium sized enterprises in Springwood. They consistently spoke about the need for certainty, security and confidence in the market. In addition, our suite of IR reforms, including this very important restoration of workplace health and safety rights, will make a significant contribution to the restoration of confidence in consumers and therefore business. Those opposite cling to their unsupported, ill-informed and rejected hatred of workers who look out for other workers.

We should always remember, and the opposition must learn, I submit, that the most important reason for going to work is not work at all. I commend the Minister for Industrial Relations on introducing the bill.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (9.23 pm): I rise to address the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I believe in ensuring the highest standards of accountability in relation to workplace environments and improving the health and safety of workers. I would like to acknowledge the improvements in workplace health and safety and employee outcomes as achieved under the former LNP government.

The Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 amends two important acts. I will speak firstly to the Electrical Safety Act amendments. The Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, in its current form, proposes to re-establish the role of the electrical safety commissioner, with the reinstatement of both an electrical education committee and an electrical equipment committee. The explanatory notes identify that the cost of re-establishing the electrical safety commissioner role will be covered from within an existing budgetary allocation.

The role of the electrical safety commissioner was abolished in 2012 by the LNP, with the explanatory notes from 2012 identifying the role was a bridging role that commenced in 2002 and had been reduced to three days a week by 2007. A key consideration for the amendment in 2012 was a reduction in red tape and cost saving, with the functions to be achieved in alternative ways. With the Labor government re-establishing this role, there must be a value proposition achieved with regards to a transparent outcome which is benchmarked against other potentially similar roles in other jurisdictions. There is nothing in the current draft that provides me with the confidence that this will occur.

Secondly, this bill proposes amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act in two broad themes. The first theme involves right of power provisions including (a) reinstating the right of entry powers allowing workplace health and safety permit holders to gain immediate access to workplaces thereby removing a 24-hour notice requirement; (b) removing the right of a person conducting a business to refuse the person assisting the workplace health and safety representative—the assistant—from entering unless notice has been given; (c) reinstating provisions that a health and safety representative may direct that unsafe work cease immediately; and (d) reducing the penalty for contravening workplace health and safety entry permit conditions from 200 penalty units to 100 penalty units.

The provisions for the right for permit holders and health and safety representatives to gain immediate access and empowering workplace health and safety representatives to direct a worker to cease work were removed in 2014, with the changes made at that time being in response to construction industry complaints and concerns about the misuse of rights of entry powers and the inconsistency with entry requirements in other existing legislation.

It would appear that the current Legislative Assembly of Queensland Finance and Administration Committee consultation process confirms that these concerns remain and that the changes are just another example of the Palaszczuk Labor government simply acceding to union pressure and influence. Only recently Fair Work Building and Construction alleged that the CFMEU had broken the law 822

times. It is extraordinary that those opposite seek to support increasing union right of access while halving the penalty for misuse when such an extraordinary example of alleged abuse remains before the courts.


The second theme involves absence from work provisions including a proposal to reinstate an absence from work time frame for reporting a serious injury—section 36—with a serious injury definition being amended to include a requirement to report to the regulator incidents causing a person to absent from voluntary or paid employment for more than four days. Then Queensland Labor minister for education and industrial relations, the Hon. Cameron Dick MP, previously amended the legislation in 2011 and removed a time frame related incident notification requirement to both harmonise national model workforce health and safety laws and reduce the red-tape burden for businesses that operate in more than one state. One can only assume that the current health minister and member for Woodridge, the Hon. Cameron Dick MP, has become captive to union dominance and influence within the Palaszczuk government.

The amendment to section 36 at clause 16 means that Queensland workplaces will have different reporting requirements from other harmonised jurisdictions. For a government that purports to be focused on jobs and to have even understood the need for harmonisation and the reduction of the reporting burden back in 2011, this amendment now introduces reporting inconsistency between different states, particularly for Queensland based employers located in more than one jurisdiction. It also establishes an unnecessary reporting burden that will impose a significant cost for business, particularly small business, with no rationale provided for a demonstrable improvement for health and safety.

This bill will increase costs for business and make it harder for business to achieve optimal outcomes. Ongoing efforts to ensure the harmonisation and national consistency of workplace health and safety laws is an effective mechanism for the continuous reduction of red tape for businesses in my electorate and Queensland.

We have seen the trifecta of workplace vandalism by this Labor government since its election—the ideological agenda of returning Queensland to the dark ages with respect to industrial reform. We have the legislative trifecta of the Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and now the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

It is all about union empowerment leading to workplace antagonism, reduced productivity and inefficiency. It is all about the CFMEU. Queenslanders believe and know that this Labor government is run by union bosses. This government supports unethical conduct. We have seen this tonight in relation to the member for Cook and we have seen it with respect to the hearings undertaken by the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption. We just have to look at Michael Ravbar, the CFMEU state secretary and a member of the Labor Party's national executive, who gave the order to shred documents requested and in fact subpoenaed by the royal commission. I do not support this legislation.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (9.29 pm): I rise to support the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I am sure that I am not alone in this place in my feelings that even one workplace death is too many. In fact, at the International Workers' Day memorial this year in Brisbane on 28 April, we remembered 41 workers who have died at work since the beginning of this year. That is 41 deaths this year to 28 April. Last year 185 workers lost their lives at work. No-one should ever go off to work with any other expectation than to return home to their families safe and in the same physical and mental condition as they left.

Under the previous government, the rights of an HSR, health and safety representative, to direct work to cease if he or she had a reasonable concern that a dangerous situation could occur were removed. I have, as previously stated in this place, spent the majority of my working life in the electricity supply and mining industries, working predominantly on high-voltage equipment and apparatus. In these industries the role of an HSR is vital not only to the wellbeing of workers but also to help the company avoid system and equipment failures when and if an error in judgement occurs. They are the eyes on the ground, making sure that their workmates' lives, health and safety and the security of the electricity supply network is not compromised. An HSR is a trained role—that is, an HSR undergoes a training package which explains the requirements of the role and the responsibilities which come with the role.

Within the electricity supply industry, the role of high-voltage switching and access is without doubt one of the most dangerous elements of work and, although highly regulated and prescribed, incidents can and occasionally do occur. We have a saying in the industry, 'Keep your focus on the job

because one flash and you're ash.' When performing high-voltage switching, it is not time to be thinking about what is happening on the weekend. It is a critical task that requires the highest concentration and focus. If an error is made, not only will lives be lost but also the impact on our state's electricity network and consumers is dramatic when transmission incidents occur, particularly now the requirement for N-1 was removed by the previous government. N-1, for those who do not know, was a redundancy built into the network so that outages to allow maintenance could occur and minor feeder and substation faults could be absorbed while allowing supply to continue in most cases.

I have been an HSR in the industry and on numerous occasions over the years I have had to ask for work to stop before an incident occurred. Under the legislation before the House, an HSR will always still be required to consult the person in control of a business or undertaking prior to issuing a direction to cease work, unless there is an imminent safety risk where the consultation must occur as soon as possible after. This will address any concerns about rogue actions from health and safety representatives. The person in control of a business or undertaking can also direct a worker to carry out other suitable tasks until the safety concern can be addressed, which will address concerns about using safety as a scapegoat to avoid work. An HSR will also be able to seek assistance from a workplace health and safety entry permit holder in limited circumstances without a 24-hour notification period.


Let's talk about the 24-hour waiting period. Investigations into breaches of workplace health and safety should be immediate like any investigation and anyone responsible for conditions or actions which could harm a worker should be held to account. Imagine the police called to a road accident where there is a fatality and told they have to give 24 hours notice to investigate! That would be ludicrous. This change to the role of workplace health and safety representative is not going to do anything except promote health and safety in the workplace, and for the life of me I cannot understand why anyone would oppose legislation which enhances the safety of workers.

On the reinstatement of the role of electrical safety commissioner, the people of Queensland lead the way in adopting the benefits of electricity. Indeed, this very building was proudly the first parliament house in Australia to have electricity connected—that was in 1886. Almost 140 years later the people of Queensland continue to lead the country in adopting new and emerging technologies for using and making electricity, including the exciting new opportunities for electro technologies such as solar, wind generation and battery storage. These technologies will challenge our traditional outlook on our electricity supply industry and, during this technological transition, Queensland needs informed oversight to ensure that electrical safety is not lost or diminished.

I am proud to be part of a government that will re-energise the role of the Commissioner for Electrical Safety, to give oversight and direction to the Electrical Safety Act, which is an important piece of Queensland legislation directed at reducing the human cost of electrical accidents by Queenslanders in their homes, workplaces, businesses and the community.


Debate, on motion of Mr King, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.35 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Gaven Electorate, Community Safety

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (9.35 pm): I rise tonight to speak on a topic that concerns most of us, and that is the issue of feeling safe in our communities. Community safety is of paramount importance to all Queenslanders, including my fellow locals in the Gaven electorate. Our family chose to live in the Gaven electorate because of the family-friendly atmosphere and the strong sense of community it offers. So I feel extremely privileged to be in this position where I can stand up to improve our local area for generations to come, and I would like to take this opportunity to update the chamber on this very important issue.

During the last state election, the Gaven Labor candidate was adamant that a fully staffed police station was needed at Pacific Pines. This was so important in fact that, according to their candidate, Labor had committed to a feasibility study on that station. However, as soon as Labor moved into government, the communities of Pacific Pines, Park Lake and Maudsland—the areas that would most benefit from this new police station—were advised no further of the feasibility study. It was only when, at the request of the Pacific Pines Residents Group, I asked a question on notice in parliament on

21 May this year regarding the status of the feasibility study and what, if any, action was being undertaken by the government that we received a response. And what was the reply from the police minister? While a feasibility study would be undertaken and reported to the minister by September, the minister would not commit to releasing it to the very communities that it would impact most upon! Worse still, it has recently been brought to my attention that now, under the Queensland Labor government, the existing Pacific Pines Police Beat is no longer manned on weekends on a regular basis.


So after all the hard work by Senior Constable Rebecca Williams from the Pacific Pines Police Beat to lower the crime rate figures and build community confidence in our community, what can we expect now? We can expect that this will surely make law enforcement a lot more difficult, and it will certainly negatively impact all parts of our community. It is unfortunate that community safety in the Pacific Pines area is now worse under Labor.

Regardless, I continue to work on a number of local campaigns to ensure community safety. In Highland Park I am working to establish a Neighbourhood Watch group, currently organising with local residents for our upcoming first meeting. I am facilitating a road safety campaign in conjunction with the local councillor Glenn Tozer and the Queensland Police Service. I successfully advocated for the installation of school safety flashing lights at William Duncan State School and am currently awaiting their installation.

In Pacific Pines, as noted, I am standing up for our local police presence and I am still championing for school safety flashing lights at Jubilee Primary School and will not stop until this is achieved.

In Nerang, very importantly, I am continuing to work with concerned locals to have emergency stopping lights and a clear zone installed outside the Nerang Fire Station on the increasingly busy Beaudesert-Nerang Road to ensure the safety of members of the community and fire station officers as they depart the station. I will be seeking to have the government reconsider their current refusal for these works to occur.

Meals on Wheels

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (9.38 pm): A good measure of a successful community is to count the number of volunteers, and in my electorate of Barron River they are in abundance. I was recently invited by Mrs Joann McClure, the President of Marlin Coast Meals on Wheels, to assist in the delivery of meals throughout my electorate. Marlin Coast Meals on Wheels has been delivering nutritious food to frail, aged and younger people with a disability since 1990 and this year celebrates its 25th anniversary.


The group is often contacted by the Cairns Hospital to arrange meals for patients recovering from surgery for up to six to eight weeks. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday a team of volunteers arrives at the kitchens and begins cooking from 6 am to prepare meals for about 70 clients. The meals are then delivered to the clients' homes. The other day I had the privilege of joining Rosie Bennett, a retired nurse on her round. For many clients living alone, the visit from a Meals on Wheels driver can be their only human contact for the week. I know from my work as a paramedic that emergency calls have often come from Meals on Wheels drivers who arrive to find one of their regular clients stuck on the floor or having some sort of medical emergency.

The Meals on Wheels volunteers do not just prepare and deliver meals; they provide much needed social contact to people who may be isolated or lonely as well as monitoring the physical and psychological wellbeing of those who are most vulnerable. Keeping people out of hospital and nursing homes as long as possible means the volunteers are also helping to save tax dollars. A friendly smile, a chat about the weather, a nutritious meal and knowing someone will drop by to say hello has changed the lives of many people and it is not just the clients who value this contact. Ask any of the volunteers and they will tell you that reaching out and making a difference in someone else's day makes their day, too. Anyone who has to live alone at any stage of life would know that finding the motivation to cook well-rounded, nutritious meals can be difficult. Adding to this frailty, physical disability, early dementia or grief after losing a spouse and the shopping, transport and cooking experience can become overwhelming.

Earlier this year during National Volunteer Week I had the privilege of presenting awards at a ceremony organised by FNQ volunteers where a runner-up award was represented to Mrs Margaret Scammell. Margaret has been volunteering her services at Marlin Coast Meals on Wheels for 15 years. She has volunteered in the planning, cooking of meals, administration of run sheets and the delivery of meals as well as tending to the special dietary needs of the clients. Over the years Margaret has also

dedicated herself to other volunteer groups including the Red Cross, University of the Third Age and Probus. I would like to encourage people, especially our retirees who still have so much time to give to the community, to consider volunteering for a group like Meals on Wheels.

Southport Electorate

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (9.41 pm): I rise to speak on a number of events which have taken place in my electorate over the past few months. Firstly, I seek the leave of the House to table a copy of the sensational Southport book published and distributed by local advertising agency Headline Creative.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Sensational Southport—CBD Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia' [[1375](#)].


For the second time Headline Creative have released a book, a Southport-specific marketing piece, to promote the area both interstate and internationally. This is a follow-on to *Southport Towards Twenty 18* and again it has been a great success. For this edition there will also be a Mandarin version to assist in further educating the international community and to complement the growing Chinatown within Southport. The *Sensational Southport* book again has been printed and distributed at no cost to the taxpayer, and not one cent of the proceeds goes to me or the LNP. It is a commercial project run by a local advertising agency.

We had a very successful launch for the book at Parkwood International Golf Course. We raised \$2,000 for the raffle, which will go in support of Family Services Group in Southport. Last month I was also pleased to be able to host my second lunch to raise money for the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence. It is an incredible organisation. I have spoken a number of times about them in this House. Director Di Macleod has always gone above and beyond to ensure the centre has been an amazing support for women in our community. I was honoured to have been able to assist in celebrating the centre's 25 years of service. The day raised more than \$17,000 for the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence, celebrating the great achievements of the centre over the 25 years and acknowledging the hard work put in by the entire team and all the supporting volunteers. Here is hoping they have another great 25 years.

I would also like to thank Luke Altschwager from Parkwood International Golf Course for his ongoing support for the many events run in our electorate. Without him generously donating the venue and his time and the services of his staff, we would not be able to run such successful events for our local charities and community groups. Given how important awareness of domestic violence is in our community, I was heartened by the success of last week's community leader round table for the domestic and family violence prevention strategy on the Gold Coast in gathering a vast array of ideas and contributions from over 40 delegates at that round table. I was glad to be part of this important discussion and have the opportunity to meet with other community leaders to build strong working relationships and work on solutions to reduce domestic violence as much as possible.

Finally, I would like to mention the White Balloon Day lunch that we hosted at Avial Indian restaurant in Southport. I want to acknowledge the great work of many in the local business community to support that occasion when, on the day, we raised over \$6,000 in support of White Balloon Day and their ongoing work educating kids with the Ditto program in many of our schools across the state. I would like to thank all the businesses and guests who attended and supported these various events.

Holland Park State School, P&C

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.44 pm): Leading any organisation is challenging. Leaders must articulate a vision, assess and manage their resources, motivate and praise their human resources, communicate with stakeholders, develop a strategic plan that allows for stakeholder input, be sensitive to the needs of their members and they must be able to deal with the unexpected. This long list is challenging at the best of times but is even more challenging when the organisation is made up of time-poor parents, has an executive that is re-elected annually, has a budget that starts from zero every year and has an entire school community who are deeply concerned about their children's education and are willing to provide feedback every step of the way. I am, of course, describing the challenges of running a school P&C or P&F association.

In my electorate I have an incredibly diverse range of schools and all have active and effective P&Cs and P&Fs. Each group is different but each group is right for its school community. In my opinion, the parents' committees are a fundamental building block of the success of not just the school, but the entire community.


I am pleased to advise the House that the Holland Park State School has been named P&C of the Year in the recent P&C Queensland Awards, led ably by the executive team of Kumar Thaivarayan, Lisa O'Donnell, Patricia Gibbons, Stephanie Sullivan and Rhian Persal. This team is supported by a large membership base. They run an organisation that is professional, driven by a strategic plan and is achieving great things in their school community and the broader community.

I was recently asked to speak at the school's Annual Excellence Expo. While I think it is great that the school takes one night a year to celebrate and recognise excellence, I noted in my dealings with the school, that every day is devoted to excellence. The P&C is a fundamentally important part of this culture of excellence. Over the last year the P&C has assisted the school to build a Japanese garden, buy a new piano, fit the hall with data projectors, install new soccer goalposts and work towards upgrading the pool grandstands, outdoor theatre and courts.

The P&C drives the school community to link with the broader community, running events such as the Easter community event, which is open to the entire community. They have also partnered with several local sporting organisations such as the Holland Park Cricket Club to make their facilities available to the entire community. When I recently organised a P&C networking event at the Coorparoo Secondary College, I asked Kumar Thaivarayan to speak to the group about strategic planning. He used his skills as an organisational change manager. Not only did he provide advice, but he listened and learned from all present.

I am proud of and inspired by all the volunteers who work hard in our P&C and P&F committees, but the Holland Park P&C has been recognised as being outstanding in the state and it is something that is truly deserved. I want to acknowledge and thank the members of that P&C for the great work they do in our community.

Broadwater Electorate


 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (9.47 pm): I want to take the opportunity tonight to acknowledge a couple of the recent events that we have seen in the great electorate of Broadwater. On 22 September I had the great pleasure of joining my good friend and council colleague Cameron Caldwell from division 3 at the Paradise Point Meals on Wheels AGM. I want to take the opportunity tonight to acknowledge president Jim, who is continuing in the role, his fantastic committee, the administrator Cheryl who unfortunately is leaving us in a couple of months and of course all of the amazing volunteers. All of us in this House know the fantastic work that Meals on Wheels do across our community, whether or not we live on the Gold Coast, in Brisbane or other parts of Queensland. I have certainly welcomed the opportunity to go and visit people in my community and take meals to them because it is a great opportunity to say hello to some people who quite often, as I am sure we would all acknowledge, do not get the opportunity to see a lot of people. It is the volunteers who do an amazing job.

It was with that in mind that I took the opportunity at Tastes of Paradise on Saturday night, which is a fantastic event that is sponsored and organised by council in Paradise Point, a fantastic suburb in my great electorate of Broadwater.

On Saturday night I took the opportunity to take some fantastic community volunteers as my guests as we got to celebrate a big street party with fireworks and entertainment. Families enjoyed the park and restaurants had tables that spilled out onto the street. I want to acknowledge and thank Denis and Lorraine O'Connell. Of course Denis O'Connell is well-known to people on the Gold Coast as the former mayor. I took Pat and Barb Fairon—Pat is the president of the Runaway Bay RSL sub branch—and Garry and Anne Krischock, who are both involved with the Runaway Islands Neighbourhood Watch group; Len and Ros Thomson—Len is the president of the Labrador Men's Shed—and Brendan and Bernadette Boyle. Brendan is the recently elected president of the Paradise Point Progress Association. It is important that we take the opportunity to recognise tireless community volunteers. I would also like to thank Adrian and his team at Mano's Italian Restaurant for the fantastic night that they put on.

With the time that I have remaining I would also like to acknowledge and pay tribute to Clay McCann, the deputy principal of Labrador State School, who recently worked with me to ensure that we were able to recognise White Balloon Day. This is something that I have done since 2012 with the year 4 students. Each year we put more than 100 balloons out on the school boundary fences, Ditto the Bravehearts mascot comes along, and it is an opportunity for us to sit down and talk with the year 4 students about what is and is not appropriate and the message of Bravehearts. Using the school fence on a main road is an opportunity for us to spread the message to the broader community about the fantastic work that Bravehearts do and to raise awareness of this issue in the community.

Vietnam Veterans' Day


 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (9.50 pm): I rise tonight to bring to the attention of the House the recent events in my electorate to commemorate Vietnam Veterans Day in August this year. Originally it was a day to commemorate the Battle of Long Tan in 1966, but it has since been adopted by all veterans. I have been reading up on the history of Long Tan, and I have learned that the Battle of Long Tan was the largest single unit battle fought in Vietnam by Australian troops. It began on the afternoon of 18 August and went right through the night until the morning of the 19th. The Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army were aware that the Australians were there to secure the province and they decided they would take them on. This was the fate that befell Delta company—6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment—who were on patrol that particular day. The enemy lay in wait for them; it was a huge ambush in a rubber plantation called Long Tan. The Australians had to hold off thousands of enemy troops for the duration of that battle. Eighteen Australian troops were killed and up to a thousand of the enemy.

In acknowledging Vietnam Veterans' Day communities throughout Australia remember the sacrifices made by our young men and women in a conflict that spanned a 10-year period. The commemorations in Kallangur started with a rededication of Anzac Park in Petrie, continuing the work of Moreton Bay Regional councillor Dave Dwyer, who has been a huge voice in my area with his passion to make Anzac Avenue a tribute to those who have served in the military. Another event was a Vietnam veterans service at Vietnam Veterans' Place in Kallangur. Attended by many Vietnam veterans, it was a particularly moving service with some great stories from some of those who had served in that conflict.

The final service was the most remarkable. I was invited to our local veterans motorcycle club The Patriots for the most stirring service of all. I rode out there on my motorbike and was welcomed as the new local member. We heard from some ex-servicemen with experience in many conflicts and although I am not usually an emotional person, the respect I feel for those who have served always moves me. My own military experience consisted of a brief period in the reserves in RAEME 104 Field Workshop, and I participated in one military exercise, Kangaroo 89, in the Northern Territory. I will always admire those who have dedicated a large part of their lives to serve.

I was invited to this event by the master of ceremonies and event coordinator and now proud member of the club, my predecessor Trevor Ruthenberg. He took the air cadet troops that he is training along for the service, and the youth and pride they added to the ceremony helped to make it the most remarkable and memorable of all.

North Queensland Cowboys

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.53 pm): Tonight I would like to pay tribute to the North Queensland Cowboys for winning their first NRL premiership. This is truly a magnificent achievement for the club and indeed the north in general. As I said in a letter to Peter Parr, general manager of the football department just two days before the grand final, 'Nothing unites the people of the north like the Cowboys.' From the cane fields to the coalfields and from Capricorn to the cape, in their own special way our Cowboys bring people together—bushies, townies, Indigenous, you name it.

Without doubt the Cowboys are now entrenched as the pride of the north after their amazing 17-16 point victory over the Broncos on 4 October. It was a fairytale result that captured the imagination of the sporting public, and I congratulate everyone involved: chairman Laurence Lancini and his board; CEO Greg Tonner and his staff; head coach Paul Green and his coaching staff; the support staff; and last but not least the Cowboys players themselves who were superbly led by co-captains Johnathan Thurston and Matthew Scott.


As a proud fifth-generation North Queenslander I was thrilled to be at ANZ Stadium for our date with destiny. It was my 16th grand final in a row—as it turned out, 'sweet 16'—and the best ever. It was certainly the best since 1989, when the premiership trophy left Sydney for the first time. Tonight I would like to acknowledge some of the great people who made the Cowboys possible, starting with Kerry Boustead, a homegrown league legend who came back from the 'big smoke' to become the Pied Piper with the support of XXXX. It was largely thanks to people like the late Ron McLean and Doug Kingston from News Limited, the latter my old boss at the *Townsville Bulletin*, who persuaded Bowie to come back and work alongside the likes of John Lyons and junior league stalwart Barry Buchanan.

There are many others who also deserve recognition—people such as Ben Wall, then chairman of the QRL's Northern Division; John Moore from Cairns; Bill Duguid from Mackay; Joe Goicoechea; Mike Carney; Laurence Lancini; Ross Keir; the late Ken Grinham; and Charters Towers pharmacist Michael Collins. I apologise to those whose names I have missed out. I also want to recognise inaugural coach Grant Bell and first-ever captain Laurie Spina.

I fondly remember the night that the dream was ignited back in 1989 when the Broncos pummelled Parramatta at the Townsville Sports Reserve. I was also there in 1992 as a young TV reporter for WIN News when a beaming Bowie flew back into Townsville after securing the license to enter an expanded Winfield Cup. I was also there in 1995, driving 1,500 kilometres to watch the very first game. That same year I had the great privilege of calling their first home games on WIN TV, including the first win at home against Western Suburbs and before that, the very first win on the road against the Steelers in Wollongong. I was also there for the first finals appearance, the first win against the Broncos, the first grand final, and from 2009-2011 I called the home games on the local radio station.

Put simply, I love the Cowboys and I know I am not alone. Tonight my message to the state Labor government is 'aim up'. Ten years ago they pledged \$160 million to fund a new stadium on the Gold Coast. We have been allocated \$100 million in the north, and North Queensland deserves a whole lot better!

Nudgee Electorate, Schools

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (9.56 pm): Mr Speaker, second only to my pride in the achievements of my own children is my pride in the extraordinary achievements of students in schools across my electorate. Recently I had the pleasure of attending the Northgate State School Arts Extravaganza. Every classroom came alive with a display of visual arts from an 'under the sea' theme in prep classrooms to decorative lanterns and carnival masks in the upper primary. The hall also came alive with choir, band and dance performances.

One of the showcased artists was year 6 student Akari. Akari is a talented pianist and at such a young age has already been invited to play for the Governor of Queensland and audition for world-renowned international concert pianist and teacher Lev Vlassenko. While at the gala it was also lovely to hear of student Emdadul, who came to Australia three years ago from Bangladesh. Emdadul played his first-ever game of AFL this year for the mighty Mayne Tigers in the under-12 division and was one of only four children from 250 players shortlisted for the best and fairest player. I am told that his growth from a relatively quiet student to one who has grown in confidence has been nothing short of extraordinary.


While on the arts, earlier this year I also had the pleasure of attending the Creative Generations State Schools Onstage, where local Virginia State School students Poppy and Mali were featured solo vocalists and Eddie a drum line player. The quality and maturity of their performances was nothing short of impressive, and I look forward to seeing the national broadcast on Network Ten on 12 December at 2.30 pm. I have no doubt that these students have a bright future ahead.

Moving from the arts to academia, Wavell State High School student Gizelle Pickering has recently returned from three weeks in Russia as part of the Australian Geography Olympiad team competing internationally. Gizelle performed admirably and achieved a bronze award. Wavell also excelled in the recent Middle School Literacy Olympics, where 80 teams of students from 24 state primary and secondary schools competed in English, SOSE and the arts. Wavell students won two out of four of the year-level categories.

A particular highlight for me was the lovely time I spent with prep students at Zillmere and Northgate state schools recently to celebrate Book Week. A mother of two boys under five myself, I summoned all of my bedtime reading experience and gave the prep students my best rendition of *Pig the Pug* and *Noni the Pony*, both Book of the Year shortlist books. To see the prep students' eyes light up at the joy of books and reading was such a thrill.

Mr Speaker, I could never mention all of the schools or do justice to all of the wonderful students across my electorate in the three minutes allotted to me, but I would like to take this opportunity to also acknowledge and thank the education minister Kate Jones, who visited my electorate last week to meet my wonderful school principals and hear firsthand the great work that is happening in our local state schools. Thank you, Minister, for your commitment to providing Queensland children with the best education system in the country, and thank you to the principals, teachers, parents and volunteers who make our schools the safe and quality learning environments they are.

Domestic and Family Violence

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (9.59 pm): I rise to speak about something very disturbing that has been brought to my attention relating to the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I bring it to the House because those who brought it to my attention advise me that the Treasurer is aware of the issue but apparently nothing is being done.

The information is based on a survey of employees. Some 251 people, or 88 per cent of employees, completed the survey. Some 164 respondents were women. The 2015 employee opinion survey statistics on harassment and bullying are very worrying. I will outline the responses to questions in relation to harassment and bullying. In response to the statement 'Bullying is not tolerated in my workplace', 67 per cent agreed. That means that 33 per cent obviously do not agree with it because they are seeing things happening around the place. In response to the statement 'Witnessed bullying/harassment in the last 12 months', 58 per cent overall said that, no, they had not witnessed it. That means that 42 per cent had. Worryingly, in the community participation area 47 per cent said that they had not witnessed bullying. That means that 53 per cent had witnessed it. In response to the statement 'Experienced harassment/bullying in the last 12 months'—


A government member interjected.

Mr CRANDON: You can laugh about this, but this is about domestic violence so just button your lip. In response to the statement 'Experienced harassment/bullying in the last 12 months', 74 per cent said they had not. Twenty-six per cent had. And so it goes on. It is very, very concerning.

This is an issue that is magnified by what I was further advised. I understand that DATSIP is in the process of gaining white ribbon workplace accreditation. What does white ribbon workplace accreditation mean? It means that, among other things, all women have a right to be safe at work from domestic, family and workplace violence. Before any workplace can become a white ribbon accredited workplace it must first meet a number of criteria. For example, it must formally recognise and commit to addressing men's violence against women, whether inside or outside of DATSIP. It must embed and commit to addressing men's violence against women through their leadership, team training, policies and procedures. In becoming a white ribbon accredited workplace they must also, among other things, directly address and mitigate the risk associated with bullying. My informants tell me that women in DATSIP remain the most vulnerable group and subject to workplace bullying.

The evidence is there. I ask the Treasurer to please urgently address these issues because at the end of the day bullying in the workplace also travels across to bullying in the home. It is all about domestic violence. We have to cut it out.

Capricorn Coast Running Festival

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (10.02 pm): The sun was shining, there was a cool south-easterly breeze across Keppel Bay, hundreds of excited people and the DJ had the bass pumping at the 5th annual Capricorn Coast Running Festival at the Yeppoon foreshore on Sunday, 4 October. The CQPhysio Group Capricorn Coast Running Festival is one of Central Queensland's most professional and exciting road-running events, with over 940 entrants, including me, taking up the challenge.

Featuring a spectacular beachside location, a flat, fast and scenic course, five great events and all the trimmings of a big-city event, the annual Capricorn Coast Running Festival is a must for all runners and walkers. DJ Blake Hamlyn hit the decks and created an electric running festival atmosphere right on the doorstep of the southern Great Barrier Reef.

The course record in the Rees R & Sydney Jones Half Marathon was smashed by Rio Olympic hopeful Clare Geraghty. Clare raced as part of her preparation for the Melbourne Half Marathon in October, the New York Marathon in November and aims to qualify for the Olympics in Rio next year. Geraghty smashed the female course record by over 10 minutes, while Blair Drabble took out the men's half marathon. It was definitely a treat for all of the local aspiring young runners to see Clare in action.

The Hillcrest Rockhampton 10-kilometre event was dominated by local high school students Kevin Toman and Kirsten Humphreys, with Humphreys shaving just over 15 seconds off the women's course record. As expected, CCRF golden girl Victoria Gillies took out back-to-back five-kilometre titles, and 2014 10-kilometre podium finisher Graham Leeson went one better over the shorter distance, taking out the men's five-kilometre title.

The Stockland Rockhampton Mile Bolt course record was also smashed by Brisbane runner Dan Symonds and, as if she could get any better, Clare Geraghty backed up her half marathon win with a women's Mile Bolt course record.

I had the honour of sounding the starting air horn using DJ Blake's iPhone for the Stockland Rockhampton Kids Dash, and I participated in the Highpoint Access & Rescue five-kilometre run with a close-to-personal-best time. It was great to see so many people of all ages and abilities as well as mums and dads with prams, all running or walking on a Sunday morning in a bid to challenge

themselves and their fitness. The festival is also a great contributor to local tourism. The strong local participation in the festival is exemplary of the commitment to health and wellbeing made by many locals on the Capricorn Coast.

Many thanks go to major sponsors CQPhysio and Tourism and Events Queensland for making the fifth anniversary year of the Capricorn Coast Running Festival the biggest and best yet. I congratulate organisers Jason Paull, Sean Peckover and all of their support team. Their tireless work ensures the festival runs smoothly every year and is an experience to rival any sporting event run out of Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.05 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams