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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 1 September 2016

Subject	Page
SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS	3281
Questions on Notice	3281
Committee Proceedings	3281
PETITIONS	3281
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	3282
Rio Olympic Games, Welcome-Home Parade	3282
New Industries.....	3282
Natural Disasters, Recovery Assistance	3283
State Finances.....	3284
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Courier-Mail</i> online, dated 31 August 2016, titled 'Queensland Business Monthly: Our two-speed economy'	3284
Smoke-Free Zones	3285
State Schools, Disability Services	3285
North Stradbroke Island, Economic Transition Strategy.....	3286
National Skills Week	3286
Retail Sector	3287
Regional Queensland, Innovation.....	3288
Biofuels.....	3288
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Department of Energy and Water Supply: Biofuels exemption guide, August 2016. ...	3289
Child Protection Week	3289
MOTION	3290
Order of Business	3290
LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE	3290
Report	3290
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 38—Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016.	3290

Table of Contents – Thursday, 1 September 2016

NOTICE OF MOTION	3290
Organised Crime	3290
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3290
Child Protection	3290
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Nonconforming petition regarding a law for the investigation and reporting of suspected child abuse.	3290
Liberal National Party, State Convention	3291
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance	3291
M1 Motorway	3292
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media release, dated 11 December 2014, by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Hon. Warren Truss, titled '2014: Building the infrastructure Australia needs'	3292
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Map, titled 'National Land Transport Network Road Corridors—Queensland'	3292
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance	3293
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 16 August 2016, from the Chair, Logan: City of Choice Leadership Team, Ms Jude Munro AO, to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Hon. Mick de Brenni.	3293
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	3294
Logan Renewal Initiative	3294
Social Housing	3294
Public Sector Investment	3295
Logan Renewal Initiative	3296
Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility	3296
Logan Renewal Initiative	3297
Budget	3297
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, undated, from the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan MP, to residents regarding the Queensland 2016-17 state budget.	3297
Logan Renewal Initiative	3298
Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry	3299
Port of Townsville, Pilot Vessels	3299
Hot DesQ	3300
Jobs	3301
Women on Boards	3301
Cairns, Public Transport	3302
Mining Industry	3303
Gold Coast Turf Club	3303
Exports	3304
Road Trains	3304
Ecotourism	3305
Lamington National Park, Road Access	3305
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT	3306
Rio Olympic Games, Welcome-Home Parade	3306
EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	3306
Second Reading	3306
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3320
<i>Shadows of Shoah</i> Exhibition	3320
Koalas	3321
Murri Court	3321
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance	3322
Trade and Investment	3323
Pelorus Island	3323
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Hinchinbrook Shire Council: Pelorus Island Goat Control Project—Project Plan and Communications Strategy 2016'	3324
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland Government: Decision of Animal Ethics Committee, dated 30 May 2016, relating to the introduction of dingoes on Pelorus Island.	3324
Capalaba Electorate, TAFE	3324
Surfside Buslines	3325
Indigenous Communities, Health Services	3325
Firefighters	3326
MINISTERIAL PAPER	3326
Water Legislation Amendment Bill	3326
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 19—Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response.	3326
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BILL	3327
Message from Governor	3327
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 1 September 2016, from Her Excellency the Acting Governor recommending the Industrial Relations Bill 2016.	3327
Introduction	3327
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Industrial Relations Bill 2016, Volume 1 (Chapters 1 to 11) and Volume 2 (Chapters 12 to Schedule 6)	3327
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Industrial Relations Bill 2016, explanatory notes.	3327
First Reading	3329
Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee	3329
Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date	3330

Table of Contents – Thursday, 1 September 2016

MOTION	3330
Order of Business	3330
EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	3330
Second Reading	3330
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 14— Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, government response.....	3339
Consideration in Detail	3342
Clauses 1 to 114, as read, agreed to.	3342
Clause 115—.....	3342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Kate Jones's amendments.	3342
Clause 115, as amended, agreed to.	3342
Clauses 116 to 132, as read, agreed to.	3342
Clause 133—.....	3342
Clause 133, as amended, agreed to.	3342
Clauses 134 to 140, as read, agreed to.	3342
Third Reading	3342
Long Title	3342
MOTION	3343
Organised Crime	3343
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of newspaper articles, various dates, regarding outlaw motorcycle gangs.	3345
Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.	3349
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3349
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT	3349
Further Answer to Question; Port of Townsville, Pilot Vessels	3349
SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT	3350
ADJOURNMENT	3350
Oakey	3350
MacGregor State School	3351
Seniors Week	3351
Mackay Electorate	3352
LGBTIQ Community	3352
William (Jim) Sorensen Safety House	3353
Gaven Electorate, Road Safety	3353
Leyburn Sprints	3354
Stradbroke Flyer; Day, Mr G	3354
Stafford Electorate, Sporting Clubs	3355
ATTENDANCE	3356

THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.



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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Questions on Notice



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, one important mechanism to assist the Legislative Assembly in ensuring ministerial responsibility is questions on notice. Like my predecessors, as Speaker I have made an effort, through my directions to table officers, to ensure that questions on notice asked by members comply with standing orders. Table officers acting on my authority routinely review questions to ensure compliance and bring any apparent noncompliance to my attention.

Answers to questions on notice, both in terms of timeliness and content, are the responsibility of each minister. While the mechanics of such a process are often delegated, the responsibility for ensuring compliance with the standing orders cannot be delegated.

Answers to questions are also routinely reviewed to ensure compliance with standing order 118 and other standing orders and practice and procedure. Answers must be relevant to the question. Answers should not simply debate the subject matter of the question. Answers should also comply with the general rules of debate.

Beyond ensuring procedural compliance, I do not otherwise assess the quality of answers. As has been noted by previous Speakers, complaints about answers can arise because questions are not answered in the way the questioner desires. It may also be that a minister, or those who draft a response on the minister's behalf, comprehends the question differently from the way the questioner intended or misunderstands the member's question. Sometimes ministers are not as comprehensive in their answers as they could be. Often the best remedy is to ask a more specific question.

Committee Proceedings



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have noticed a recent increase in the number of allegations regarding matters of privilege relating to portfolio committee proceedings. I wish to remind all members that, whilst portfolio committee proceedings are generally conducted in public, the proceedings of such committees which are not open to the public and which are not authorised by a committee to be published remain strictly confidential to the committee as detailed in standing order 211(1).

Standing order 211(2) allows for the disclosure of proceedings not authorised to be published to the world at large to all other members of parliament and to the Clerk or other officers of the House in the course of their duties. Accordingly, members who are not a member of a particular portfolio committee may be privy to the confidential deliberations of a committee by virtue of conversations with members on that committee or via the Comdocs secure web portal for members and staff of committees.

Members should note that paragraph (4) of standing order 211 makes it very clear that members should not refer to proceedings of a committee in the House unless the relevant committee has reported those proceedings to the House or otherwise published those proceedings to the world at large. I urge all members to familiarise themselves with the requirements of standing order 211 and to avoid any unauthorised disclosure of confidential committee proceedings either in or out of the Legislative Assembly.

PETITIONS

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

Provocation, Defence

Hon. Trad, from 433 petitioners, requesting the House to remove the potential for provocation to be used in defence of an individual who has committed an act of murder, by enshrining in legislation that an alleged unwanted homosexual advance cannot be used as an application of the provocation defence [\[1421\]](#).

Palm Beach, Light Rail

Mrs Stuckey, from 530 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure thorough community consultation regarding the route proposal for light rail in Palm Beach with residents who live in this location [\[1422\]](#).

Curra State Forest

Mr Perrett, from 732 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately excise Corella SF700 from the Curra State Forest, or issue a lease to the local council for a sporting shooters range complex [\[1423\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk—

Greyhound Racing Industry

From 154 petitioners, requesting the House to recognise the strong animal welfare and integrity measures that are now in place in the Queensland racing greyhound industry; the determination to maintain high standards against those caught live baiting; and to continue working with registered owners, trainers, breeders and greyhound racing clubs to ensure a bright future for the industry in this state [\[1424\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Rio Olympic Games, Welcome-Home Parade

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): Queenslanders will be given the opportunity to cheer on the returning Olympic athletes at Australia's only public welcome-home parade tomorrow in Brisbane. Co-hosted by the Queensland government and Brisbane City Council, the parade will commence at 12 noon through the Queen Street Mall. I know that everyone in this House will join with me to congratulate our inspiring returning Olympians, and what better place to celebrate than right here in Queensland.

Queenslanders have truly done us proud on sport's biggest stage: the Campbell sisters and Brittany Elmslie; Emma McKeon, Ryan Tyack and Taylor Worth; Dane Bird-Smith and of course Anna Meares. The women's Sevens Rugby team won the first ever women's Rugby Sevens gold medal, with around half of the team hailing from Queensland. Importantly, Queenslanders accounted for a large percentage of Australia's overall medal count and are truly deserving of a public welcome home parade.

I am so proud of our Queenslanders' efforts, and I encourage the public to come out and welcome them back home to the best state. It is the perfect way to encourage our athletes to keep the dream alive for the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. I encourage those who can to sport their best green and gold colours and to show their support to our returning athletes. They are our greatest role models. The Brisbane parade through the Queen Street Mall will culminate in a public meet and greet in King George Square, where fans will be able to meet their Queensland Olympic heroes and congratulate them. Let's show them a warm Queensland welcome!

New Industries

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.38 am): I want Queensland to be the home of new industries because new industries means new jobs for the future. A key focus of my government has been working with researchers, business and industry to identify those industries that can tap into Queensland's potential.

As this House would know, a brand new biofutures industry is a key passion of mine because of the jobs and economic opportunities it will bring to our state. My innovation minister has been working tirelessly to push our Advance Queensland agenda—our broad, economy-wide policy platform that is designed to foster Queensland's research base and promote the development of new ideas, products and services. Ultimately the goal is to diversify Queensland's economy. If we can do that, Queenslanders will be able to gain employment in our traditional sectors like resources, tourism and agriculture, while having newer industries that provide new job opportunities right across our state.

I know that Queensland can be the home of new industries and new jobs. Why? Because we have done it before. It was a Labor government that ushered in the world-first LNG industry. This was a massive undertaking. It took the vision to work with the private sector to identify the opportunity. It took the patience and determination to develop the new technology. It took widespread consultation to develop the framework and put in place the strictest environmental controls in the world.

Today we can say that Queensland gas is powering the development of Asia. So far we have seen billions of dollars in exports shipped from Gladstone to ports in Korea, China and Japan. It is these exports that help deliver the nation-leading economic growth forecasts for Queensland. That demand means jobs are generated here and royalties and taxes are delivered to the Queensland and Australian governments. These taxes are ploughed back into things our communities need such as schools, roads, hospitals, police, new paramedics and new nurses. The money is used to fund services and infrastructure across Queensland, from Cairns to Coolangatta. That is because all of Queensland owns that resource so all of Queensland should benefit.

It is clear that only Queensland has the capacity and commitment to develop new industries. In the last 24 hours I have noted that the Victorian government will seek a permanent ban on onshore gas exploration. I have a lot of respect for Premier Andrews, but I do not agree with him in this instance. Where science is unproven and the risk is too great, of course action needs to be taken. We have done so when it comes to underground coal gasification. I put on the record that the LNG industry in Queensland has my government's support and, I believe, the bipartisan support of the LNP. Queensland is an export economy. We look out to the world to do business.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, resume your seats, and if you want to have a private conversation, take it outside.

Natural Disasters, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.41 am): I would like to update the House on the value for money that is currently being delivered by local governments as they recover from natural disasters. In 2011 the Queensland Reconstruction Authority developed the value for money day labour pricing model in recognition of significant cost savings that could be realised by using day labour plant and equipment on reconstruction works where it provided the best value for money. On the basis of this evidence, the federal government initially approved Queensland councils to trial the use of day labour for 2011 to 2013 events. This allowed councils to seek NDRRA funding for the use of their own workforce for reconstruction works and support local jobs.

Since this initial approval I have campaigned for an extension to this trial beyond 2013 which ultimately resulted in a further extension to 2017. This is a sensible but overdue decision because it is more cost effective for Queensland communities and will help deliver recovery works faster to disaster affected communities. Approximately \$245 million in cost savings have been identified across 62 local government areas where they have used their own day labour and plant and equipment between 2011 and 2013. Unfortunately, the federal coalition has so far refused to take the same common-sense approach to the use of council plant and equipment for recovery works. The QRA's model shows that the use of council owned plant and equipment costs almost 25 per cent less than external contractor plant costs and is often the only option available to the more remote councils.

Worse, the decision by the federal government to exclude plant and equipment costs from NDRRA funded works was applied retrospectively and means that more than 30 disaster affected Queensland communities are exposed unfairly to unexpected costs. The decision disadvantages local governments already delivering works according to the guidelines in place at the time their projects commenced. Cost estimates indicate that affected local governments could be out of pocket by more than \$10 million as a result of the Commonwealth suddenly changing the rules. Some of the hardest hit councils include Winton in the state seat of Mount Isa, Barcaldine in the state seat of Gregory and Barcoo in the state seat of Warrego. These councils are already doing it tough dealing with drought and have a comparatively low rates base to fund this unplanned expenditure.

Despite two years of advocacy from the Palaszczuk government, the Commonwealth refuses to acknowledge the strain that this unfair and unjustified decision will place on struggling regional Queensland communities. Even Liberal Party Queensland Senator Ian Macdonald voiced his concern at Senate estimates earlier this year. Regarding the financial strain this has placed on these councils—

Mr Ryan interjected.

Ms TRAD: Absolutely. I take that interjection from the member for Morayfield. They should all be speaking up. Regarding the financial strain this has placed on these councils, Senator Macdonald said—

Many of them are still desperately waiting, keeping their bankers at bay—probably with shotguns—so the bankers do not come and ask them for the money that they have not got ...

I urge Minister Keenan to listen to local mayors, the Queensland government and even some of his own colleagues and authorise reimbursement for the use of plant and equipment under the NDRRA. This is a matter I will continue to raise with the Commonwealth, and I know that mayors and local communities will continue to fight for a fair resolution to this very important issue.

State Finances

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.45 am): I table an article from the *Courier-Mail* titled 'Queensland Business Monthly: Our two-speed economy'.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 31 August 2016, titled 'Queensland Business Monthly: Our two-speed economy' [[1425](#)].

The latest *Courier-Mail*/Galaxy Queensland Index survey shows the statewide number is a reasonably positive net seven figure, indicating that a majority of respondents believe the state is heading in the right direction. It states—

... in the southeast 49 per cent of respondents believe the state is heading in the right direction, while 34 per cent disagree, giving a net positive reading of 15.

However, as I have acknowledged on numerous occasions, the mood is reversed in regional Queensland. David Briggs from Galaxy says—

Overall, it's not a bad result for the Palaszczuk Government, but what the tables are demonstrating is that this really is a tale of two states.

Economist Gene Tunny says that South-East Queensland is being helped by a reasonably strong economy centred on the area, which to some extent is linked to the strong economies in other states. He said—

While things overall are looking better ... there are real challenges in the regions, which are badly affected by the mining downturn and years of drought.

After an extended period where there was a perception in some quarters that the state was in a holding pattern, there is now a growing sense that things are starting to happen again. On the Gold Coast, a combination of strong inbound tourism numbers and spending associated with the 2018 Commonwealth Games is helping boost sentiment and investment. The article states—

In the wider southeast a strong pipeline of construction work, alongside growth in service industry jobs in sectors such as health and education, is providing a boost.

When you add to this, as Gene Tunny notes, some fairly positive announcements from the state government in recent weeks, such as the redevelopment of the old children's hospital site at Herston and the decision to legalise ride-sharing services such as Uber—this represents a significant deregulation move—you get the sort of environment where confidence is boosted. Despite a lengthy federal election campaign, the China slowdown, Brexit and the Trump factor, definitely business confidence has improved in recent months.

The article goes on to say that another great positive is an infrastructure plan which gives industry a clear picture of what the government's priorities are. I, for one, will not ignore the large part of Queensland outside the south-east corner. That is why our 2016-17 budget had such a strong focus on regional Queensland.

On another note, Fitch Ratings has reaffirmed our credit rating. I acknowledge that, while the Queensland government does not contract Fitch as one of our official ratings agencies, they still provide advice to the market about the quality of our credit. Fitch indicated that the outlook is stable. The affirmation largely reflects the following for Queensland: improving direct debt position, sound liquidity, sound debt management and the state's stronger budgetary performance. The stable outlook reflects Fitch's expectations that Queensland, supported by economic growth and its fiscal principles, will maintain an improved budgetary performance.

Fitch estimated that the ratio of general government direct debt to current revenue has improved due to revenue growth and the debt reduction undertaken in 2015-16. Queensland has taken a number of strong measures over the last couple of years to improve its budgetary performance, reduce future general government debt and rebuild its financial position. While we have more work to do across Queensland to drive jobs, increase investment and grow regional economies, it is clear that our government's commitment to strong fiscal management is working.

I can also update the House with the March quarter 2016 Queensland State Accounts. Unlike the previous government, we continue to make this data available for people. They show a resilient Queensland economy that is weathering unsettled global economic conditions and a transition away from a mining boom economy. The gross state product measure in the State Accounts provides a comprehensive measure of economic growth in Queensland. This measure is broader than the quarterly state final demand figures published by the ABS, as GSP includes comprehensive measures of the state's trade sector.

In real trend terms, Queensland GSP rose by 0.5 per cent in the March quarter 2016. In annual terms, compared with the same quarter a year earlier, trend GSP rose 3.1 per cent in the March quarter. Household consumption—the largest component of Queensland's GSP—rose 0.5 per cent in the March quarter, while dwelling investment grew 4.1 per cent. A strong pipeline of housing work yet to be done suggests ongoing strength in Queensland dwelling investment over 2016. Queensland's economic growth in the March quarter reflects gains from the trade sector. Net exports contributed 0.5 percentage points to GSP growth, assisted by the ramp-up in LNG exports.

All of this commentary and statistics point to the Queensland economy recording growth again on the back of two budgets with initiatives to encourage more jobs and build confidence right across the entire state of Queensland.

Smoke-Free Zones

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): The government's comprehensive new laws expanding smoke-free zones in Queensland come into effect today and take us one step closer to a smoke-free Queensland. These laws are a breath of fresh air for Queensland and they are the toughest antismoking laws in the country. From today, smoking will be banned near all public transport waiting points, including queues at taxi ranks, bus stops, ferry terminals, train and light rail stations. We have also extended smoking bans to early childhood education and care centres, including a five-metre buffer beyond their boundary, private residential aged-care facilities, all pedestrian malls, public swimming pool facilities, skate parks and near viewing, officiating and playing areas at sports facilities during under-18 activities.

Smoking is already banned within four metres of all non-residential building entrances, including all government buildings, and from 1 September this will be extended to five metres. We have also empowered local governments to create local nonsmoking laws for areas not covered by state smoking bans. This could include restaurant precincts, boardwalks and public parks. These new restrictions strengthen existing measures to reduce second-hand smoke exposure, support those who want to quit the habit and discourage others from endangering their health by taking up smoking. As Minister for Health, I am proud that we are leading Australia in laws to restrict tobacco product display in retail outlets, reduce public areas where smokers can light up or use e-cigarettes and protect others from second-hand smoke. I also want to thank the Australian Medical Association Queensland, the Cancer Council Queensland, the Heart Foundation and other community groups and the people of Queensland for their support of these new laws.

More than 3,700 Queenslanders die each year as a result of smoking. That is over 10 each day. While 88 per cent of Queenslanders are nonsmokers, exposure to second-hand smoke, which is particularly harmful for children, continues to present concerns. Smoking is a burden for Queensland. Every year in Queensland the cost is estimated to be \$6.3 billion in lost productivity, health costs and premature death—all attributable to smoking. That is why our government will do all it can to support people who want to stop smoking and to protect the rest of us who choose not to smoke. As of today, Queenslanders will be able to breathe easier in even more smoke-free places across the great state of Queensland.

State Schools, Disability Services

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (9.51 am): We are focused on providing the best education possible for students with a disability. We know we can do better and we will do better. We want to ensure there is a standard of excellence and confidence in our policies and processes when it comes to education for all students with a disability involved in Queensland state schools. That is why I have commissioned a wideranging, independent review of Queensland's education policy for students with a disability. Deloitte Access Economics has been appointed to lead this review following an open tender process.

From tomorrow we are calling on the community to provide its input into the review through our online survey. I am also writing to every principal in every state school to encourage them to take this opportunity to have their say and provide their valued input. Also, all heads of special education services will be invited to complete the survey. The findings will help us ensure that our policies and practices relating to disability are world class and that we are offering the highest quality education to all students with a disability currently enrolled in Queensland state schools.

The review will take an honest look at what we are doing well and areas in which the department can better support teachers who have responsibility for teaching students with a disability. Importantly, the review will engage the views of students with a disability, their families and other crucial members of school communities, particularly principals, teachers, teacher aides and allied health professionals. All of these voices will contribute to actions that ensure we provide education on the same basis for all children in Queensland. I look forward to considering the recommendations of this review so that we can secure the best education and the best quality of life for our young Queenslanders with disability.

North Stradbroke Island, Economic Transition Strategy

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.53 am): I am sure all members would agree that North Stradbroke Island's environmental and cultural values deserve to be protected for future generations. Straddie is also home to a community which deserves to have its lifestyle and prosperity continue. Today I can advise the House that the Palaszczuk government's \$28 million-plus economic transition strategy kicks off now to support these dual outcomes. Our strong economic strategy will guide the community through the transition to a more diverse and sustainable economy when sandmining ends in 2019—an economy built on sustainable tourism, local business and education and training. This strategy will generate more than 150 sustainable jobs.

From tomorrow our island coordinator will be available in Dunwich. I would ask locals to look out for the Department of State Development banner and listen to community radio Bay FM and 4 Triple A for location details later today and tomorrow morning. On Monday the permanent office will open and the coordinator will be at work on the island Monday to Wednesday working with locals, implementing our strategy on the ground where stakeholders have told us they want to see action. Within the next 12 months we will commence work to improve camping amenities, cabins, road access and interpretive and location signage.

Within the next 12 months we will support the Quandamooka cultural festival, progress the first stage of the Minjerribah Cultural Centre and establish an Indigenous business development fund to foster the potential of Indigenous tourism and education. Within the next 12 months we will start master planning for Dunwich to underpin a visitor precinct and ecotourism and resort accommodation for the gateway that visitors enter on Straddie. With my colleague the transport minister we will identify and explore public transport improvements and integration as a priority, because that is what stakeholders have told us that they need. They have also identified the importance of broadband connectivity, and I will be raising this as a priority with the Commonwealth. I am sure my colleague the Minister for Science and Innovation agrees with me that access to fast, reliable internet is fundamental to driving new, sustainable small business opportunities.

Our strategy has 23 initiatives to stimulate sustainable jobs and business opportunities for Straddie and its community. Among the medium to longer term initiatives are a summit to attract private investment, a new Peel Island jetty and improved recreational trails. A committee of key stakeholders and state and local government officers will guide the implementation of the strategy and work with our island coordinator. We will also be consulting with unions, including the Australian Workers' Union. Just imagine Straddie as a world-class ecotourism destination with an environmentally sensitive golf course and a suite of cultural and environmental assets to attract visitors from around the world. We are open for investment on Straddie in future partnerships and ecological sustainable development featuring our 20,000-year-old Indigenous culture drawing local and overseas visitors. To us and to the extra 1.4 million tourists per year coming to Brisbane that magic island of Straddie is an unspoilt wonder just waiting to be discovered. Today is the beginning of a new chapter for North Stradbroke Island.

National Skills Week

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (9.58 am): This week we have been celebrating National Skills Week. National Skills Week, which commenced in 2011, is an annual event promoting Australia's vocational education and training, VET, system. It highlights the many achievements, contributions, career pathway

opportunities and success stories from the VET sector. This year National Skills Week commenced on Monday, 29 August, with the Queensland launch on Wednesday, the 31st. Ms Sandra Gillanders, Hy-Performance Fluid Power's Chief Executive Officer and state winner of the small employer category at the 2015 Queensland Training Awards, spoke at the launch event.

The Queensland manufacturer and supplier of hydraulic and dry products to global mining industries also went on to do Queensland proud by being awarded the 2015 Australian Training Award for the small employer category. This is a great Queensland small business that cites the flexibility of the VET sector as essential for meeting its future business needs. This is just one of many Queensland training success stories that we will hear during the course of National Skills Week that the Queensland government is proud to support in 2016 with the theme 'New world, new vision, your future'.

This year's National Skills Week aims to challenge people to think about how much they know about vocational education and training, the progression opportunities and the rapidly changing job market. Its focus is to raise the status of VET through positive messaging about the skills, career pathways and the value of the sector to the economy. This aligns with the Queensland government's commitment to support Queenslanders to enter the workforce through targeted skills programs, such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work and sponsoring initiatives like National Skills Week.

The people of Queensland need to have faith in the training system. That is why we restored the Queensland Training Ombudsman, which students, employers, families and providers can turn to ensure that the training being delivered in this state is of a high standard and providing positive outcomes. With the Queensland government's \$810.7 million investment in VET for the 2016-17 financial year, National Skills Week presents an opportunity to highlight the positive—all the good things that VET can mean to students, parents, employers and industry.

The VET sector nationwide has an opportunity to reform in a number of areas, such as ongoing funding arrangements, where a new National Partnership on Skills Reform is an urgent priority. As I have stated previously in this House this week, I urge the federal government to reach out to the states and commence a conversation around a new deal or, at the very minimum, a 12-month extension to the national arrangements. If we are to have a nationally consistent set of standards and funding arrangements, then the federal government needs to take some leadership on this issue and propose some ideas that can set the sector up for the coming years. The Palaszczuk government is proud of the training and skills sector in this state, and National Skills Week is a great opportunity for us all to reflect on the great work of our public and private training providers and see the opportunities that training can provide.

Retail Sector

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.01 am): The Palaszczuk government understands that the needs of business are constantly changing and how important the private sector is to job creation. We will always work with business, industry and unions to promote economic development and jobs.

As one of the state's major employers, the retail sector is crucial for generating jobs. That is why we have announced a review of the state's retail trading hours. We want to see more jobs in this sector. We are establishing a reference group to consider how Queensland could maximise an estimated \$200 million annual economic benefit from addressing anomalies in the state's retail trading hours. The reference group will be chaired by QUT's School of Justice, Associate Professor and former Speaker of this House, John Mickel, and report back with recommendations in time for the proposed new Easter Sunday public holiday in 2017.

All major stakeholders will be represented on this reference group: the National Retail Association, CCIQ, the Master Grocers Australia, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, the SDA, the AWU, United Voice and the Queensland Council of Unions. I am pleased to note that Queensland's peak industry body, the CCIQ, supports the review. CCIQ Director of Advocacy, Nick Behrens, said—

CCIQ believes carefully targeted reform can help ease the compliance burden and reduce regulatory inconsistencies, ensuring Queensland's shop trading hours framework continues to support the growth of our state's small business community.

We acknowledge the state government is genuine in its commitment to review the Act, with a view to enabling small business to compete and grow.

The CEO of the National Retail Association, Dominique Lamb, also believes that retail trading hours need to be simplified, saying in a statement released yesterday—

The NRA looks forward to consulting with the government and the Minister on this matter, with the hope of reforming retail trade in Queensland, and giving retailers greater flexibility to better service their customers.

The SDA, representing the majority of Queensland's retail trade workers, also supports the review. All stakeholders acknowledge that the current legislation governing trading hours needs modernisation to meet current community expectations and economic realities. I want to stress that modernisation will not be achieved by favouring major supermarket chains at the expense of small and medium sized retailers. This review will be one that delivers a fair and balanced result for everyone concerned, making sure that those interests are well served for the public who trade with these retailers.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Innovation, member for Kawana, your interjections are disorderly. You are warned under standing order 253A. If you continue, I will take the appropriate action.

Regional Queensland, Innovation

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.04 am): Innovation and entrepreneurship are not unique to big cities. We are seeing incredibly innovative new products and services being developed right across Queensland. Since the launch of Advance Queensland, I have visited 13 regions across the state and met with many hundreds of locals to talk about investing in our future by harnessing innovation to strengthen and diversify the economy and create jobs.

From sensor technology in sugar mills, to sunscreen that mimics the UV protection of the Great Barrier Reef, from apps that reduce waiting times to see the doctor, to research to reduce costs in abattoirs, regional innovators are making their mark both at home and in global markets. People should not feel that they need to move to Brisbane to get the support they need to turn good ideas into commercial success.

To foster innovation right across our state, the Palaszczuk government is providing \$6 million to support the development of regional innovation hubs throughout Queensland and a further \$1.5 million to ensure that they are all networked with each other. These hubs will support regional innovation by connecting local efforts, leveraging key regional strengths and lifting the capability of innovative local firms to create jobs.

To make sure that we get the best out of these hubs, we are asking for the help of regional Queenslanders to design this program. Last week, along with the member for Ipswich, I visited the impressive Fire Station 101 co-working space in the City of Ipswich to launch the regional innovation hubs discussion paper. I would like to congratulate the Ipswich City Council and Mayor Paul Pisasale for having the vision to establish the start-up hub. If Queensland is to be ready for the knowledge economy of the future, it will take all levels of government, regardless of political persuasion, to work together for the common good of future generations.

Each region in our state has its own unique challenges and opportunities and each will require different backing to support the turning of great ideas into commercial outcomes. We will conduct a series of workshops across the state to build a sense of shared purpose around innovation and listen to stakeholders about local needs and how to encourage collaboration to deliver results. For those who cannot attend the workshops, I encourage them to share their views online via the Advance Queensland website.

We want to maximise engagement and participation to ensure the success of the regional innovation hubs that will shape the growth of innovation and entrepreneurship throughout Queensland. Queensland is made for innovation, particularly in our regions. I want to encourage locals to help make the most of this funding and join the innovation movement that is working to build a better future for Queensland.

Biofuels

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.07 am): Queensland biofuels can power our vehicles, diversify our fuel mix and reduce emissions. By supporting the use of biofuels, we have an opportunity to drive growth in our regional areas, create jobs and add value to the state's abundant agricultural resources. An important part of our biofutures agenda is the introduction of a biofuels mandate, which will commence on 1 January 2017. I am pleased to confirm that the Palaszczuk government is actively preparing for the commencement of the mandate to ensure that industry is in the best possible position to transform Queensland into a renewable energy economy.

The mandate requires fuel retailers to sell the required amount of E10—three per cent; in other words, 30 per cent of fuel volume sales—where they own or operate 10 or more sites or have sale volumes at a site above a certain threshold. The act allows this threshold to be adjusted by regulation.

As indicated would happen at the time that the parliament gave unanimous support to the legislation, the Palaszczuk government has now undertaken further analysis on the most appropriate threshold. Today, I can announce that, following very strong industry response to initial reporting requirements, the government will set the threshold at 500,000 litres of petrol sold per site and calendar quarter. This change is expected to significantly reduce the number of small businesses that need to comply with the mandate. Over half of those that no longer need to comply are expected to be businesses outside South-East Queensland.

We are reducing the regulatory burden on independent small businesses while maintaining the overall policy outcome for the biofuels industry. The regulation to give effect to this change is now being drafted and will be in place before the end of the year. I am also pleased to advise the House that we have finalised the exemption guideline for the mandate, and I table a copy.

Tabled paper: Department of Energy and Water Supply: Biofuels exemption guide, August 2016 [[1426](#)].

The guideline neither expands nor restricts the application of the legislation this parliament has put in place. Rather, it provides clarity and certainty for industry by explaining some of the scenarios in which an exemption application might be approved. It also provides guidance around the process and types of information that should support an exemption application. While exemptions are not the first or preferred option, some fuel sellers may have specific circumstances that justify the grant of an exemption from the mandate for a period of time.

I would like to convey my appreciation to the state's fuel industry, including its wholesalers, service station representatives and biofuels producers, for their contribution to both the threshold and the exemptions framework, as well as our Department of Energy and Water Supply staff who are doing a fantastic job. This constructive approach stands us in good stead for the commencement of the mandate. We know that Queensland is driving the nation's biofuels industry. As we move to a renewable energy future for Queensland, the biofuels mandate will provide certainty to ensure that the biofuels industry can invest, innovate and grow and, of course, most importantly, support jobs in our regions.

Child Protection Week

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.10 am): Next week Queenslanders will come together to celebrate Child Protection Week. On Sunday, both City Hall and King George Square will be lit up blue to mark its commencement. This year there is even more reason to celebrate as we mark the 30th anniversary of this important week in Queensland. I would like to thank Act for Kids and the Child Protection Week committee for organising this important week. I would particularly like to thank committee chair Elisabeth Kobierski and Act for Kids ambassador Kay McGrath for their tireless work.

Activities will be held across the state to help raise awareness that child protection is a shared responsibility and we all have a role to play in keeping children safe. Later today I will be joining a number of my parliamentary colleagues at the annual Child Protection Week awards. The ceremony gives us an opportunity to reflect on the excellent work being done in Queensland to strengthen families and keep children safe. People who choose to work in the child protection sector are dedicated to improving the lives of Queensland's most vulnerable children and young people. On that note, I want to pay tribute to my department's hardworking Child Safety staff. As I said at budget time, we already have 166 more front-line and front-line support staff than we did two years ago. By the end of this year my department will have reprioritised an additional 40 front-line and front-line support staff to child safety and family support. In addition, we will soon commence an independent analysis of demand and resource allocation to inform future deployments. This will give us a clear road map to address pressures and reduce Child Safety officer workloads.

It is important to recognise that support for families is not just contained to roles within government. The Palaszczuk government's record investment to support children and families and to prevent domestic and family violence means that hundreds of front-line jobs are being created in the community sector. Since coming to office we have created more than 230 new jobs. Over the next two years we will create another 400 jobs in our Family and Child Connect services, Intensive Family Support services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing services, domestic and family violence prevention and support services and, of course, our neighbourhood centres. This builds on the Community Services Industry Alliance's *Forecasting the future* report from April which predicted more than 20,000 jobs will be created in the community services sector as it grows over the next decade. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government is leading the way by restoring services and investing in jobs that support vulnerable Queenslanders.

MOTION

Order of Business

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That general business notices of motion—House to take note of committee reports—be postponed for this day's sitting.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (10.13 am): I lay upon the table of the House the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee Report No. 38, *Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 38—Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 [[1427](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Organised Crime

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House calls on the government to:

1. protect Queenslanders against the return to Queensland of organised criminal activity of all kinds;
2. guarantee to this House that the effective existing laws in regards to anti-association and 'stop search and detain powers' for police will not be watered down; and
3. ensure that existing clubhouses remain closed and no new clubhouses will be opened.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Child Protection

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.14 am): This morning I am tabling a petition with over 30,000 signatures, one of the largest ever petitions presented to the Queensland parliament. This petition includes the names of 30,000 everyday people who want to see all Queensland children get the care and protection they need and deserve from our community and our child safety system.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding a law for the investigation and reporting of suspected child abuse [[1428](#)].

I would like to give special acknowledgement to Alicia Duvall, who is here in the chamber today, a concerned Caboolture local who, off her own bat, initiated a petition to raise awareness of perceived shortfalls in our child safety systems and gaps in current legislation. Alicia's petitions reads—

No child who is referred by a doctor as having sustained injuries intentionally inflicted or sexual in nature will be sent home until a full investigation is completed.

When such a medical professional or Hospital reports the likelihood of abuse that such a report will be treated in the same manner as a 000 phone call; A LIFE AT RISK, so that these children will be treated as a priority emergency.

Alicia's petition not only raises awareness but also seeks to bring about positive change. Today marks the start of Child Protection Week and later this afternoon the Child Protection Week awards ceremony will be held in the Premier's Hall to recognise those in the sector who dedicate their lives to keeping our youngest and our most vulnerable Queenslanders—our children—safe. Today's ceremony marks the official launch of Queensland Child Protection Week, which runs from 4 to 10 September. This year's theme is 'Protecting Children is Everyone's Business' and, clearly, over 30,000 people have made it their business by signing Alicia's petition.

Child Protection Week is a time to reflect on how we as a community can play our part to protect children right across this state and, in fact, right across this country. To our child safety officers and staff, we say thank you for the tireless work you do day in, day out. To the community and support sector who help damaged and broken families pick up the pieces, to our foster-carers who open their

homes and their hearts, without you the system would not work. I also want to acknowledge the health workers, teachers, nurses and police who all play their part in this important and very challenging environment.

There is nothing more important than the protection of our most vulnerable Queenslanders, our children, and this petition advocates for positive change. That is why when in government the LNP instigated the far-reaching commission of inquiry into child protection of which we accepted all 121 recommendations and plotted out the road map for the future. The inquiry was established to overhaul a system that was clearly failing. The LNP's commitment over five years to implement the commission's recommendations included funding 77 new front-line child safety officers. This allowed us to reform the child protection system and help make Queensland the safest state in Australia to raise children. Protecting children is everyone's business.

Liberal National Party, State Convention

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.17 am): What a meeting of minds it was last weekend at the LNP state conference. The Leader of the Opposition said they made 'mistakes', but the only mistake he admitted to was moving too quickly. What we do know is that those opposite moved quickly to sack 14,000 public servants, the public servants they want to respect in the House today. They had no respect for them in government, particularly when they sacked 5,000 health workers and 1,800 nurses and midwives, putting pressure on those in the system to respond to things like child safety concerns. They moved quickly to waste \$20 million of hard-earned Queensland taxpayers' money on consultants, publicists and advertising for the Strong Choices debacle. They moved so quickly that they did not even bother to read the report on the Barrett centre which said it should not be closed without a replacement.

We saw the member for Clayfield telling the LNP conference, 'Our united party is and always has been the champion of new ideas.' They are so united that the Leader of the Opposition was elected with the overwhelming support of a third of his party room. The LNP is so united that the Leader of the Opposition is the third leader of his party in two years. On the subject of new ideas, I spent some time going through the motion paper. What I did see? I saw a motion from the Young LNP, so important and critical to the future of Queensland, something at the cutting edge, about retaining knights and dames in Australia. All I can say to the Leader of the Opposition is this: ask Sir Tony Abbott how that worked out for him. Malcolm Turnbull has done nothing to change Sir Tony's policy proposals. He is opposed to same-sex marriage and opposed to climate change, but even Malcolm Turnbull knows that knights and dames do not reflect a modern Australia.

What was the motion from the Young LNP? The motion, not of the old fogies in the parliament but of the young fogies in the LNP, states—

That this convention of the LNP affirm its support for the rank of Knight/Dame of the Order of Australia.

You can see them all—Sir Tim, Dame Deb, Lord Jarrod—going around and whipping up the numbers, saying, 'We've got to get our knighthoods. We have to get this motion up.' There is no more exciting time to be an LNP member who wants a knighthood.

We also had the motion calling on the federal LNP to instruct the Commonwealth Treasury to introduce a flat tax. The last person to do that was Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen—bingo! There are the knighthoods again—at the time he was trying to take over Australia. The LNP's view of the future is more of the same from the past.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.20 am): It is so good to hear the minister acknowledging the young people of the LNP. On a more serious note, at a time when the state is crying out for jobs and investment, the number of Queensland jobs has fallen every month for the past six months under this asleep-at-the-wheel Labor government. Since January, we have seen more than 24,000 full-time jobs lost. That is potentially 24,000 Queensland families in turmoil, all because this Labor government has put up the 'closed for business' sign.

There are many examples of this government delaying major projects or simply being unable to deliver. Of course, we have the proposed call-in of West Village. We have the failure to get the Adani mine off the ground. We have the withdrawal of Aquis from the integrated resort development process. We have the Logan Renewal Initiative. When will the inertia of this do-nothing Labor government end?

The proposed \$7 billion ASF integrated resort development on Wave Break Island on the Gold Coast was originally scrapped by Labor. Over 12 months ago, the minister announced that a significantly scaled back ASF project was back on track. However, we have seen absolutely nothing on track, because the minister has done absolutely nothing in the past 12 months. He has not said a word about the project and no progress has been made in relation to it. The minister has not been spending his time kickstarting the secondary approvals for the Adani mine. All we have seen him do is scrap the Galilee Basin strategy. That strategy would have facilitated the future development of the Galilee Basin and seen Queensland's economy grow.

In Queensland we have a bizarre situation where the government is simply intent on stopping all job-creating projects. The projects that they do actively champion are simply doomed for failure. Ever since the Treasurer claimed the Aquis project as one of his new year's resolutions, the proposal has been plagued by uncertainty. Now we have seen the Aquis casino project fall over on his watch. That is another missed opportunity for Queensland and another multibillion dollar loss in investment, meaning the loss of thousands of potential jobs. Labor will not even guarantee a casino licence for Northern Queensland.

This asleep-at-the-wheel Labor government has hung up its 'closed for business' sign. This government is doing nothing.

M1 Motorway

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.24 am): It has been seven weeks since the M1 delegation, consisting of the mayors of Logan city and the Gold Coast, the RACQ, the CCIQ, the Queensland Trucking Association and me as the Minister for Main Roads wrote to the Prime Minister requesting a meeting to talk about the M1, to get it funded, to get the jobs going and to get the traffic flowing. What do we have? Still we have not had the meeting. The Prime Minister and Minister Fletcher were in Queensland for the LNP convention, but they did not want to talk about the M1. They were happy to talk to the LNP political party convention, but they did not want to talk about the M1 and get things going.

However, Minister Fletcher did have time to write an opinion piece that was quite enlightening. The fact that he wrote it before agreeing to a meeting is a sad indictment on priorities. Let us look at the opinion piece, in which Minister Fletcher attempted to verbal me by saying—

According to Mark we have reneged on a policy that the Federal Government will always provide 80:20 funding for country roads.

Never in my life have I called the M1 a 'country road'. It shows that Sydney based Minister Fletcher has no idea what he is talking about if he calls the M1 a 'country road'.

He said that Minister Bailey 'has not been able to point to any document which lays out such a principle'. I have from the federal government's website, and I will table it, a document from no less than Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss dated 11 December 2014, that states—

The Australian government has reintroduced the traditional 80:20 funding split for new road and rail projects on the national network outside metropolitan areas.

I will table that document and draw the attention of the federal minister to it. I will also table again the map from the federal government's own website outlining the National Land Transport Network, which includes the M1.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 11 December 2014, by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Hon. Warren Truss, titled '2014: Building the infrastructure Australia needs' [[1429](#)].

Tabled paper: Map, titled 'National Land Transport Network Road Corridors—Queensland' [[1430](#)].

Federal government documents do exist. They are produced by his own government. He only needs to look at his own website.

All we want is for the M1 to be funded just as it is across the border in New South Wales. In New South Wales the same road gets an 80:20 funding split, but the federal government is offering us only 50 per cent. They are trying to rip off Queensland with a discounted rate. I will not stand for it and this government will not stand for it. Across the border, the stretch of road from Woolgoolga to Ballina is getting \$3 billion at an 80:20 split, but the Gold Coast gets only 50 per cent. It is a disgrace. They should stop ripping off Gold Coast residents and Logan residents, cough up the money and get those projects going on the M1.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.27 am): The minister should reflect on his mate Anthony Albanese's deal in relation to the Bruce Highway, where he offered only 50 per cent. What did we do? We got on and actually built the thing so that now people can drive on it. Instead of finding excuses, he should get on and do the job. However, that is what this do-nothing government is all about: excuses for not doing things, rather than finding ways to go about things.

We heard the member for Woodridge talk about conferences. I remember an ALP conference, and this is going back a couple of years, at which they were debating how the leadership rules would work and the unions. I remember the member for Bundamba standing up and saying, 'Come on, Cam, we know what you're all about! We know what Cam is all about!' The member for Woodridge was sitting next to the member for South Brisbane, not too close to the member for Inala, and he had his eye on the main game. He was ready to rock and roll. I say to the member for Woodridge that we remember our history and it would pay him to remember his history.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! All right, members. One moment. We will just take a breather for a moment.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No. We will just wait a moment.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: It is his time, but we will wait.

Mr NICHOLLS: Let me simply echo the words of the member for Bundamba: Cam, we know what you are on about, mate!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think we have had enough.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take this opportunity to join with the Premier in saying that we will be welcoming and congratulating our Olympians as they return to Brisbane. I look forward to being at the welcome home ceremony and parade tomorrow that is being hosted by the state government and the city council, which is entirely appropriate.

There are more appropriate matters to mention this morning. We have seen in the last week a government under pressure. We have a Treasurer happy to hand out details of government employees to his union mates, but, even more so, happy to see employees who disagree with being given—

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence to those comments and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, the member has taken offence to those comments. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. We have a Treasurer who is prepared to mess with retail trading hours at a whim as part of changes to industrial relations legislation that he has not consulted on. Only a year ago he told the *Courier-Mail* that he has no plans to review or change the way trading hours are determined in Queensland. We have a Treasurer who would not introduce a new tax but introduced a three per cent surcharge.

We have a housing minister who, without consultation with anyone, scrapped the Logan Renewal Initiative. I table a letter from the Logan: City of Choice leadership team chair, Jude Munro, a highly respected bureaucrat who has served mayors of all political persuasions. Her description of this is an atrocious and, as Aunty Betty said, arrogant and dismissive decision by this government—a government that is scrapping jobs and benefits for Queenslanders.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 August 2016, from the Chair, Logan: City of Choice Leadership Team, Ms Jude Munro AO, to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Hon. Mick de Brenni [\[1431\]](#).

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: We will now commence question time. Question time will finish at 11.31 this morning.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Logan Renewal Initiative

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (10.31 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to Jude Munro's letter about the scrapping of the Logan Renewal Initiative. Considering Ms Munro has said, 'To be frank, the feedback from the community housing sector is one of disbelief,' will the Premier now concede the housing minister should have consulted with stakeholders such as the Logan: City of Choice leadership team before scrapping the Logan Renewal Initiative?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. This issue has been canvassed at length in previous sittings. The Minister for Housing has made very clear the decisions he took in relation to ending that contract. My concerns, the government's concerns and the housing minister's concerns were around the lack of consultation that had happened previously in relation to the awarding of that contract and not taking the community with them.

As I have said previously, and I will say again, my government was not going to be exposed to the risk of having a large amount of social housing transferred out of the state housing system—not to mention how the housing tenants would have felt as well. This government firmly supports social housing. We have made it very clear that it is very important for people to have a roof over their heads.

I represent an electorate that has a large amount of social housing. What we did see under the former LNP government was a rush mentality to basically push social housing away from government control and to treat people who live in social housing like third-class citizens.

Mr Pitt: Would not even let them take a holiday.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I will take that interjection. What they wanted to do was to put restrictions on whether or not a person could take a holiday to visit family members, look at putting another person in their home—that is, to share—when that is their family home.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I am listening to the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will always stand up for people in social housing in this state. I understand it probably more than many other people having represented my electorate for coming up to 10 years. A large number of my constituents live in social housing. Let me make this point. The distress that the former government caused for people living in social housing was absolutely disgraceful and shameful.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I think you have answered the question.

Social Housing

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. I refer to Jude Munro's letter which describes Logan's existing housing stock as 'concentrated in just 10 of Logan's 68 suburbs, rundown ... and do not meet the needs of local tenants'. Why is the minister so determined to leave Logan's social housing tenants in aged, rundown and unsuitable homes?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. As I indicated in response to several questions and in relation to several statements in this place, this government is committed to delivering safe, secure and affordable housing for the most vulnerable Queenslanders not only in Logan but across the entire state of Queensland.

As I indicated, we have already met with a series of developers. Next week we will meet with maintenance contractors, whom we have had a long-term arrangement with and whom we work with to deliver \$10 million a year to upgrade and maintain those homes and improve standards. We will meet with them and then we will take a precinct by precinct approach to delivering more affordable housing, more social housing and better quality housing.

It is no wonder that the Leader of the Opposition and those opposite do not understand. They do not understand the value of building a pipeline of works such as what we are talking about with our precinct by precinct approach that will support jobs in places like Logan and support those employed to deliver maintenance contracts in Logan. When they were in government they did not have a plan for social housing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock!

Mr de BRENNI: When the opposition was in government they did not have a plan to deliver more social housing in Queensland. At the height of their reign, in 2013-14, the member for Everton built a meagre 31 social housing dwellings in this state—31.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, you are warned under standing order 253A. Your interjections are repetitive and disruptive. Member for Everton, if you continue you will be warned. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Mr de BRENNI: Yes, I do. They built 31 homes at the height of their reign. How many did this government deliver last year? We delivered 200 homes. That is over six times as many homes as the member for Everton delivered. In 2016-17 we will deliver an additional 400 homes for those living in social housing.

There is no doubt that providing housing support for people is important to those on this side of the House. We also know that building new homes that meet the changing needs of the community is important. That is why we will be making sure those homes are of the highest quality.

Given this question and what we have heard over several weeks, some might be under the misapprehension that the LNP is the champion of vulnerable people in Queensland and in Logan, but we all know that nothing can be further from the truth. The LNP has an absolutely miserable record when it comes to the treatment of people in social housing.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I think you have answered the question.

Public Sector Investment

Mr POWER: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the positive developments in terms of public sector investment in Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Logan for the question. We are seeing a lot of public and private investment right across the length and breadth of Queensland. In fact, this week in this House I talked specifically about \$100 million worth of investment happening in social housing across our state. Those opposite continue to criticise. We get on with the job of building and delivering for Queenslanders and, as I said earlier this week, generating 2,000 jobs as well.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you will have ample opportunity to ask a question that you feel is appropriate this morning. You can get on the list if you want to ask a question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I remember when the member for Everton was actually the housing minister.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, with respect, I do not want you to debate the issue. Can you please come back to the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am talking about social housing and public investment. Unfortunately, those opposite were not committed to building and developing this state.

I can also advise the House that our market-led proposals are going extremely well. We had the announcement about the cruise ship terminal, the aquarium and the Logan Motorway extension, which is proceeding extremely well—once again, delivering jobs for Queensland. We have also had the \$1.1 billion investment of Australian Unity that will generate in the Herston Quarter over 750 jobs, looking at a dedicated health precinct. I thank the health minister and the Treasurer for working so hard to make sure that we have achieved the right outcome for that centre, catering for the growing needs of our state.

I can advise the House that the June quarter Deloitte Access Economics Investment Monitor details nearly \$183.5 billion in planned or committed public and private sector projects in Queensland, ahead of New South Wales and ahead of Victoria. What we see from those opposite is them constantly talking down the Queensland economy. Would we expect anything less from those opposite from the way that they conducted themselves when they were in office, the way that they cut, the way that they slashed, the way that they had a downturn in the economy?

The value of Queensland projects in the June quarter increased by \$15.5 billion since the March quarter report. In addition, we are attracting a new \$16 million biofuels pilot plant at Gladstone and we have four market-led proposals that have reached detailed proposal stages worth \$665 million that will

support more than 1,600 jobs during construction. Since we have come to government there have been more than \$22 billion in private investment announcements, supporting over 76,000 jobs. My government listens, my government continues to build and we continue to deliver jobs for Queensland.

(Time expired)

Logan Renewal Initiative

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. I refer to the letter by Jude Munro that has just been tabled. Can the minister advise what he is doing to overcome the 'palpable sense of disappointment' in the Logan community resulting from the minister's decision to cancel the Logan Renewal Initiative?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the question. As I indicated in the previous sitting week, I have already taken the time to meet with stakeholders in the Logan City Council. I have met with developers who are interested in providing more social housing, not less. When I met with the Logan City Council there was a variety of views about more housing, less housing, no housing—very similar to what we have heard from those opposite. They do not know what they want in terms of housing in this state. Do they want to be involved in housing? Do they care about housing?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! The minister's answer is relevant and on point. I urge you to consider your interjections.

Mr de BRENNI: If you want to talk about palpable disappointment, let me talk about the contractors that have had a longstanding relationship with this government to deliver a pipeline of maintenance and upgrades for many, many years up to the value of \$10 million. Those contractors will continue to enjoy a relationship with this government to deliver that work. They are real jobs in that community—the community in which I live—and many, many people rely on this government to provide homes. I will be meeting with those contractors next week to talk through our expanded program. We are going to talk with them about our refurbishment program. We are going to talk with them about our new construction program.

If we want to talk about palpable disappointment, I think we should reflect on the palpable disappointment that was possibly felt by many individuals after hearing about the LNP convention on the weekend. We have heard a lot about the need to build new homes for people in Logan and right across the state. What did the LNP convention say about social housing management?

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, I think you have answered the question.

Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

Mr CRAWFORD: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on discussions with the federal government for Queensland to access the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility fund?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Barron River for that very important question. From the outset, I place on the record my congratulations to Labor's new Chief Minister-elect Michael Gunner for his and the Territory Labor Party's overwhelming victory on Saturday. Mr Gunner and his hardworking Labor team achieved a crushing 18 per cent swing against the former government. I look forward to working with Michael Gunner to help develop Northern Australia because we know that there is huge potential—

Mr Springborg interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: He is missing it. The member for Southern Downs is missing the action. He has woken up.

Ms Trad: You were always 'gunna' be the premier, too!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I take that interjection. He was 'gunna' get there three times.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, one moment.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Three times.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, perhaps you should direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, Mr Speaker. He was 'gunna' get there three times but, unfortunately, it did not happen. In all seriousness, I look forward to working with him as we look at unlocking the potential that is derived from Northern Australia. I want to pay special tribute in the House to Minister

Coralee O'Rourke, who is working diligently in helping to identify the key projects for this fund. I am very concerned that it has been now some 441 days since the funding facility, the NAIF, was actually announced. How many projects have got out the door since it was announced? Zero—absolutely zero. Why is the Prime Minister—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Hinchinbrook, if you want to ask a question you have an opportunity to do it during question time.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have been to numerous COAG meetings where we have discussed this issue. The fund has been set up. There is \$5 billion sitting there. I want the money out the door. It is about time that those opposite started putting pressure on their federal counterparts to get that money out the door.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under standing order 253A. Your interjections are repetitive and disruptive. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I know that the members of my government are firmly of the view that we need to keep the pressure on the federal government to make sure that we can build the projects that will create jobs. I believe that Queensland has the best potential to capitalise on that fund. I will be speaking with Malcolm Turnbull about it because there is nothing more important than getting that \$5 billion out the door, rather than it just sitting there and wasting away, doing absolutely nothing.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, if you persist, you will be next on the list.

Logan Renewal Initiative

Mr BENNETT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. Can the minister confirm Logan social housing residents will miss out on an estimated \$150 million as a result of his decision to scrap the Logan Renewal Initiative?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member opposite for the question.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Logan, you are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

Mr de BRENNI: The residents of public housing in Logan will not be missing out. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. What our government has decided to do is continue our investment and continue our responsibility for delivering public housing in Logan. I can tell the House how the people of Logan would have missed out. The resolution from the LNP convention said that they should shift the focus away from building more dwellings and offer sharper interventions. That is where people would have missed out in Logan.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I think you have answered the question.

Budget

Mr KING: My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer please advise of any reactions to the recent state budget from other MPs and any alternative approaches?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is bad enough in this House that we have to sit through some of the scare campaigns run by those opposite—their favourite targets are government workers—and the peddling of mistruths, but it is very hard to keep up with what they get up to outside of this place. To assist us, I have a letter written by the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan, to his constituents. I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan MP, to residents regarding the Queensland 2016-17 state budget [1432].

He sets out his hostility and opposition to the two budgets that I have handed down in this House, which is the basis for the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr PITT: I hear him carping away negatively yet again—very lazy, as he always has been in this House. We now have an \$8 billion black hole which was overseen by the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Moggill complains about the debt action plan measures, but just like the Leader of the Opposition he does not say where the money will come up from under the LNP's plan because they do not have one.

He complains and he doubles down on the debt action plan, but he never talks about any of the facts. He talks about debt. General government debt, as we know, is more than \$10 billion lower under our government than it was forecast to be under the previous government. This has resulted in \$800 million in interest repayment savings—and those opposite wanted us to keep increasing the debt—when compared to the 2014-15 budget. It is in stark contrast to the \$13.6 billion increase in general government debt under those opposite.

The member for Moggill then spreads doom and gloom about the economy. He talks about the domestic economy contracting every single quarter since the election of the government. What a great sleight of hand from the member for Moggill. Gross state product, which of course includes exports, has grown from 0.8 per cent under those opposite to 3.5 per cent under our government.

On state final demand we are happy to put our figures up against theirs any day of the week. When we look at this measure, under those opposite two consecutive quarters of state final demand shrunk by 0.8 per cent in September and December 2014. Under our government, this figure is improving from the lows under the member for Clayfield. State final demand is forecast to hit three per cent per annum in 2017-18. He then says that Labor should be focused on providing financial relief. This from those opposite who had to be forced into a backflip about concessions for seniors in budgets. They said they were going to give people \$120 a year savings in electricity bills yet prices went up by 40 per cent.

To add to it, the member for Moggill says that we should be providing financial relief. We have not heard a thing from those opposite supporting us on our Fairer Fares campaign, which starts next year and which will provide much fare relief. I think the member for Moggill should stick to his portfolio responsibilities, and I think everyone in Moggill would say the same thing. Bring back Bruce!

Logan Renewal Initiative

Mr EMERSON: My question is to the Premier. In her letter, Jude Munro said the Logan Renewal Initiative was 'endorsed by all levels of government, community and business'. Why did the Premier, in her previous answer, claim that there was no consultation on this project?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member very much for the question. The letter has only just been tabled. I have not had a chance to read that letter. I will undertake to read that letter. It was just tabled. As I said—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, the Premier's answer is relevant and on point.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said very clearly, the Minister for Housing did not take this decision lightly. He had all the facts before him. He went through it very thoroughly and made the decision in the best interests of the people living in Logan. I understand that there has been a subsequent meeting about this issue and that there is broader consultation and discussion that is happening. The housing minister understands the needs of families in the Logan area. That is why he is putting forward a clear plan—

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Indooroopilly's question was about the Premier's previous answer when she claimed that there was no consultation. I believe the Premier should answer that question or sit down.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier was referring to processes of consultation and engagement that the minister had been undertaking in relation to the project. It is clearly in response and in answer to the question.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the House is obviously mistaken or did not listen to the question. The question was about the answer the Premier gave in regard to consultation carried out when the Logan Renewal Initiative was set up.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will rule: the Premier is relevant.

Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry

Mr KELLY: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on any further implementation of the commission of inquiry into the closure of the Barrett centre by the previous government?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. As the member for Greenslopes and all members of the House know, one of the major recommendations of the Barrett commission of inquiry was the construction of a new residential mental health facility for young people in Queensland. As I mentioned in the last sitting week, the government is working closely with the families who were affected by the LNP's disastrous decision to close the Barrett centre.

A project oversight group has been established with the involvement of families. There are weekly meetings of the group to ensure that work is occurring appropriately. I am also pleased to report to the House that Queensland Health has engaged the Destravis group to assist with planning and sight selection. Destravis have extensive experience in healthcare services including the Princess Alexandra Hospital transit lounge relocation, the PA Hospital strategic plan and the Wynnum community health centre.

I was interested to hear that on Friday the member for Clayfield told the LNP state conference the LNP had made mistakes during their time in government. I would suggest that failing to read an expert report that was tabled in front of the then government, a report that they commissioned, was a mistake. Cancelling a project with no consultation with experts was a mistake. Closing the Barrett centre with no replacement counts as a mistake.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: Frankly, on this serious matter the member for Clayfield needs to put some substance into his statement about mistakes to make sure they are more than just hollow words.

The commission of inquiry into the closure of the Barrett centre found that 'no person or entity accepted responsibility for the cancellation of the Redlands project' which would have ensured the services provided at Barrett continued. Most people would correctly conclude that that was a mistake. Now is the time for the member for Clayfield to put things right. Now is the time to acknowledge that he did wrong and that he hurt some vulnerable people in Queensland. Queenslanders need to hear the member for Clayfield say that taking between \$100 and \$120 million out of the health department in three months was a mistake. They need him to say sorry for that.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: They need him to say sorry that his actions led to the cancellation of a facility that would have replaced the Barrett centre. Most importantly, Queenslanders need to hear the Leader of the Opposition say that he fully and completely supports the recommendations of the commission of inquiry because Queenslanders need confidence to know that those services will never be ripped away from Queenslanders again and that they will never be ripped away by the LNP. That is the assurance, that is the apology, that is the step the Leader of the Opposition needs to make as a leader to ensure we deliver for vulnerable Queensland adolescents.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Southern Downs, I have given you more than a reasonable amount of latitude. If you persist, you will be warned.

Port of Townsville, Pilot Vessels

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer the Treasurer to his recent visit to Norman R Wright & Sons boatyard where he talked about jobs and apprenticeships. Can the Treasurer explain why the Port of Townsville has awarded a contract for new pilot vessels to a Victorian company, threatening the jobs and apprenticeships at a Queensland based company?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. As he would well know, our government owned corporations in this state operate with a commercial mandate and of course they need to ensure that they get best value for money in terms of shareholder returns to the overall people of Queensland. We are very clear when it comes to our government owned corporations that they should be focusing on getting higher numbers of apprenticeships, including ensuring that we have a minimum standard in terms of the number of apprentices attached to individual projects they are undertaking.

I find it very interesting that there is a lot of care now from all of those opposite about all of our government owned corporations, including the Port of Townsville. As we know, the Port of Townsville was going to be used as the funding vehicle for a Townsville stadium, because it was all about selling

off the Port of Townsville to fund that stadium. Now they care about Townsville jobs. Where was their care and attention when they were going to have that privatised? How much control would there have been over anything to do with jobs and apprenticeships at the Port of Townsville? None. We also know that when it comes to new generation rolling stock we have been doing some fantastic work in terms of apprenticeships, including ensuring that we get Townsville based businesses involved.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock for one moment. Member for Indooroopilly, the minister's answer is on point and relevant.

Mr PITT: I am happy to further investigate the specific matter that the member is raising because I need to get to the detail. We always have to get to the detail when those opposite ask questions because they have been peddling mistruths in this place all term. They did it all last term and we need to check the premise of the questions. We have to be very, very careful. I do find it quite astonishing that this term they now care about the Port of Townsville when they wanted to sell it. I have no time for those opposite now suddenly having some care and attention towards our government owned corporations—any of them—when they really treated them as a cash cow.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, I think you have answered the question. I do not want you to debate the matter with the member for Glass House.

Hot DesQ

Mr BROWN: My question is to the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business. Will the minister please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping to make Queensland the start-up state of Australia?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I know that the member for Capalaba is incredibly passionate about supporting businesses in his local electorate to innovate and create new jobs and be part of the new economy. The Palaszczuk government is committed to building our start-up sector to ensure we remain globally competitive now and into the future. A key part of that commitment is the Advance Queensland Hot DesQ program, an exciting part of the Palaszczuk government's \$405 million whole-of-government Advance Queensland innovation agenda.

As the House is aware, Hot DesQ will bring new entrepreneurial talent to Queensland to engage with our local start-up communities and work on their ventures. This program has been co-designed with the Queensland start-up community, based on international best practice. For example, the Start-up Chili program, on which Hot DesQ is modelled, was established in 2010 and has seen \$100 million in capital raised and more than 1,500 jobs created by over 1,200 start-ups attracted from 72 countries. That was all with an investment from government of about \$5 million per year.

Round 1 of our Hot DesQ program closed on 31 July and I am very pleased to advise that we received more than 100 applications from more than 20 countries. Some of the countries we have received applications from include the United Kingdom, Taiwan, India, Germany, Israel, the United States and Singapore. This is a clear indication of the global reach of this program. There was also significant interest from start-ups in other Australian states, which goes to show that our brand as the start-up state is gaining momentum. The applications are wide ranging in ideas, from industry disruptive products relevant to Queensland to globally scalable tech start-ups. The bonus is that these ideas all come with incredible talent and international start-up connections. I am really excited about the prospects some of these ventures will bring.

Hot DesQ's first funding recipient, TimeLooper, is a great example of the kind of start-up we want to attract to Queensland. This innovative company is already having an impact on Queensland's growing start-up ecosystem. TimeLooper is based at QUT's Creative Enterprise Australia, CEA, one of 13 Hot DesQ host locations around the state. Creative Enterprise Australia's CEO, Anna Rooke, said she was thrilled that TimeLooper selected them as the inaugural Australian host and lauded the company's willingness to mentor other start-ups at CEA. Speaking to StartupSmart about the Hot DesQ program, Ms Rooke said—

It's a brilliant program. That's a huge level of support for the startup and innovation community and it's really targeted at helping startups to grow in Queensland.

TimeLooper is just the beginning. I am looking forward to keeping the House informed of all these exciting developments as we see more start-ups coming to our state and supporting our ecosystems to ensure we are creating jobs today and jobs tomorrow.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mount Ommaney, your interjections are repetitive and disruptive. You are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

Jobs

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer explain how the decision was made to award the vessel tender to a Victorian company over the Bulimba based Wright boatyard, because port officials inspected the Victorian vessel but not the Queensland vessel?

Mr PITT: It sounds like he is trying to get some sort of a theme up this morning. I thank the member for the question.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. We will wait a moment, Minister.

Mr PITT: The question again—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need your assistance, member for Callide.

Mr PITT: No-one does. No-one needs the member for Callide's assistance. I am happy to take this question on notice because I need to look very specifically at the claims that have been made. It is a question that I will need to consult—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: No, it is not up to you to give a minute, member for Callide.

Mr PITT: I will remind those opposite again that they are asking a lot of questions here about a contract that is being awarded via the Port of Townsville and they wanted to actually sell the ports. They wanted to sell the net flows of profits that come from those. We have profits coming from the port sector in Queensland of between \$150 million and \$190 million over the forward estimates each and every year. That is the revenue stream they wanted to get rid of. What does that revenue stream support? It supports jobs.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, thank you. I know you like to talk about that but I do not know that that is relevant to the question.

Mr PITT: I am getting back to the point, Mr Speaker, if you will let me continue for a moment. The first question was about apprenticeships and this one is about the overall contract and the procurement process.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow you to answer.

Mr PITT: We need to understand here that those opposite do not support programs that we put in place, like our payroll tax incentive to support the hiring of apprentices and trainees. That is something that goes for the government sector. What we know is that the member for Chatsworth is asking the question and I am happy to take that on notice, as I said at the outset. This is an important question. If there is indeed anything that I need to follow up, I will because on this side of the House we value apprenticeships and jobs for Queenslanders. That is why we have retained these government owned enterprises in public hands so we have a greater degree of control over the hiring of people and where contracts are awarded to.

Women on Boards

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Will the minister please provide an update on progress towards the government's women on boards targets?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question and her ongoing commitment to gender equality here in Queensland. Our Toward Gender Parity: Women on Boards initiative aims to drive systemic and structural change through a target of 50 per cent women on government boards and bodies by 2020. Just one year into the reinstatement of this vital initiative, we have already seen promising change. The proportion of women on government boards and bodies has risen by eight per cent in just a year to 39 per cent. Women have accounted for 61 per cent of all new applications to the expression of interest register but it is a shame that we have had to start from such a low base. After the LNP walked away from a target for women on government boards and bodies, the number of women on those bodies fell from 43 per cent to 30.1 per cent. To give credit where credit is due, it seems that

the LNP have finally found themselves a shadow minister for women. It seems that those opposite have finally joined every other state and territory and their federal counterparts and have finally created a women's portfolio in the shadow cabinet.

We all seem to have missed the announcement. When the opposition leader announced his shadow cabinet he missed the opportunity to mark the LNP's commitment to women's policy by leaving out the portfolio again. In fact, this was confirmed when the member for Clayfield tabled his new shadow ministry on 10 May. Now we see it has quietly crept into the title of the member for Mudgeeraba on the parliament's website, which claims it has been her appointment since 26 May. However, correspondence sent to me recently by the member for Mudgeeraba has no mention of this title.

Regardless of when this happened, let's be thankful it has finally happened. I hope this new-found portfolio for women will mean that the LNP will reverse what they did in government when they cut the Office for Women, smashing the—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Ladies. We will just wait. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Ms FENTIMAN: I do. Let's remember their record in office. They slashed the Office for Women, there was no strategy to tackle domestic and family violence and they refused an invitation to join our watch. I am happy for the Office for Women to brief the new shadow minister for women, but I am happier to finally welcome the LNP to 2016.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Cairns, member for Glass House, what is your point or order?

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I am just seeking clarification. In his answers to questions from both myself and the member for Chatsworth, the Treasurer made reference to taking our questions on notice and providing further detail. Can I please seek clarification that the Treasurer is taking those under standing order 113(3)?

Mr PITT: I can confirm that.

Cairns, Public Transport

Mr PYNE: My question is of the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister please advise when residents in my city of Cairns will have access to some of the easy payment options that users of public transport in South-East Queensland take for granted?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Cairns for the question. The member for Cairns is referring to what many people in South-East Queensland know and appreciate as the go card. That sort of easy access ticketing is vitally important and has been at the forefront of public transport practice across Australia as demonstrated by the go card network, introduced and brought in by a Labor government. It is a demonstration of the way in which Queensland has been at the forefront of delivering that sort of level of service on our South-East Queensland network. I acknowledge that right across the length and breadth of the state there is great keenness and a desire to see the same level of functionality that South-East Queensland commuters enjoy being available to public transport patrons right across the rest of the state.

I can assure the member for Cairns and, indeed, other members of the House that the Department of Transport and Main Roads and TransLink, which is part of the department, are working very closely with service providers right across our state to deliver a more seamless ticketing solution and system for public transport across the rest of the state. That is a core part of the work that we are doing on what we call our next generation ticketing project, which will take the South-East Queensland system to the next generation of ticketing solutions, and we will ensure that we bring the rest of the public transport network in this state along with us here in South-East Queensland as we do that.

I want to take this opportunity to talk about those next generation ticketing opportunities. In delivering that, we want to make sure that we bring world's best practice to public transport users here in Queensland. When the go card was introduced in South-East Queensland we were at the leading edge of world technology in this space and we want to do that again. That is why honourable members will see as we roll this out into the future that we will not necessarily be using the go card that I can produce from my pocket right now. Instead, we will be making sure that we use technology that may include other forms of smart cards. Indeed, smart devices that people carry with them regularly today can be part of the ticketing solution and enable management of their own public transport access and budgets.

I want to thank the member for Cairns for the question. I assure him that I will work with him and other members right across the state to ensure that all public transport users can have access to best quality, latest technology systems, and ticketing is a very important part of that.

Mining Industry

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. I ask: will the minister advise the House of the latest evidence of investor confidence in the Queensland resources sector?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Mirani, who personally has witnessed the green shoots appearing in our resources sector from his own electorate. Investor confidence is returning to the resources sector. Earlier this week Taurus Funds Management completed its purchase of the Foxleigh met. coalmine near Middlemount from Anglo American. This follows Taurus's backing from Stanmore Coal to buy and restart the Isaac Plains coalmine, the opening of which the Premier and I had the honour to attend. I recall also that last year I was in Texas talking to Denham Capital, telling them what a wonderful place Queensland is to invest in. It is very pleasing to see that Denham Capital have been very active in Queensland with their coal subsidiary announcing the purchase of a portfolio of Peabody Energy resources. Denham has also invested in the Mungana mine at Chillagoe, and that is rapidly progressing. The first shipment of sulphide copper concentrates has left CuDeco's mine near Cloncurry for the port of Townsville.

Even as we transition to a low-carbon economy in the longer term, our mineral and energy resources will continue to be integral to our daily lives. That is why I congratulate the Queensland resources sector on the resourcing innovation campaign they have started this week.

This government has a very clear position on climate change action underpinned by our 50 per cent renewable energy target in Queensland by 2030. However, what many people do not realise, as the campaign points out, is that the manufacture of each solar panel requires metals and minerals, including coal, bauxite, alumina and copper. In relation to wind turbines like the ones that will generate electricity for AGL at Kingaroy, a wind turbine's generator is 65 per cent steel and 35 per cent copper, and the only way to make steel is with coking coal. Miners themselves are turning to renewables to reduce their carbon footprint. At Weipa, Rio Tinto has been trialling a 1.7 megawatt solar plant, a first for a remote Australian mining operation on such a scale. The solar plant can produce 2,800 megawatt hours of electricity a year at peak which will help reduce their diesel requirements.

The resources sector underpins our economy. It fuels our industries and provides the materials we need for our everyday lives. That is why the Palaszczuk government continues to support this vital sector for jobs now and jobs for the future.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Mermaid Beach, I am informed that we have students from the Siena Catholic College from the electorate of Kawana observing our proceedings from the gallery. Welcome.

Gold Coast Turf Club

Mr STEVENS: My question is to the Minister for Racing. I ask: can the minister advise when the balance of the infrastructure funds already allocated to the Gold Coast Turf Club under the Bligh government and progressed by the Newman government will be forthcoming to the club?

Ms GRACE: I thank the honourable member for the question. As the honourable member is aware, the racing industry in this state has had some difficult times recently. I am happy to say that that has now well and truly settled down. I also know that, in accordance with the infrastructure fund, there were funds that were allocated and approved to the Gold Coast Turf Club and those moneys have been expended.

The remainder of the funds are still to be allocated and approved by the Gold Coast Turf Club. We now have a new board in place which is dynamic and operating very effectively. It has been well-received, it is well-respected and it is working very coherently with the racing industry. We also have a new CEO who started very recently on 22 August. They obviously need time to assess their infrastructure funds. They need time to have a look at these projects so they can prioritise and allocate the funds properly so they get value for the money that they spent on racetracks around this state.

In response to the question of the member for Mermaid Beach, I say that Racing Queensland has a priority to look at all racing infrastructure needs in this state and they are doing that as we speak. When they are ready to announce their projects and seek approval I will be the first one to sign off,

because I know they will undertake a comprehensive process to allocate much needed funds on a priority basis. Let me repeat: the Gold Coast funds have already been expended. There is an amount that was in their bid which was not finally approved. It is now up to the new CEO, together with the Racing Queensland board, to determine how to best spend the funds in the Racing Infrastructure Fund.

I will add one final comment in relation to this question regarding the spending of money on infrastructure. There is not a lot of money in that fund because the legacy I have been left by the previous LNP government, which signed off on the deal, is that over 30 years we will receive less than \$100 million to spend on infrastructure in this state. Compare that to the Labor government, which in five years allocated over the forward estimates \$110 million for racing infrastructure. They inherited \$110 million over five years to spend on infrastructure such as the Gold Coast Turf Club. Out of the deal that was signed off by the LNP and the now Leader of the Opposition, we inherited \$100 million over 30 years. Priority is important. It is in Racing Queensland's hands and I have full confidence—

(Time expired)

Exports

Ms PEASE: My question is of the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Will the minister inform the House of export opportunities for Queensland produce and what the Palaszczuk government is doing to assist Queensland exports?

Ms DONALDSON: I thank the member for her question. I know that the member for Lytton is keenly aware of the role that exports play in the economic wealth of Queensland. Last week I was in the member's electorate touring the port of Brisbane seeing firsthand the operations of the port and being given a tour by the chief executive officer, Roy Cummins. During the visit I was informed that many mums and dads in Lytton work at the port during hours especially timetabled to meet school pick-up and drop-off times, so I know that the member will have hundreds of families who are interested in the export potential of this port.

As the House is no doubt keenly aware, the port of Brisbane is one of the key conduits of international trade for Queensland businesses, with more than 50 per cent of this state's international trade handled through the port. With cereal exports up more than 29 per cent, the future is looking bright for Queensland exports. The Palaszczuk government is keen to see this positive upward trajectory of exports, so as part of this government's election commitment next week I will lead a trade mission to some of our key export partners. With Indonesia, China and Hong Kong as key markets for Queensland produce, it is imperative that we connect Queensland businesses to these markets. Joining me on the tour will be representatives from Queensland businesses including Sugarbag Queensland and Selected Seeds.

This government went to the election with a clear program to facilitate overseas trade missions for industry and to ensure that Queensland producers are given opportunities to sell this state to the consumers of the world. Queenslanders know that we have some of the best produce in the world and it is time that the world was able to consume more clean, healthy and, more importantly, Queensland produce.

Road Trains

Mr MILLAR: My question is of the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports. On 23 August the minister announced a three-month trial extending access through Roma for type 2 road trains carrying livestock to improve safety and increase productivity. What is the minister doing to address the serious issue of type 2 road trains trying to access abattoirs at Rockhampton when travelling in from the west?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question. I am very happy to talk about road train access in Roma, because after three years with a record majority we saw inaction—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I had difficulty hearing. What town was it, member for Gregory?

Mr MILLAR: Rockhampton.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! We will wait. I do not need your assistance, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I call the Minister.

Mr BAILEY: Clearly the towns of Roma and Rockhampton were mentioned in the question, so if the opposition would like to give me the opportunity to answer the question I am happy to do so. While the previous government had a record majority for three years we saw inaction in terms of getting road train access to the sale yards at Roma. It was a shameful record. We have fixed that in the first year of our term because it is a productivity issue and it is an industry issue. We saw absolute neglect from those opposite.

Skipping right along to Rockhampton, the member for Rockhampton—and of course I know there is also interest from the member for Keppel—is interested in productivity improvements and heavy vehicle improvements. Under the State Infrastructure Plan we saw a \$10 million commitment in the first tranche to improve road train access across the river for the meatworks in Rockhampton. We have been consulting on that. The member for Rockhampton has been a fierce advocate for better outcomes in Rockhampton in relation to this and we are working closely on that matter. There are a range of matters to look at in terms of this project. We will make sure we do the work to get the project right. Once again we are doing this because, for three years with a record majority, we saw inaction from the LNP. Those opposite were not interested in heavy vehicle safety, not interested in—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I think you have answered the question. I call the member for Thuringowa for your question.

Ecotourism

Mr HARPER: My question is of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Will the minister explain to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing to support ecotourism in regional Queensland?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question because I know how passionate he is about drawing more people to his beautiful region. I am pleased to announce that the government has taken further action to promote ecotourism in North Queensland and create jobs. In August the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing advised a local commercial tourism operator that their expression of interest to transfer bushwalkers to the Thorsborne Trail on Hinchinbrook Island from the mainland was successful. It was the member for Sunnybank who made me aware that access to the internationally-renowned Thorsborne Trail had been hampered by limited boat access. Unfortunately, when the previous government came to office in 2012 it halted a process that could have delivered this outcome years sooner. It is sad that the town of Lucinda in the Hinchinbrook shire was so let down by the LNP.

After the member for Sunnybank raised this with me I called for expressions of interest for an additional boat transfer service. The assessment panel consisted of representatives from QPWS, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the tourism industry. I am pleased to advise the House that the successful applicant is a local resident who has now been invited to negotiate a commercial activity agreement. It is anticipated that the new commercial tourism operator will commence in the coming months.

The boat transfer service will be between the mainland, at both Cardwell and Lucinda, and both ends of the Thorsborne Trail. As such, visitors will have more transfer options to access the magnificent trail which takes the hiker over a challenging 32-kilometre trek through the bays, beaches and headlands of the island's east coast.

Hinchinbrook is one of Australia's largest island national parks and part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. Scenic highlights include the island's rugged, often cloud covered mountain backbone, vast mangrove forests and lush rainforest, secluded beaches and rocky headlands, and hidden creeks and waterfalls. The island's mangrove forests are some of the richest and most varied in Australia and are an important breeding ground for many marine animals.

Most bushwalkers take three or four days to walk the trail, which was named after the late Arthur Thorsborne, a champion of North Queensland's natural places and their wildlife. This is going to be great for local tourism.

Lamington National Park, Road Access

Mr KRAUSE: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. A stretch of road approximately four kilometres from Canungra, gateway to the unique tourist destination of Lamington National Park, requires widening so that two cars can pass safely. Can the minister advise when the government will fix this road to pristine World Heritage listed Lamington National Park for locals and tourists alike?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question. Obviously the funding of roads was made a lot more difficult in this state after \$600 million worth of cuts by the Newman government. They cut \$200 million each year, every year, from the roads budget. We got a lot less done. That is their shameful record on roads. Those opposite do not want to hear it, but that is the truth. We have an extensive roads budget for right across the state—record QTRIP expenditure over the forward estimates. As to the specific issue raised by the honourable member, I am happy to have a look at it.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rio Olympic Games, Welcome-Home Parade

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (11.31 am): In my ministerial statement this morning I said that tomorrow's parade for our returning Olympians would be the country's only public welcome-home parade. I am advised that other welcome-home parades are being held in other capital cities; however, tomorrow's welcome-home parade in Queensland will be the country's best.

EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 24 May (see p. 1935).

Second Reading

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (11.32 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 makes significant education amendments regarding the prep year of schooling, the teaching profession and non-state school funding arrangements. The bill will ensure that all Queensland children start their school education in prep. It will improve the regulation of teaching in Queensland by streamlining governance, improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the Queensland College of Teachers to protect students. It will improve the administration of Commonwealth and state funding to non-state schools by establishing statutory arrangements for the recovery of state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements. The bill will also improve oversight of non-state schools by allowing the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to share information with law enforcement agencies and reduce the collection of unnecessary school survey data.

Members will recall that prep was introduced in 2007 by the then Labor government. This is a significant feature of this amendment, ensuring parents retain the choice about when their child is ready for schooling. However, subject to the exemptions I have already outlined, the law will now require that a child always enrolls in prep first. This aligns with existing state school policy. The bill also lowers the age at which a child may be registered or provisionally registered for home education so that prep aged children can register for home education.

This bill also strengthens the Queensland Colleges of Teachers' powers to suspend a teacher's registration to keep our children safe. The bill will make significant amendments to the regulation of the teaching profession to strengthen the ability of the Queensland College of Teachers to act in the best interests of children, to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students and to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession. It will provide a contemporary and more streamlined governance structure for the college and improve the teacher disciplinary framework.

Protecting the safety and wellbeing of our students is our No. 1 priority. This bill gives the college stronger powers to suspend a teacher's registration where the college reasonably believes the teacher poses an unacceptable risk of harm to children. A decision to suspend a teacher's registration will be reviewed by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, QCAT.

A person cannot work in a school when their registration is suspended. Currently the threshold for suspending a teacher's registration requires the college to believe that there is an imminent risk of harm. It is important that we provide the college with the ability to act early and suspend a teacher's registration when that is in the best interests of children. This current threshold of 'imminent risk' is too high and does not align with the removal of educators in the early childhood education and care sector because of risks to children.

This bill requires the college to notify the Public Safety Business Agency, which is responsible for child related employment screening, when they suspend a teacher's registration. These changes will help prevent the person working in other child related employment. To complement the legislative reforms, the Department of Education and Training will improve teacher recruitment practices to enhance its capacity to obtain information about a prospective teacher's disciplinary history.

In terms of other changes, early notification from schools about child harm matters is important to allow the college to assess whether immediate registration action is required for the safety and wellbeing of students. The bill also clarifies the existing notification provisions to give greater guidance to schools about when to notify the college about these matters.

The bill enables the college to provide a more contemporary and streamlined governance structure. We are reducing the size of the college board from 17 to 15 members. To do this, we are removing one of the minister's nominees and the Queensland Public Sector Union representative. The bill will also ensure the chief executive and the remaining minister's nominee will have skills and expertise in corporate, strategic and/or regulatory functions. Consistent with stakeholder feedback, a majority teacher representation on the board is maintained. I thank everybody who was involved in the consultation leading up to this reform to enable us to reduce the size of the board in the best interests of the college.

The bill allows the college's internal disciplinary committee, renamed the Professional Capacity and Teacher Conduct Committee, to consider teaching impairment as a possible reason for minor disciplinary matters. This aims to address teacher discipline in a more supportive and non-punitive manner where impairment has caused or contributed to the behaviour of a teacher. The committee will be able to order a health assessment by a registered health practitioner where they reasonably believe impairment may have contributed to the teacher's behaviour.

The bill requires the committee to have an appropriately qualified registered health practitioner on its membership when considering impairment related disciplinary matters and in determining appropriate action. QCAT already has similar powers for serious disciplinary matters involving impairment—that is, matters where suspension or cancellation of registration is a likely outcome. These amendments do not relate to decisions about teacher registration. They will not impact on the obligations on all schools to provide reasonable adjustments.

Other reforms being progressed in this bill allow the college to consider a broader range of information to determine whether a ground for disciplinary action exists. This will allow the college to investigate allegations such as those raised in the media about teacher conduct. Currently the college is limited to acting when there is disciplinary information, which is essentially defined to mean a formal complaint or notification by a school. While this amendment widens the type of information that can be used to commence consideration of whether a disciplinary action is warranted, the college must still form a reasonable belief that there is a ground for disciplinary action before taking disciplinary action. This means the college would need to obtain reliable evidence to form the reasonable belief, regardless of how the matter initially came to the college's attention. This prevents the college from acting on rumour or innuendo.

The bill also deals with the recovery of funding from non-state schools. Eligible non-state schools may receive funding from both the state and the Australian governments. The 2014 Queensland Audit Office report into the oversight of recurrent grants to non-state schools highlighted that the lack of formal mechanisms to recover overpaid funding was a weakness of the funding program.

The bill addresses this weakness by providing a head of power for the minister's policy that will outline the procedures for recovery of overpaid funding—that is, it is a condition of payment of the funding that overpayments are paid to the state in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the policy and if funding is overpaid to a non-state school the amount of overpayment may be recoverable as a debt owed to the state. Under the Commonwealth Australian Education Act 2013, the Australian government funds Queensland non-state schools by providing funding to the Queensland government which must then be passed directly to the relevant non-state school.

It is a condition of funding under the Commonwealth act that the state has a debt recovery arrangement in place with eligible non-state schools. Without such arrangements in place, the Queensland government could be liable for a debt owed to the Australian government by a non-state school. To address this issue, the bill implements statutory debt recovery arrangements that meet the requirements of the Commonwealth act and enables Queensland to assign the right to recover any debt owed by a non-state school to the Commonwealth minister.

This bill ensures that all students reap the benefits of undertaking the prep year of schooling, it supports the education of Queensland children at both state and non-state schools and ensures a modern and responsive teacher registration system. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (11.40 am): I rise to speak to the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 and advise the House that the LNP will not be opposing this bill. There are four objectives of the bill. The first objective is to make the preparatory year of school the first compulsory year of school education in Queensland, and there is very strong research to support a prep year of school. The research clearly shows that the preparatory year does provide an environment for children to engage in a positive learning experience which can underpin a lifetime enjoyment of learning. International research has shown that prep year can provide an environment for the social and emotional development of children. It provides an environment to develop their cognition and general knowledge, language development and communication and early mathematical understandings. It can also assist with a child's health and physical wellbeing but, as I said earlier and very importantly, it can provide a positive disposition to learning.

Like me, I am sure that all members have had the wonderful experience of visiting their local schools and seeing firsthand the preppies enjoying being part of big school. Prep teachers do a wonderful job and play a very important role in the education and development of our littlest students. As we celebrate Teacher Aide Day tomorrow we should also acknowledge the important contribution of our prep teacher aides and indeed all teacher aides in our schools. We all remember a special teacher but, given tomorrow is Teacher Aide Day, I want to acknowledge a wonderful woman—Andrea Thompson, who was a teacher aide at Aspley State Preschool. Preschools of course were the predecessor to prep and my three now adult children had the fantastic opportunity of having the artistic and generous Mrs Thompson as part of their educational journey. I know that there are many Mrs Thompsons in our schools today and it is important that we acknowledge them for the invaluable contribution that they make in our students' lives and I hope they all get very spoilt tomorrow.

Not all children have the opportunity to attend big school and have those daily personal interactions with other students because of where they live. I understand my colleague the member for Warrego, who is a passionate advocate for children who live in rural and remote areas in Queensland, as are all members of the LNP, is going to speak to that later, because many of those children in more rural and remote areas are distance education families and may be on School of the Air or accessing mobile kindy. I look forward to hearing the member's contribution because she is very passionate about ensuring that children who are unable to access a normal school campus have every opportunity to have the best educational experience possible.

The term 'compulsory prep' could more accurately be defined as certain conditions that must be met before a child can be accepted into grade 1. These include completing a prep year in Queensland or a prep equivalent in another jurisdiction. There is provision in the bill for children not developmentally ready for school and for parents seeking to delay entry to school due to distance of travel and where a child attends boarding school. These exemptions allow for some flexibility for families and principals in determining a child's readiness depending on the child's individual circumstance. There is also a provision for children who are registered as homeschooled a year before enrolling in grade 1 in a state or non-government school.

We know from current information the current level of attendance for prep sits at around 97 per cent. In 2015 approximately 400 children in the state schooling sector did not attend prep prior to enrolment in year 1 and of those approximately 17 per cent were Indigenous and 63 per cent were from metropolitan areas. I would ask the minister to advise the House the cohort of children who make up the remaining 20 per cent. For example, are they children from regional Queensland who have limited prep options? For the benefit of those families, could the minister advise what might be done to address that with these changes? I ask the minister to also advise if we can expect to see any real movement above that 97 per cent mark for attendance given the number of built-in exemptions that have been afforded in this bill, or is this 97 per cent expected to be the ceiling? Whilst there is a consensus of views that children starting prep benefit long term, I would note that the committee was not provided with evidence that making prep compulsory will lift the rates of attendance any higher than they already are and I would be interested to hear from the minister how the department will be working to improve those attendance rates.

I also note that the bill continues to enshrine the minimum age limit for which a student must commence schooling at six years and six months. I would ask the minister to clarify what options will be available to education officials, principals et cetera if children are enrolled in prep and parents then do not send their children to school given that prep is now compulsory. The LNP is absolutely committed

to providing all Queensland children with access to a first-class education, and this starts with a prep year experience for them. Indeed, it was the LNP shadow minister in 2006 that first proposed the introduction of full-time teacher aides for prep in Queensland schools and then the LNP in government committed to boosting teacher aide prep hours across Queensland for prep classes, so the LNP does have a very proud record in supporting a preparatory year here in Queensland.

The second objective of the bill is to improve regulation of the teaching provision in Queensland, including by providing a contemporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers and improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the college to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students. Prior to the bill coming into the House I had the opportunity to meet with the QCT which spoke to me about the changes that it believed would enhance its work as the regulatory body for the teaching profession here in Queensland and the issues that it raised with me and spoke to me about are reflected in the legislative amendments that we see here in the bill. As reported by the parliamentary committee—

A 10 year review of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 (College of Teachers Act) highlighted the need for improvements in the College's governance structure; teacher disciplinary framework; and areas of the regulation of the teaching profession that deal with the notification of allegations of child harm and regency of practice requirements for teachers.

The bill also makes a number of minor amendments to lower the regulatory burden to the college, including the requirement to issue a registration card. There is a reduction from 17 to 15 members of the teachers college board that will remove the provision for a nominee of the Queensland Public Sector Union and providing one nominee of the minister instead of two. The bill removes the mandatory requirement for the college to impose specific returning-to-teaching conditions on teachers wishing to renew their registration and instead ensures teachers meet nationally agreed regency of practice requirements under its general condition power in the College of Teachers act. The college's internal disciplinary committee will also be renamed as the Professional Capacity and Teacher Conduct Committee, the PC&TC Committee, as part of this bill. Amendments will also allow the college to enter into voluntary practice and conduct agreements with teachers for PC&TC matters that require minor disciplinary actions as there are many cases where in minor disciplinary matters the teacher recognises that the behaviour was wrong and accepts the proposed disciplinary action.

One of the more contentious changes in the bill enables the college to consider a broader range of information to decide if there are grounds for disciplinary action. By removing the section that defines disciplinary information, it enables the college to consider any information as the basis for practice and conduct proceedings. As the committee reported, the college will be able to investigate disciplinary issues or child safety concerns reported about a teacher in the media. However, submissions by the department said that the college must still have a reasonable belief that a ground for disciplinary action exists before taking disciplinary action against a teacher. That would prevent the college from acting on rumour or innuendo. I note that the minister referred to that, but I am keen to hear from the minister as to what checks and balances will be in place to ensure that that is going to happen.

The bill also seeks to improve the responsiveness of the college to protect children from harm. The House knows how very passionate I am about ensuring that all of our children are as safe as they possibly can be. 'Harm' is defined in section 7 of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act as—

... any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

The committee reported advice from the department that there have been concerns that there are some circumstances where the current act does not allow the college to act soon enough to protect the interests, safety and wellbeing of children in schools. Currently, a teacher's registration may be suspended if the college reasonably believes that the teacher poses an imminent risk of harm to the children. Clause 18 of the bill clarifies that harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance, or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances. Although we would all agree that complaints be dealt with carefully and appropriately, it is not clear how the changes will address vexatious complaints—how they will be handled and how expeditiously they will be finalised. I seek the minister's advice on how they are going to be handled.

The third objective is to introduce a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements. According to the explanatory notes, in 2014 the Queensland Audit Office conducted a performance audit of the oversight of the state recurrent funding program for non-state schools and estimated that \$1.5 million in funds were overpaid to some non-state schools owing to the overcounting of student numbers. In order to address that, the bill introduces a formal statutory process for the recovery of state and Commonwealth government funding to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements.

The final objective is to strengthen oversight of non-state schools by enabling the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to disclose relevant information with law enforcement agencies and to reduce red tape for non-state schools by reducing requirements for the provision of school survey data. The Non-State Schools Accreditation Board works with the governing bodies of non-state schools for accreditation and funding purposes. The explanatory notes and the report of the committee state that the board needs to be strengthened to provide the accreditation board and its auditors with the ability to report suspicions of criminal activity such as fraud—overclaimed enrolments—the use of school funds for non-educational purposes, or the siphoning of funds to outside of Australia. Currently, the accreditation act does not allow for the accreditation board and its auditors to report their suspicions to the Queensland Police Service. This amendment allows for the information to be shared with the appropriate agencies to ensure that any fraudulent or other criminal activity is mitigated.

I turn now to the committee report. There were seven submissions to the committee and one supplementary submission by the Queensland Teachers' Union. All of the submissions were supportive of each of the main elements of the bill. One reservation was put forward by the Catholic Education Commission surrounding the funding for non-government prep year students. I have spoken to them about this matter. I understand that this issue is not directly related to the workings of this House and that the department of education addressed these concerns. Although it remains an issue for the Catholic Education Commission, I think that it is important to acknowledge the strong commitment of non-government schools, including Catholic schools, to delivering quality prep education.

In closing, I would like to thank the committee for its examination of the bill, in particular my LNP colleagues the members for Broadwater, Albert and Buderim. I would also like to thank the secretariat, the departmental officers and, of course, those who provided submissions to the committee. Delivering a quality education for our children should always be a priority. The prep year provides the platform for our children to reach their potential, turn their aspirations into reality and be contributing members of our community. I look forward to hearing the minister's responses to my concerns in her closing remarks.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (11.55 am): I rise to speak in support of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill as the chair of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee, whose responsibility it was to examine the bill in detail. Firstly, I would like to thank the groups and organisations for their submissions and those who spoke to the committee at the public hearings that were held over the duration of the examination of the bill. I would also like to thank the committee members from both sides of the House and the secretariat staff for their involvement in the examination of this bill.

The Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 makes significant amendments to the prep year of schooling, the teaching profession and non-state school funding arrangements. The bill will ensure that all Queensland children start their school education in prep. It will improve the regulation of teaching in Queensland by streamlining governance, improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the Queensland College of Teachers to protect our all-important students. The bill will also improve the administration of the Commonwealth and state funding to non-state schools by establishing statutory arrangements for the recovery of state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements. The bill will also improve oversight of non-state schools by allowing the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to share information with law enforcement agencies and reduce the collection of unnecessary school survey data.

As a parent, former teacher and high school principal, along with just about every other member of this House, I understand the importance of education at an early age and the role it plays in the development of our young children. By the time a young person reaches the age of five, they have generally learned about 70 per cent of their learning skills, including asking complex questions. As every parent in the House will know, the most feared complex question that is asked of a parent is, 'Where do babies come from?' Perhaps it is not a complex question but more of a complex answer given by parents.

Mr Boothman: Storks.

Mr STEWART: Storks, a cabbage patch, among some other examples of where children come from. Other learning skills include improving walking, running and climbing skills; improving drawing skills and learning to write some numbers and letters; understanding the meaning of numbers; developing relationships with peers; showing independence; showing confidence and increasing skill and speed in physical abilities; and having extended conversations. All of that is learned through the role that a parent plays for their own child in developing learning skills from a young age.

Perhaps one of the most valuable gifts education can give to a young child is the ability to read. Research conducted by Lorelee Hiskin from the University of Missouri showed that students who have a positive attitude towards reading and confidence in reading have higher levels of academic success. Therefore, the sooner we can get children learning to read, the better their educational outcomes. This bill makes prep the compulsory first year of schooling by providing that a principal of a state or non-state school must not enrol a child into year 1 until the child has undertaken prep in a state or non-state school. That is an important step in securing better long-term educational outcomes for that student.

As we know, all flowers do not bloom on exactly the same day. Our children's educational milestones are like those flowers: they do not all happen on the one day, or exactly at the same time as each other. That is why this bill does not lower the compulsory schooling age of six years and six months. It provides flexibility for parents to determine whether their child should enter prep in the year they turn five by 30 June, or the following year. This is a signature feature of this amendment, ensuring that parents retain the choice about when their child is ready for schooling.

This bill has four key components to it. I have already spoken about the introduction of compulsory prep which is very close to my heart. I would also like to speak on the second aspect of the bill, namely the ability this bill brings to improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the College of Teachers to protect the safety and wellbeing of our Queensland students. Protecting the safety and wellbeing of our students is our No. 1 priority. This bill gives the college stronger powers to suspend a teacher's registration where the college reasonably believes the teacher poses an unacceptable risk of significant harm to our children. A decision to suspend a teacher's registration will be reviewed by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. A person cannot work in a school when their registration is suspended. Currently the threshold for suspending a teacher's registration requires the college to believe there is imminent risk of harm. It is important that we provide the college with the ability to act early and suspend a teacher's registration when that is in the best interests of our children. This current threshold of imminent risk is too high and does not align with the removal of educators in the early childhood education and care sector because of risk to children.

The department advise that there have been concerns that there are some circumstances where the act does not allow the college to act soon enough to protect the interests, safety and wellbeing of our children. Currently a teacher's registration may be suspended if the college reasonably believes that the teacher poses an imminent risk of harm to children. Clause 33 makes a small but important amendment to section 49 of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act by changing the threshold for suspension from imminent risk to a lower threshold of unacceptable risk of harm to children. Lowering the threshold for suspension allows the college to suspend a teacher's registration immediately where the college reasonably believes that the teacher poses an unacceptable risk of harm to our children. Essentially, the amendment provides the college with the ability to act earlier. The explanatory notes describe the policy intent of the amendment to section 49 as—

The main purpose of a section 49 suspension is to ensure children are protected while the College progresses disciplinary action to the relevant disciplinary (now practice and conduct) body, which will make the final decision in relation to the teacher's registration. The new threshold for suspension of teacher registration is intended to strengthen the ability of the College to act in the best interests of children to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students.

In considering the suspension of teachers, the Queensland Teachers' Union maintains that the welfare and best interests of children is a paramount concern and that no objection to lowering the threshold was any of their concern. The QTU believes that the amendment to section 49 is balanced by the ability of the teacher to appeal the suspension of registration.

This bill promotes the high value of education in our community by determining that the prep year of schooling becomes compulsory and provides every opportunity for our young people to succeed in life through high-level education learning outcomes built on the foundations from a compulsory prep education and, secondly, by delivering stronger powers to the Queensland College of Teachers to suspend a teacher's registration where the college reasonably believes the teacher poses an unacceptable risk of harm to a child. For these reasons, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (12.03 pm): I rise to contribute to the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I acknowledge my fellow colleagues on the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: the members for Albert, Buderim, Townsville, Maryborough and Pumicestone. We do not always agree, but there are times when we are able to, in a bipartisan fashion, work together and agree. I also acknowledge the secretariat for the work that they did, the departmental officials who came and briefed the committee and, of course, those who took the time to make submissions.

As I said, we do not always in this House agree, but I think there is one thing that we can all agree on, and that is that education is the greatest gift that society and government can ever give a child. It is the foundation stone of someone's future. The opportunities that one gets from education will help set them up for life. I appreciate that all 89 members of this House are absolutely committed to making sure that the next generation of leaders are given the best possible start. In that vein I acknowledge the five schools in my electorate of Broadwater: Coombabah State High School, Coombabah State School, Labrador State School, St Francis Xavier Catholic School and Biggera Waters State School. The principals, teachers and teacher aides at those schools and schools across Queensland are doing a fantastic job of educating our children.

The shadow minister for education has touched on the move to compulsory prep. We know that the preparatory year of education is incredibly important. If we do not get it right from the beginning it makes it so much more difficult when those children get older. It is also particularly important to not only get the education component right but also get the relationship between teachers and students right. If kids do not enjoy the first years of school then they will not enjoy the next years, particularly moving into secondary education where we all know that it is vital for their future that they enjoy and engage in their education. We need to be conscious of and respect a family's choice and work with families to make sure that we can offer them the best option so that government and society can provide that education.

My good friend and colleague the member for Warrego has concerns about how we make sure that in rural and regional Queensland we offer the best form of early years and preparatory education. I do not intend to canvass the issues that the member for Warrego will, but I know that she and the member for Gregory are incredibly passionate about this. We know that it is not as easy for people who live in rural and regional Queensland to get access to school, to be able to drive five minutes down the road, as might be the case for those who live in more urban parts of Queensland. The shadow minister has touched on it and I am sure that the minister in responding to the debate will respond to the concerns that have been raised by the member for Aspley and will, in the course of this debate, be raised by the member for Warrego.

There are a number of issues that are being addressed in this bill and it is not my intention to canvass them all, but I do want to touch on the regulation of the teaching profession. There are a few elements with respect to that. Firstly, with regard to the Queensland College of Teachers and their ability now to have more flexibility in the return-to-work provisions, I can absolutely see the benefits of this. Being too prescriptive does not always provide the best outcome. What we are acknowledging here is that the Queensland College of Teachers is best placed, rather than government, to determine the right provisions for that particular individual. Importantly, this proposed change takes into account the individuality of circumstances for that particular teacher who seeks to return to the profession rather than assuming that a one-size-fits-all approach is going to work because, as we know, a one-size-fits-all approach very rarely works.

In relation to regulation of the teaching profession, we need to be conscious of the changes with respect to the disciplinary role of the Queensland College of Teachers. I echo the comments of my colleague on the committee the member for Townsville that our priority must always be the safety of children at school. The children who we are educating today are the leaders of tomorrow. Our focus should always be the safety of those students. As the member for Aspley touched on, and the member for Albert is passionate about, this is about making sure there is an appropriate mechanism to respond to vexatious complaints. The last thing that any of us want to see is a good teacher, who is out there inspiring children and providing quality education, slurred and sullied because of a vexatious complaint.

Whilst our priority will always and should always be the safety of children, we also need to make sure that we are conscious of natural justice and procedural fairness where appropriate to ensure that we do not lose good teachers from the profession as a result of vexatious complaints. As I said, that is something that the member for Albert is very passionate about and I trust that he will touch on it in his contribution to the debate.

The other thing that I will quickly touch on is debt recovery from non-state schools. We need to ensure integrity in the system. While we want to encourage parents to exercise their freedom of choice and their right to choose what is right for them and their child, we also need to make sure that, where taxpayer dollars are being sent to state and non-state schools, there is integrity in the system to ensure that there is no inappropriate use of funding or inappropriate oversupply of funding to non-state schools. Ultimately, that comes down to government offering the people of Queensland an assurance that taxpayer dollars are not going to be used inappropriately. I acknowledge that what we are doing here is ensuring that there will remain integrity in the system.

As I said, I think all 89 members of this House are incredibly passionate about education. I am particularly passionate about it, as is the shadow minister, because it is the foundation stone of someone's future. It is so critical that we get right the early years and the preparatory years, because it makes a difference. I had a fantastic preschool teacher and a great year 1 teacher. I loved school and I loved learning. To this day I continue to enjoy learning and each and every day I learn something new. I acknowledge and agree with the comments of the member for Townsville about the importance of reading. If you give a child the gift of reading, you give them the gift of knowledge. A thirst for knowledge and to learn something new each and every day allows children to immerse themselves in an amazing world of opportunities and experience. On that note, I acknowledge the teachers in my local schools and across Queensland who are encouraging students to participate in the Reading Challenge. As we all know, it is very important that kids learn to love school, to love learning and to love reading.

The opposition will not be opposing the bill. Some issues will be raised by my colleagues the members for Albert and Warrego. I will leave it to those more passionate members to raise those issues on behalf of their communities.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.12 pm): I rise to speak on the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. Like the chair of the committee, the member for Townsville, and the deputy chair, the member for Broadwater, I acknowledge that, while the committee members do not often agree, in this case there was quite a consensus. It was interesting to hear from the various people who addressed the committee. I have to back up the comments of the chair and the deputy chair that all 89 people in this House are advocating for a better education system for our young ones, who are the future leaders of the state. It is quite correct to say that everyone in this House is concerned about the future and the education of younger Queenslanders who are attending school now.

In 2007 prep commenced throughout Queensland. I have seen the benefits of prep in my schools, of which there are over 27 in my electorate. My electorate is a very low socio-economic area of Queensland, with one of the highest rates of youth unemployment and unemployment generally in the state and across the country. I have seen the benefits that children get from prep in schools such as Sunbury State School, Maryborough West State School and Granville State School in Maryborough. Sunbury State School has a very beneficial program called KOALAS Early Learning Program, which parents and prep students are involved in. It is getting absolutely great results. We know that we are getting good results because of prep.

I was looking at the latest NAPLAN results for the electorate and they are fantastic. With the money that has been invested by the Palaszczuk Labor government into education in my electorate, we are starting to see the results come through NAPLAN. As the local member, I am proud to say that we have had some really good results from NAPLAN. I congratulate all the teachers, teacher aides, principals and everyone in the regional education office in my electorate, who all go above and beyond the call of duty, especially when we look at the hours that teachers put in. We should congratulate the teachers for the work that they do. This subject is close to me, as I know quite a few teachers. Often we hear that teachers have X amount of holidays a year and have it pretty easy, but I know that that is not the case.

The bill provides that state or non-state school principals may not enrol a student in year 1 unless the child has undertaken prep. The only exceptions to that requirement in the bill are that the child was registered for home education in the year prior to enrolment in the school, the child has undertaken prep in Queensland or the equivalent in another jurisdiction or the principal is satisfied that the child is ready for schooling in year 1, taking into account the child's social, emotional and developmental attributes. This is a good bill. Having worked on the bill with my fellow committee members, I know that this is good legislation and it should be passed by the House. I am pleased that members on the other side of the House are backing it, because it is for the betterment of our school aged children across the state.

The bill does not lower Queensland's compulsory schooling age. That means that parents will retain the flexibility to delay their child's entry into schooling until the year that the child reaches compulsory school age. However, under the proposed reforms, the child should be enrolled in prep as the first year of schooling. As a parent, I know the importance of that. My oldest child is now a schoolteacher. As his parents, we did not believe that he was ready to start school. We were given great consideration by the education department. As parents, we realised that he was not ready and we held him back a little longer, and he has gone on to bigger and better things within education. He was just not ready to start school at that particular time.

The bill deals with teacher registration. This is also good legislation. I concur with the member for Albert that there have been cases where vexatious complaints have been made against teachers and the cases have dragged on and on. The legislation will give the teachers registration board the power to have such allegations cleared up, allowing the teacher back into the classroom. I agree with the other members of the committee that the safety of our children is paramount. However, we have to remember that, in this modern age of social media and such things, people can make vexatious complaints and ruin a person's reputation very quickly. We have to be mindful of that. I was very happy to be a member of a committee that was very mindful of that. The new teacher registration powers will enable them to act very quickly in such matters. The bill also allows for the recovery of funding from non-government schools. I think that is self-explanatory. We covered that through the committee process.

In summing-up, I support the bill and I commend it to the House. Tomorrow across the state is Teacher Aides Day. I wish all the teacher aides in the Maryborough electorate a great day. They do a fantastic job. I hope they have a happy day. I will be thinking of them tomorrow.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (12.19 pm): I rise today to make a reasonably short contribution to the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. From the outset, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, the committee staff and all those who participated in the hearings for their contributions.

I follow in the footsteps of the shadow minister and the member for Maryborough in wishing our teacher aides a fantastic day tomorrow. Teacher Aide Day is 2 September. They do a fantastic job. I have a daughter in prep this year. My daughter absolutely loves going to school. She does not like missing school. She finds it an interesting and exciting place where she gets to catch-up with her friends and learn lots of new and interesting things.

This bill can be broken down into multiple key parts: making prep compulsory; making changes to the regulation of the teaching profession—I will go into that in a little more detail later—introducing debt recovery arrangements for non-state school funding; and strengthening the oversight of non-state schools. Prep was introduced in Queensland in 2007. Reading the committee's report we can see that we have made some inroads when it comes to our NAPLAN results, and we should all be proud of that. We are part of the world community and education is paramount. We need to ensure that Australia is a leader in terms of education. When one does a little research on this matter one finds that when it comes to the PISA, the Programme for International Student Assessment, results from 2009 to 2012 we have seen a decline in education in Australia across-the-board. Unfortunately, this is something we need to work on.

A government member interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: When it comes to this issue, though, the LNP is very supportive of getting the best standard and a world-class education for our young people. As a father of a daughter in prep that is certainly something that I think we should strive for.

We need our young people to be engaged in reading and their families to be engaged in reading. It has been documented many times in the past that reading to your children at home and getting them interested in picking up a book and reading it and inspiring their imagination is very important. It gives them the best start in life. Given the hours we do as members of parliament, my wife certainly takes the lead role in sitting down with my children and reading them books and inspiring their imaginations.

I turn to the issue of the regulation of the teaching profession. The bill makes some minor changes to lower the regulatory burden on the College of Teachers—for example, the requirement for registration cards. One of the major changes in this legislation involves how disciplinary action is taken against teachers. I am sure everybody in this chamber would agree that the safety of our children is paramount and this has to be given priority. Removing disciplinary information enables the College of Teachers to consider any information as the basis for any conduct proceedings. Furthermore, the bill talks about improving responsiveness when it comes to protecting children at risk. I certainly commend the government for that. They are trying to speed up the process.

As the member for Broadwater mentioned before, one of the main concerns we have with this bill is the issue of vexatious claims and how they are dealt with. I have actually spoken to a couple of teachers who have had frivolous and vexatious claims made against them. Whilst it is critical to ensure student safety and protection, claims against staff members which are misleading and untrue potentially destroy the careers of innocent individuals. The strain and stress it puts on them is enormous. It is something that I find very concerning.

We certainly do need to protect children, but justice needs to be served when it comes to these claims against teachers before the information goes out into the media. It could potentially destroy a person's career and it is something that they will never come back from. A couple of teachers have come to see me about this legislation. One teacher said, 'Mark, these accusations against me completely destroyed the very fibre of my being. It made me leave the profession.' This person was a great teacher. Before this complaint, this person, in their long career, had never had any complaints against them. This one complaint destroyed her passion and love for teaching. I feel there needs to be protections against vexatious claims. If a person is guilty then the book should be thrown at them. When it comes to vexatious claims, people's names and integrity need to be protected.

They are the main parts of the bill that I wanted to speak to. Again I thank my fellow committee members for their work. It is good to see government members and opposition members working together on this bill and achieving a great outcome.

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (12.27 pm): I rise today to support the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I wish to thank the other committee members and the secretariat for the effort they put into reviewing the substance of this bill. I should mention, as my other colleagues have done, it is Teacher Aide Day tomorrow. Teacher aides do a wonderful job in our schools. We should always remember them.

The primary objective of this bill is to deliver a better education system to Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government has had the foresight through Advancing Queensland to further educate our children. As an enormous ancillary benefit we will be creating further jobs. Prep was introduced by a Labor government in 2007. We find nine years later that we are advancing it again. The opposition had three years to do something with it and did absolutely nothing. I am happy that they are supporting this bill. This is a good bill.

The primary benefits of this bill are: to make it compulsory for the first year of schooling for our children to be prep; to improve the regulation of teaching by providing innovative, streamlined governance; to improve the structure of the Queensland College of Teachers; to improve the disciplinary framework for strengthening the ability to protect the safety and wellbeing of our students; and to introduce a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement.

The bill implements the Palaszczuk government's commitment to make prep the compulsory first year of school education by amending the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and to provide that a state or non-state school principal must not enrol a child in year 1 unless the child has undertaken prep at a state school, a non-state school or other equivalent education facility. The principal must also be satisfied that the child is ready for school in year 1, taking into account the child's attributes.

The reality is that in Queensland currently there is no requirement for a child to undertake prep. This quite often leaves children who were not engaged in the prep system at a distinct disadvantage to those who were. International evidence indicates that children who have participated in a quality prep or equivalent education program gain significant long-term benefits. These include higher levels of completed education, better employment opportunities, greater stability in relationships going forward and lower rates of mental illness. The only disparity that I must mention is that prep teachers are required to achieve the same level of qualification as primary school teachers but work at a greatly reduced level of remuneration.

I will now turn my focus to our invaluable dedicated teachers. There will be an improvement of the teacher disciplinary framework by removing unnecessary red tape, allowing teacher impairment to be considered in a supportive way when deciding minor disciplinary matters and allowing the College of Teachers to enter into voluntary agreements for resolution of minor disciplinary matters. There will be further improvement in other areas of regulation for our 43,000 teaching professionals by clarifying when schools must notify the college about allegations of child harm—allowing suspension of registration if there is an imminent risk to a child—and providing more flexibility to the college to ensure teachers meet recency of practice requirements.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that the committee members heard evidence from the Queensland Teachers' Union that some teachers have at times faced three different investigations all at once, suffering character assassination by public disclosure of vexatious claims made by some students and those allegations, when investigated, were found not to have any substance at all. This remains a concern moving forward.

The estimated financial impact of making prep compulsory and other changes are anticipated to be minimal as the necessary structure is currently in place and any additional operational costs will be met from within existing resources. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (12.33 pm): Firstly, I would like to thank the committee chair, committee members and the committee staff for their hard work and diligence through this process. I rise to speak to the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The bill before the House primarily sets out to achieve the following: first, to make the preparatory year the compulsory first year of school education here in Queensland; secondly, to improve the regulation of the teaching provision in Queensland, including by providing a contemporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers and improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the college to protect the safety and wellbeing of all students; thirdly, to introduce a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement; and, fourthly, to strengthen oversight of non-state schools by enabling the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to disclose information to law enforcement agencies and reduce red tape for non-state schools by reducing requirements for the provision of school survey data.

On 24 January this year, just before the new school year was about to commence—a coincidence I think not—the Premier and Minister for Education announced that prep attendance will become mandatory for Queensland children from 2017 under the proposed legislative changes to ensure that ‘no child is left behind’. While I can agree that the early years of learning are important, I am not sure that adding more red tape and more bureaucracy to a system that is already working well is going to dramatically improve any outcomes. I also note that when the move to make prep compulsory was last considered in 2013, a parliamentary committee was advised by the education department that it would be unlikely to lift attendance rates.

In short, while the introduction of prep appears to have been successful as we have seen an improvement in the NAPLAN results, it should also be recognised that not all children are the same and that there should be room for parents, principals and teachers to work together to decide when a child is ready to start in prep. The committee noted, however, that the introduction of compulsory prep for all Queensland was supported by most submitters, with Independent Schools Queensland believing the bill provides enough flexibility for the schools they represent. However, if the government is serious about leaving no child left behind, it should look to invest in solutions that engage families in a child’s education and development, rather than making prep compulsory as a quick prestart of the school year announcement.

The Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 will also strengthen the Queensland College of Teachers’ powers to suspend a teacher judged to be a risk to children. The department advised the committee—

There have been concerns that there are some circumstances where the current act does not allow the college to act soon enough to protect the interests, safety and wellbeing of children in schools.

Currently a teacher’s registration may be suspended if the college reasonably believes the teacher poses an ‘imminent risk of harm to children’. ‘Harm’ is defined in section 7 of the College of Teachers act as ‘any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing’. Clause 18 of the bill clarifies that harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

It is also important to note the small but important amendments to section 49 of the College of Teachers act by changing the threshold for suspension from an ‘imminent risk’ to a lower threshold of ‘unacceptable risk’ of harm to a child which provides the college with the ability to act much earlier. The explanatory notes further state specifically that the new threshold of suspension of teacher registration is intended to strengthen the ability of the college to act in the best interests of children to protect the safety and wellbeing of all students.

This bill further contains provisions to improve administration of the Commonwealth and state funding to non-state schools. Eligible non-state schools may receive funding from both the state and the Australian government. In the 2014-15 financial year, accredited non-state schools received \$693.1 million in grants from the Queensland government and \$2.1 billion from the Australian government. These grants are calculated based on the non-state schools’ annual student numbers.

The committee learned that in 2014 the Queensland Audit Office conducted a performance audit of the oversight of the state recurrent funding program for non-state schools and estimated that \$1.5 million in funds were overpaid to some non-state schools due to the overcounting of student numbers. In response to those findings, the bill is introducing a formal mechanism for the recovery of state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements. Lastly, the bill will also improve oversight of non-state schools by allowing the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to share information with law enforcement agencies and reduce the collection of unnecessary school survey data.

I would also like to make a comment relating to the way teachers are treated. A couple of my colleagues, including the member for Albert and also the member for Pumicestone, touched upon this. There are some teachers in the profession who are unduly impacted by false and vexatious accusations. I think there has to be a middle ground found somewhere so that we can protect those teachers as well.

It is great to come out with the big stick, but at the same time we have to think of those teachers and the impact on their families at home when they are accused of something that may never be substantiated. I believe that to be the big hole in this bill. There is middle ground still to be found. I am sure all teachers try to do the right thing, but there are some who are falsely accused and we need to make sure we look after them as well as the interests of the children. I hope the Minister for Education takes that on board.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (12.40 pm): The importance of education in influencing our future cannot be overstated. If we make the right decisions about education, if we invest in our children and in equipping them to be future citizens, then we are shoring up our state to be the best it can be and for Queenslanders to be the best we can. That is why I am so proud to be a member of the Labor Party, because we have a track record on education. Over successive state Labor governments—even before the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power last year, and I do want to talk later about our achievements in education over the last 18 months including this year's \$9.1 billion investment in education in the 2016-17 budget—we have introduced major milestones in education including the transition of year 7 to high school, implementing universal access to kindergarten, implementation of the Australian curriculum, introduction of the prep year, which we talk about in this bill, and commitment to providing the best possible physical environment for learning with a strong commitment to capital works and maintenance budgets. These have had major and long-term impacts on the foundation we are providing for our young people, because education is in Labor's DNA and we have so much to show for it. This bill is a continuation of our commitment to education.

I would like to thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for the work it did on this report. It was great to see the bipartisan support which has been expressed in that report and which has been expressed by members opposite.

The primary objectives, among others, for the bill include making the prep year the compulsory first year of school education in Queensland and improving regulation of the teaching provision in Queensland, including by providing a contemporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers and improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the college to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students. If I had an hour, I would love to talk more about that last dot point because it is so important that we provide a supported environment for our students and teachers.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for Morayfield and other members for suggesting they might move an extension. I will decline at this point as I have plenty of opportunities in this term to talk more about these important matters.

I think a number of members have already talked about the already high levels of prep enrolment in Queensland, at 77 per cent. However, despite that, there is currently no requirement for a child to undertake a prep year before entering year 1. There is strong evidence to show that children who have participated in a high-quality prep year, or an equivalent education program, gain significant long-term benefits including high levels of completed education, subsequent employment, greater stability in relationships and lower rates of mental illness.

I can remember when the prep year was introduced in 2007. My daughter was in the last cohort of students to be in the preschool year at Morningside State School, our wonderful local school. I can remember the teachers at the end of that year at Morningside State School saying to me what a difference they could see, particularly the year 1 teachers. They had students coming in all on a reasonably level playing field and all with a great foundation for learning in year 1. They could notice a palpable difference.

Since then, we have been able to see the benefit in measures like NAPLAN. Although it is important to acknowledge that NAPLAN is just one tool that teachers and parents can use to get an idea about student learning, they are very useful statistics. The NAPLAN results for this year have shown that Queensland students have continued to outpace the nation. I would like to congratulate our Queensland teachers and students for their efforts.

Compared with last year, we have improved in 15 out of 20 test areas in our students' performance in meeting the national minimum standards. Our year 3 students continue to perform strongly, with their 2016 results improving across all test areas, ranking first in the country for grammar and punctuation against national minimum standards. We also ranked second in the country for students meeting the national minimum standard in the areas of year 3 reading and numeracy, year 5 grammar and punctuation, and year 7 spelling. This strong improvement that we are seeing, particularly in the early years, shows that our education reforms and our investment in extra teachers are delivering results. Even though there are only a small number of students not currently doing prep, we have a commitment to all students and we want to be sure that they all reap the benefits of this very strong foundation that we are committed to providing for them.

I would like to congratulate all of my local schools for the work they are doing with their students to make sure they reach their full potential. I have 13 schools in my electorate and they are all different. They all have their own particular strengths and personal styles, but they are all doing excellent work. In fact, we are spoilt for choice in the Bulimba electorate. I cannot praise highly enough the principals, teachers and other staff and the parent communities for their professionalism and their dedication to students. I would like to mention those 13 schools because they deserve credit: Balmoral State High School, Murarrie State School, Seven Hills, Norman Park, Cannon Hill, Bulimba and Morningside state schools, Camp Hill State School, which is physically in the electorate of the member for Chatsworth—

Mr Walker: My old school.

Ms FARMER: Thank you for that acknowledgement, member for Mansfield. I have a number of students attending that school. The remaining schools in my electorate are Cannon Hill Anglican College, Lourdes Hill College, St Oliver Plunkett, St Thomas, and Saints Peter and Paul's. As I said, they are wonderful schools and I am so proud to represent them.

I would like to talk about other education achievements which, along with our initiatives around prep, have contributed to this excellence that we are seeing and this improvement in the results in Queensland students. One of those is providing enough teachers to carry out the important work that they need to do. Could we get a more enthusiastic education minister? I think we all get excited when we see her stand up to talk about the things that she is doing on a daily basis to improve the education environment for our children.

It was great to read a media release from the minister not long ago about class sizes. The data for 2016 showed that the vast majority of classes were well above the targets. Almost 90 per cent of primary and 95 per cent of secondary classes had the agreed number of students or even fewer. In fact, there was a decrease in average class sizes across all year levels. This is fantastic because it is showing a very quick turnaround from the terrible situation that Queensland schools were in after the LNP government cut 500 teachers from our staffing levels. How that could not make a difference to classes and to the ability of our children to be the best that they could be defies belief. Our commitment is to ensure that our class sizes are right. In fact, we are actually over target. The number of class sizes over target is now at the lowest level since Labor government was previously in government.

There are a couple of other things I want to mention because I think it is really important to acknowledge some of the really strong initiatives that we have brought in just in the last 18 months. It is important to support our teachers. We have now made sure that they will have appropriate salaries to encourage them to stay in the classroom and use their experience and expertise to make sure our kids get a quality education. We are changing the senior assessment system. We have our Advance Queensland initiative such as the introduction of the digital technologies curriculum and the STEM teaching academy.

The minister just this week has been talking about the disability in schools review which is going to give us a lot of strong and confronting messages. The minister is willing to find out everything that we need to know there. We know that teachers have more control over what they teach out of the core curriculum. We are encouraging students to respect teachers more. We have grants to promote excellence in educational research. There is so much more, and that again shows why we on this side of the House can be so proud to be part of a Labor government. We have talked about Teacher Aide Day. I am very much looking forward to going to see the teacher aides at Cannon Hill State School and bringing along the cake that I deliver to all of our local schools to thank our teacher aides. I want to thank all of the teaching staff for everything they do.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (12.50 pm): I want to congratulate the Minister for Education for introducing the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 to this parliament. Education is of critical importance in ensuring a fair and equitable society. It is an issue that affects every single Queenslanders whether they are a student, a parent or a teacher. This week year 12 students across

the state sat the QCS. I want to wish all of those students all the best for their studies for the rest of the year, particularly those year 12 students in the electorate of Stretton and especially those students studying at Stretton State College, Calamvale Community College and the Islamic College of Brisbane.

The primary objectives of the bill are as follows: to ensure that all Queensland children start their school education in prep, to improve the regulation of teaching in Queensland, to improve the administration of the Commonwealth and state funding to non-state schools and to strengthen oversight of non-state schools. Prep was introduced in 2007 by the Labor government to ensure a strong foundation for children starting school. International evidence indicates that children who have participated in prep prior to year 1 gain significant long-term benefits. Currently, there is no requirement for a child to undertake prep the year before entering year 1; therefore, there are a small number of children missing out on the long-term benefits of undertaking prep.

This government wants each child to benefit from the foundations that prep establishes, and therefore this government has made a commitment that from 2017 prep will become the compulsory first year of school education in this state; therefore, from 2017 onwards, no principal of a state or non-state school will be able to enrol a child if they have not undertaken prep. Importantly, the bill does not lower the compulsory schooling age of six years and six months. Parents will have the choice to enrol their children for prep at the age of five if they determine that their child is ready.

The bill also seeks to improve regulation of the teaching profession in Queensland, including by providing a contemporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers and improving the teacher's disciplinary framework, which will strengthen the college's ability to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students. The college is the regulatory body responsible for registration and regulation of the teaching profession in Queensland. The bill will enable this government to uphold Queensland teaching standards and maintain public confidence by ensuring that education in Queensland schools is being provided in a professional and competent way.

The bill will also introduce a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement. Under the Commonwealth Australian Education Act, the federal government pays financial assistance to the state of Queensland for non-state schools. The Queensland Audit Office conducted a performance audit of the oversight of the state funding for non-state schools and highlighted the lack of a formal mechanism to recover overpayments. This bill provides a statutory process for recovery of state recurrent funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement, meeting the requirements under the AEA. This will enable the government to assign the right to recover any debt owed by a non-state school to the Commonwealth.

Further to this, the bill will strengthen the oversight of non-state schools by enabling the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to disclose relevant information with law enforcement agencies and remove the requirement for the provision of unnecessary school survey data to reduce red tape on non-state schools. This bill ensures that students will reap the long-term benefits that prep establishes, ensures professional and competent teaching practices by strengthening the teacher registration system. provides debt recovery arrangements and strengthens oversight of non-state schools.

I commend the committee, particularly the committee chair, the member for Townsville, for all their work on this bill. It is good to see that support for this bill is bipartisan. I do note that when the member for Aspley made her contribution on this debate she did state that the opposition would be supporting the bill, but she also had a few issues she wanted to raise with the Minister for Education. She was quite inquisitive and had a few questions and issues she wanted to raise with the Minister for Education. That really got me thinking about whether the member for Aspley was as inquisitive when she was part of the former LNP government, particularly when the member for Surfers Paradise was education minister. I wonder if the member for Aspley asked any questions when the member for Surfers Paradise slashed over \$23 million from the Department of Education and Training when he was the minister.

Mr Furner: How much?

Mr PEGG: It was \$23 million. I wonder whether the member for Aspley was vocal then. Certainly, the public record does not show that she was. What about when the member for Surfers Paradise was education minister and he proceeded to suggest a range of draconian saving measures, including reducing its expenditure on parent awareness strategies, reducing research into the best way to achieve educational outcomes for students and reducing funding for the professional development of teachers? Where was the member for Aspley then? Is the member for Aspley on the record on any of those issues at all? I think the public record is quite clear that she is not.

There is one burning question that I really wish the member for Aspley asked the member for Surfers Paradise when he was the minister for education and he cut the Fanfare program in 2013. We heard earlier in the week from the member for Townsville that Pimlico State High School was very successful in the Fanfare program. I have to disclose that I have participated in the competition myself. It is a great and fantastic competition. The member for Aspley should have asked the member for Surfers Paradise this question when he cut the popular Fanfare program: given that there was a general government spend of \$48.5 billion in that year, how much did that cut contribute to the bottom line of the state budget? If the member for Aspley had bothered to ask that of the member for Surfers Paradise, she would have found out that the answer was a paltry \$88,000. That is right—\$88,000, or 0.0002 per cent of the total budget.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr PEGG: I will say it slowly for the benefit of the member for Toowoomba North. It was 0.0002 per cent of the total budget. That is what cutting the Fanfare program and leaving those students in limbo did for the budget bottom line. I really wish the member for Aspley had asked that question of the member for Surfers Paradise at that time because it would have saved a lot of heartache for a lot of people.

This bill ensures that students will reap the long-term benefits that prep establishes. As I said at the beginning of my contribution, education is of central importance to a fair and equitable society, and that is why we are introducing amendments that will support Queensland's education and teaching system. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Pegg, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.57 pm to 2.30 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Shadows of Shoah Exhibition

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.30 pm): A couple of weeks ago I accepted an invitation to attend an exhibition entitled *Shadows of Shoah*, which was to have its opening night at the Brisbane Synagogue Memorial Hall. This event was well attended, with members of other faiths and dignitaries attending the opening along with representatives from all three levels of government in attendance. It is a remarkably powerful exhibition and was staged by the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies—QJBD.

Among other survivors of the Shoah, the exhibition features two cherished members of the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation, Reb Zelig Berkhut and Dr Bert Klug, who movingly describe their memories of this horrifically indescribable period of their young lives. An article about the exhibition quotes the president of the QJBD, Mr Jason Steinberg, who is present in the public gallery today. The article states—

... the exhibition was yet another way to educate Queenslanders about the shoah and impact of anti-semitism.

Mr Steinberg is quoted as saying that the exhibition was 'a huge honour for Queensland because it will help educate adults and school children about anti-semitism and the evils of the Holocaust'. *Shadows of Shoah* is an artistic project, communicating the gravity and significance of the Holocaust in a very sombre way. The exhibition was developed by Perry Trotter. He felt that for all the documentation and voluminous past research on the Holocaust, the human face was missing and that a shadow is cast upon Jewish people when the Shoah is discussed. This remarkable exhibition ensures each survivor's story is faithfully conveyed and is extremely moving.

At this event, I had the absolute honour of meeting Auschwitz Holocaust survivor Mr George Stein who is also present in the public gallery this afternoon. I have met some fascinating people in my time as a politician, but I was riveted by Mr Stein's story of hope and inspiration. He is the living embodiment of all that is good in mankind whilst staring down a dark time in history which displayed the absolute worst example of mankind. Born in Hungary in the late 1920s, Mr Stein was deported with his entire family to Auschwitz and he spent time in an underground tunnel manufacturing the V1 and V2 rockets at a concentration camp in Germany. He was liberated from Bergen-Belsen by the British forces on 15 April 1945 and, tragically, was the only survivor from his large family.

Mr Stein arrived in Australia as an unassisted migrant in 1955 with his wife and two small children and went on to become a true inspiration to all those who have known him professionally and in his local community. I will forever cherish the opportunity I had to spend time and converse with this

remarkable gentleman because his love for life, family and country and the wellbeing of all those around him stood out. From the darkest shadows of adversity, he now radiates a light that illuminates all that is good in humankind.

Koalas

 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (2.33 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to address some of the flippant remarks about protecting koalas in their environment made by the Minister for Environment regarding the comparison of policies between the previous LNP government and this increasingly irrelevant Labor government. The minister made reference to koala habitat in the electorate of Glass House bought during our term and the fact that only one koala lived on this block. I do not know whether the minister spent some time creeping through the undergrowth to identify this lone 'Kenny Koala' or dispatched a task force of rangers to do the work for him. The point is that, unlike the Labor government this year, the LNP actually purchased land suitable for koala habitat not only in the electorate of Glass House but also in my own electorate of Noosa where a sizable portion of land was purchased at 470 Lake MacDonald Drive.

Labor has the unique ability to spin a policy line while doing nothing substantive about ensuring the success of the policy being spun. This is clearly the case for the koalas of South-East Queensland. I congratulate Andrew Powell on the work he did for the previous government and advise that I have already had many proactive discussions with Dr Christian Rowan, the shadow environment minister, about the survival of koalas in South-East Queensland.

Friday, 30 September is national Save the Koala Day. A lunch is being held on Noosa's Makepeace Island, which is owned by Sir Richard Branson and Brett Godfrey, to raise funds to save koalas. I understand that the minister is attending the event and I am hoping for some good news from him. There is exciting news ahead as I understand that Sir Richard and Brett Godfrey are developing a plan to address the future of this unique animal.

The current government needs to start thinking outside the square to ensure the survival of koalas. Preliminary estimates in the new South East Queensland Regional Plan suggest that an additional two million people will be living in the south-east by 2041. Where will the koalas fit in? Work was being done towards the end of our term in government to conduct a trial to again translocate koalas into the Noosa National Park. This could be achieved in other areas purchased for koala habitat, and it is time for the government to act.

As I have said before in this place, if as a community we lose the battle to maintain healthy koala populations in South-East Queensland, then we have lost the war to maintain the environment in which these wonderful creatures live.

Murri Court

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.36 pm): Recently I had the opportunity to officially open the Murri Court at Wynnum Magistrates Court. It was a wonderful event for the bayside, for our local Murri Court elders, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, Magistrate Zac Sarra and all court staff. The Palaszczuk government committed \$8.7 million over four years to reinstate specialist courts and court diversion programs such as Murri Court. The Courts Innovation Program has been working to implement this election commitment which includes the reinstatement of Murri Courts. A number of Murri Courts have already been reinstated in locations including Cleveland, Cairns, Cherbourg, Mount Isa, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Brisbane and Richlands, and now the beautiful bayside has one in Wynnum.

Extensive consultation with the magistracy, elders and respected persons, community justice groups, members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and other key stakeholders including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Corrective Services across the state have contributed to the development and rollout of the new Murri Court.

I was thrilled to be at the formal launch of the Wynnum Murri Court and what a celebration it was in the Wynnum Court House. It started with Aunty Joan Hendriks' wonderful welcome to country and the fabulous Yulu Burri Ba Dancers entertaining us, elders and respected persons and our local magistrate, Zac Sarra, who told us how important the Murri Court program is and how it is working. It was a truly wonderful celebration and acknowledgement of this important specialist court.

Murri Courts are so important in our community. They can help to address overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system and can provide a more appropriate experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients of the criminal justice system. Our Murri Court elders, magistrates, government agencies and community service organisations provide great support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander court clients. I am so impressed by the work of our local elders and community justice groups who play an extremely important part of working collaboratively with Wynnum Murri Court and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

The Bayside Community Justice Group works tirelessly with our Wynnum community and I thank them for their great work and dedication, particularly Ms Nova Robertson and co-chairs Uncle Norm Clarke and Aunt Joan Hendriks who represent our community elders well. This is just one of 49 community justice groups across Queensland. I know that many elders are volunteers who work to share their knowledge, life experiences and cultural advice to enhance our justice system and improve services and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Their leadership and ongoing support is inspiring. I know how important the Murri Court is to not only my community but to other communities across the state.

I thank the elders of the Bayside Community Justice Group for their commitment to the Wynnum Murri Court and to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. I thank them for their ongoing passion, drive and commitment. It is so very important and I really value everything that they do.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Before I call the member for Moggill I would like to acknowledge the presence today in the gallery of former deputy premier Paul Lucas.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.39 pm): Not only does Queensland have an incompetent Labor government but it also has a sinister government that is harming the social and cultural fabric of Queensland and destroying the economic prosperity of hardworking families in Queensland. The Treasurer, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, does not like hearing the truth, but I will continue to tell my constituents in Moggill about this failing Treasurer and D-grade government. The member for Mulgrave, the Humpty Dumpty of the Queensland parliament, is certainly no Andrew Fraser, he is no David Hamill and he is no Terry Mackenroth. It is no wonder that this Labor Treasurer wants a return to the past, as birds of a feather flock together. Not being satisfied with raiding the long service leave entitlements of public servants and increasing debt on government owned corporations, the Treasurer has now raided the defined benefits superannuation fund of Queensland's public servants. This was a \$4 billion raid that was not recommended by the Queensland State Actuary. The Treasurer also wants the power to drastically alter the final payout for those public servants accessing the defined benefits scheme.

This government and its Treasurer are all sizzle and no spark, just like a scout's matchbox on a wet weekend. We know that Labor wants a carbon tax. We know that, because of their economic mismanagement, Labor governments all want more taxes and higher fees and charges, which leads to higher debt and deficits. This Labor government have their hands in the pockets of ordinary Queensland taxpayers, with higher fees and charges and higher car registration fees nearly double the rate of inflation. Youth unemployment is skyrocketing, particularly in regional Queensland. Business confidence is plummeting and overall infrastructure spending in Queensland is down by 4.7 per cent.

We also need to be very careful with respect to the agenda of the increasingly radical left-wing elements of the Palaszczuk Labor government. Those socialists opposite who support the now disgraced Safe Schools program have been unmasked as Marxist ideologues who are promulgating a socialist cultural agenda at the expense of the welfare of our developing children and young people. Those socialists opposite want to destroy families and harm the existence of humanity itself in Queensland. I call upon the National Civic Council, the Australian Family Association, Family Voice, like-minded conservatives and other associated organisations to mobilise your members and networks of influence to defeat this government at the next election. This is a sinister government beholden to unions and Marxists which is threatening social cohesion, threatening our economic prosperity, threatening rural and regional Queensland and threatening the wellbeing of families, including those in my electorate of Moggill.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is incapable of bringing forward a fair legislative agenda for the true benefit of all Queenslanders. Only the LNP has the experience, the energy and the enthusiasm to deliver stable government for Queensland.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I would like to acknowledge in the gallery students and staff from Hemmant Flexi-School from the electorate of Lytton. I call the member for Stretton.

Trade and Investment

Mr PEGG (Stretton—ALP) (2.42 pm): Over the past year I have had the opportunity to highlight the tremendous economic successes of the Palaszczuk government. Today I would like to focus on a key aspect of this success: trade and investment. Trade and investment are significant sources of growth for Queensland. Overseas exports account for around 20 per cent of Queensland's gross state product and an estimated 440,000—or one in five—Queensland jobs are underpinned by the export sector. The recent state budget increased funding to Trade & Investment Queensland, the government's global business agency, by a dramatic 14 per cent in the first year. The Deputy Premier also announced an additional \$25.3 million over five years to roll out a government-wide strategy to grow the state's international education and training sector and an extra \$1.5 million over three years for two new trade offices in Chengdu, China, and Singapore. I unreservedly congratulate the Deputy Premier for her outstanding success.

I do not say this lightly, but the LNP were absolutely hopeless when it came to encouraging trade and investment in Queensland. In their ruthless 2012-13 state budget—a budget where over 14,000 public servants were sacked—\$1.4 billion was wiped from the state's capital program and the supposedly low-tax LNP increased taxes by \$600 million. The trade portfolio did not fare very well either. Trade Queensland obtained funding of \$27.6 million, which was almost 20 per cent less than the funding allocated by the Palaszczuk government this year. In 2013-14 this allocation was barely increased, while in 2014-15 Trade Queensland was transformed into a poorly funded statutory body. Apart from numerous trips overseas—and there was always a healthy budget available for that—the member for Clayfield achieved nothing of worth in the trade portfolio while he was the responsible minister. This is what the 2014-15 budget papers said about Queensland's investment environment before the LNP were thrown out of power. I refer to Budget Paper No. 2, which states—

Excluding LNG, business investment has been weak ... overall business investment is expected to decline in 2013-14.

...

... overall business investment is expected to continue to fall, sharply in 2014-15 and more moderately in 2015-16 ...

What a great outcome! These economic wizards generated one of the worst investment outcomes the state has ever seen, as confirmed by their own budget papers. The problem is that the LNP did what they always do to fix things: they cut the guts out of the trade portfolio and expected investment to flood in. Of course this approach stifled economic growth, leading to poor trade and investment outcomes and increasing unemployment for hardworking Queenslanders.

Unfortunately, the LNP not only jeopardised future Asia-Pacific jobs and trade when they were in government but they have also managed to do that while in opposition. They have put future trade and jobs at risk by not ruling out a preference deal with One Nation. By doing this, those opposite are sending a message to the rest of the world that they accept the principles and policies of One Nation. I say to the member for Moggill that you can judge a person—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): The member's time has expired. I call the member for Hinchinbrook.

(Time expired)

Mr PEGG:—by the company they keep. Stop breaking bread with James Ashby—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order! I warn the member for Stretton. Once your time is over and the Speaker has asked you to resume your seat, you must resume your seat immediately.

Pelorus Island

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (2.45 pm): On 17 August 2016 the environment minister issued an interim conservation order over Pelorus Island to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council allegedly to protect the vulnerable beach stone-curlew from wild dogs that were released as part of a feral goat eradication program. Since that time there has been considerable public interest in the Hinchinbrook Shire Council's plan to remove the feral goats from the island and the circumstances in which the environment minister, supported by the agriculture minister, issued the conservation order. Today I want to pose some questions and issue some challenges to the Palaszczuk government.

Firstly, with respect to the agriculture minister, what has emerged is that her department strongly supports this project even if she does not. In fact, the Hinchinbrook Shire Council's Pelorus Island feral goat project plan lists the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries as a project partner. I table that plan for the information of all members.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Hinchinbrook Shire Council: Pelorus Island Goat Control Project—Project Plan and Communications Strategy 2016' [1433].

I also table the department's Animal Ethics Committee decision dated 30 May 2016 approving the involvement of wild dogs in the feral goat control program on Pelorus Island.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: Decision of Animal Ethics Committee, dated 30 May 2016, relating to the introduction of dingoes on Pelorus Island [1434].

The first question for the agriculture minister is: does she support the independent, science and best-practice based decisions of the Animal Ethics Committee within her own department? If she does, the minister also supports the use of the 1080 delivery device used in the project on Pelorus Island. If she does not, we must ask if the minister supports the existing, widespread and routine use of 1080 in wild dog control programs across Queensland, including those programs funded by her own department of agriculture.

Secondly, since the environment minister issued the conservation order we have not seen any evidence released to the public that would support his decision which officially confirms that beach stone-curlews or any other vulnerable species of animal are in fact present on Pelorus Island. I challenge the minister to release any evidence he has in his possession. In addition to the Palaszczuk government approved plan on Pelorus Island, other projects involving the release of feral predators into areas with listed threatened species are currently underway in Queensland. Given that the minister has described this type of project as inhumane and cruel, he needs to confirm that he has moved to shut down all of these approved projects.

The Hinchinbrook Shire Council is currently using ratepayers' money to comply with the order issued by the environment minister. Given that the Palaszczuk government originally approved this project, I call on the Premier to guarantee that the council will be reimbursed the costs of compliance so that Hinchinbrook shire ratepayers are not disadvantaged. On 17 August this year the interim conservation order was issued to the council by the environment minister. It provided 14 days for the council to comply with the terms of the order and this has now expired. I call on the Premier to guarantee that the council will not be fined or the council's chief executive officer imprisoned for any failure to comply.

(Time expired)

Capalaba Electorate, TAFE

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.48 pm): During my time as a candidate for office I became aware of a very real concern in my community about the state of our TAFE campuses at Alexandra Hills. Teachers, parents and local business owners who rely on TAFE for education and livelihood were very distressed that it was being defunded and left to deteriorate. There were genuine fears amongst parents and staff that TAFE would close or be privatised. The TAFE brand is trusted and gives parents and students the confidence that many do not have in the private sector.

I was a part of the community campaign to save our local TAFE. We held rallies, sponsored petitions and put the word out to local media. The worst example of the policy of abandoning our local TAFE was the loss of mechanic course, which is highly valued by mechanic businesses in the local area and a vital pipeline for new, talented local staff.

Shortly after I was elected I toured the campus and got a firsthand look at the consequences of the LNP: leaky ceilings with holes, students using rusty and outdated tools and a general state of decay. Teachers showed me around their once-proud campus. They were trying their hardest to deliver a quality education to local kids—

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection from the member for Cleveland—including his son, who graduated from there. Since then it has become a better place. They succeeded despite the odds but it was embarrassing, to say the least. They showed me the new toolbox they had recently succeeded in acquiring. This was a major achievement and was the first new thing they had been able to obtain in some time. This goes along with \$40,000 worth of improvements to the campus.

I am pleased to report that over the past two years the Alexandra Hills TAFE campus SkillsTech has seen a 43 per cent increase in new enrolments. This equates to almost 200 additional kids who will go on to get a skill in our local area. A big factor in these increases is the new and innovative programs that have been introduced by staff. I commend the minister for her work. I particularly commend Mary Campbell, the SkillsTech manager, and local teacher Barry Evans, who takes great pride in the work he does.

Surfside Buslines

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.51 pm): Our bright yellow Surfside buses are a familiar fixture on the Gold Coast, providing transport for hundreds of thousands of locals and tourists every year. Surfside provides a great service, but lately these buses have been the target of misbehaving youths and unruly passengers, who seem to get some sick pleasure from damaging property and placing the lives of others in serious danger.

In just two weeks during the last school holidays Surfside buses reported almost 20 separate incidents involving young people damaging buses with rocks and other projectiles in Tugun, Currumbin, Varsity Lakes, Burleigh and other suburbs. One incident involved rock throwing from an overpass onto a bus travelling at 100 kilometres an hour on the Pacific Motorway. Thankfully no-one was hurt, but it could have been fatal. General manager Martin Hall says that rock throwing is highly concerning and costly. An individual broken window can cost up to \$1,000—sometimes double that. In just two weeks it cost almost \$40,000 to fix broken windows, doors and windscreens.

It is not just rock throwing that is on the increase, with a number of vicious attacks on bus drivers and passengers on Gold Coast buses, too. Recently a 16-year-old was arrested following a sickening attack on a 71-year-old man travelling from Tweed Heads to Southport. Video footage showed the man being punched up to 10 times in the head after asking passengers to stop smoking.

The Palaszczuk government has sat on its hands while the issues of fare evasion and attacks have spiralled out of control. Between April 2015 and April 2016, the fare-evade button was pushed almost 500,000 times, costing government and bus companies over \$25 million and putting the current number of our bus services at risk. Queensland lags behind other states when it comes to managing fare evasion. Why has the government not embarked on a dedicated awareness campaign before now?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! There are a number of members standing in aisles and the level of conversation is getting quite high. I can hardly hear the member for Currumbin. Could members please keep their conversation to a minimum.

Mrs STUCKEY: I asked the Minister for Transport what measures are being implemented to ensure the safety of passengers and drivers. The minister acknowledged that it is a serious matter but offered no comfort to affected persons that he had any plans to increase security, just that he held bus safety forums. This is the same minister responsible for the Commonwealth Games, to be held in less than two years time on the Gold Coast. Public perception of safety is paramount. We need people to keep using our buses or we will lose some routes and, importantly, our reputation. The Palaszczuk government needs to step up and provide better resources and put the lives of innocent bus drivers and passengers first, before the situation gets out of hand.

Clearly, more senior network officers need to be based on the Gold Coast. It is not good enough to have these SNOs working only four days a week rather than seven when our police are flat out trying to catch offenders. Authorised officers should be involved also. In Currumbin we need our youth engagement officer returned to us to work with the growing number of youth misdemeanours like these.

Indigenous Communities, Health Services

 **Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (2.54 pm): Transitioning to Indigenous community controlled health is often seen as government giving away its roles and responsibilities—ownership or power, if you will. It is also seen as a negative from others unaware that, in order for any activity like primary healthcare service to happen, it is paramount that the communities have an understanding of the issues that confront them, not only as individuals but also as families and the community in a broader context.

Transitioning to Indigenous community control is about taking responsibility for the input to your life and the output in terms of options and benefits. Transitioning to Indigenous community controlled health care is about having the buy-in of communities through community led, community driven and community managed service delivery, so that you know and understand what the net values are to you and your community.

Community control is about self-help—not being told what you should do and how you should do it and in the time frames of others that are, for the communities in the Cape at least, culturally inappropriate, culturally insensitive and culturally biased. That cannot be adapted to working within the cultural protocols the community needs to enable and engage in real dialogue and real change at a grassroots level. Have you ever wondered or considered what it would be like to have services that are provided by your own people—your own mob and community members—where it is possible to see the impact of change in community from health, economic development and addressing social factors of life?

Transitioning to community controlled health for Indigenous people on Cape York is about self-determination of the people of Cape York to determine what is the most appropriate and suitable primary healthcare service that meets their needs as a component of their human rights under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, whereby it is our right to live long and prosperous lives.

Firefighters

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (2.56 pm): While representing the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services recently I watched 23 urban firefighter recruits of the 97/2016 recruit course join the ranks of the QFES after graduating at a ceremony at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy in that wonderful electorate of Lytton, represented by the hardworking member, Joan Pease. The recruits will take up positions in Brisbane, Bundaberg, Townsville, Innisfail and the Tablelands in Far North Queensland.

Queensland communities rely on our firefighters to keep them safe and to see them through times of distress and disaster. The graduating recruits have embarked on a career that will at times be challenging as they take on the vital role of safeguarding the lives of Queenslanders. There is no doubt that each recruit will rise to this challenge and make an invaluable contribution in their communities.

During the ceremony we heard from QFES Acting Commissioner Mark Roche, who said that the new urban firefighters had undergone a rigorous recruitment and training process in readiness for their new roles. The department's recruit firefighter selection program is uncompromising, and Queensland communities can be assured that only the best people for the job are appointed. The recruits' successful completion of the intensive 78-day course sees them leave the academy well equipped with the necessary skills to respond to a range of emergencies including firefighting, road crash and technical rescue, and hazardous material management. As well as constant on-the-job training, urban firefighters continue formal studies in firefighting and emergency operations for 2½ years after graduation, further building their skills and enhancing the department's service delivery for Queensland. These graduates take the total number of QFES recruit firefighters appointed since February 2015 to 133, with 36 of those appointed this year. Clearly, this shows the support this Palaszczuk Labor government is providing to restore front-line public servants.

Conversely, the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls, wants to 'right size' the Public Service. The last time those opposite did this we know the result—14,000 Queenslanders lost their jobs. No wonder people in the Public Service are concerned if an LNP government is ever returned. Morale is only now lifting to a standard of comfortableness and reasonableness to ensure they do their jobs appropriately, whether it be the police, firefighters, ambulance officers, teachers, health workers and so on. It is important that morale is maintained and it will only be maintained by a government that cares for them like the Labor Palaszczuk government.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! The time for private members' statements has expired.

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Water Legislation Amendment Bill

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.59 pm): I lay upon the table of the House the Queensland government's response to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee's report No. 19 on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

Tabled paper. Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 19—Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response [[1435](#)].

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.00 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Acting Governor.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): The message from Her Excellency recommends the Industrial Relations Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BILL 2016

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, CATHERINE ENA HOLMES, Acting Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act relating to industrial relations in Queensland, to repeal the Industrial Relations Act 1999, to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Holidays Act 1983, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Magistrates Courts Act 1921, the Ombudsman Act 2001, the Public Guardian Act 2014, the Public Service Act 2008, and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003, and to amend the Acts mentioned in schedule 6 for particular purposes.

(Sgd)

ACTING GOVERNOR

Date: 1 SEP 2016

Tabled paper: Message, dated 1 September 2016, from Her Excellency the Acting Governor recommending the Industrial Relations Bill 2016 [[1436](#)].

Introduction

Hon. G GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.00 pm): I present a bill for an act relating to industrial relations in Queensland, to repeal the Industrial Relations Act 1999, to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Holidays Act 1983, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Magistrates Courts Act 1921, the Ombudsman Act 2001, the Public Guardian Act 2014, the Public Service Act 2008, and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003, and to amend the acts mentioned in schedule 6 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Industrial Relations Bill 2016, Volume 1 (Chapters 1 to 11) and Volume 2 (Chapters 12 to Schedule 6) [[1437](#)].

Tabled paper: Industrial Relations Bill 2016, explanatory notes [[1438](#)].

It is with great pleasure that I rise to introduce the Industrial Relations Bill 2016. The Palaszczuk Labor government made a commitment to Queenslanders that we would restore fairness to the state's industrial relations jurisdiction. Today we deliver once again on that commitment. Queenslanders want fairness and balance in their industrial relations laws, and that is what they will get under this government. This bill will wipe away the last vestiges of the former Newman government's unfair and unbalanced industrial relations laws in Queensland. The LNP's laws stripped away the hard-fought and won employment conditions of state and local government workers. Its laws failed to respect the rights of workers to collectively bargain with their employer for their wages and conditions. They tied up registered industrial organisations in expensive and ineffective red tape. Its laws made it harder for workers to be represented in their workplaces. These were the laws that were engineered by the member sitting opposite, in particular the member for Kawana, without any proper consultation.

In line with our election commitments, in March 2015 the government established an independent review of the state's industrial relations laws and tribunals to provide recommendations for fair and balanced reform. This was the first major review of the state's industrial relations laws since 1998 when Professor Margaret Gardner oversaw a review that ultimately led to the current Industrial Relations Act 1999, an act that was introduced by one of my predecessors, the Hon. Paul Braddy. The review was conducted by an independent reference group headed by Jim McGowan AM, a former director-general in the Queensland public sector with extensive industrial relations experience. It included key industrial relations stakeholders from across the spectrum, including representatives of unions and employer

organisations, the Queensland Bar Association, the Law Society, government agencies and the Local Government Association of Queensland. This inclusive approach demonstrated that the best means to develop and implement genuine industrial relations reform is to bring all parties together.

Following an extensive process of public consultation, the final report of the reference group, *A review of the industrial relations framework in Queensland*, was published on 4 March 2016 and it made 68 recommendations for reform. The recommendations provide a sound foundation for a modern, fair and balanced system of industrial relations here in Queensland and those recommendations are reflected in the bill before the House today. The Industrial Relations Bill 2016 provides the framework for the state's industrial relations jurisdiction that is fair and balanced and which will support the delivery of high-quality services, economic prosperity and social justice for Queenslanders. The Industrial Relations Bill 2016 will replace the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and regulate Queensland's industrial relations jurisdiction. I remind the House and those opposite that the state industrial relations jurisdiction covers essentially the state public sector and local government. The private sector is now covered by the national industrial relations system as a result of the hostile takeover by the Howard government in 2005 and the further referral of powers by the state government in 2010.

The bill establishes the key defining features of the state industrial relations system. These are a set of minimum employment conditions and standards; collective bargaining as a cornerstone for setting wages and conditions; a set of individual rights to fair treatment; effective, transparent and accountable governance and reporting obligations for all registered industrial organisations and employer associations; and a strong and effective independent umpire. This bill demonstrates the government's commitment to consultation by providing for a high-level consultative forum for stakeholders to discuss Queensland's industrial relations laws and related matters. This reflects our view that a fair and balanced industrial relations system in Queensland rests upon communication and genuine consultation between government, local government, agencies, employees and their unions.

The bill gives effect to the bargaining model developed in the report of the review panel, placing the emphasis on the parties to reach agreement through good faith bargaining and for the commission to assist the parties to reach agreement through conciliation. Arbitration will be available as a last resort only when an agreement cannot be reached. The bill recognises the rights of parties to take protected industrial action in pursuit of their bargaining claims and ensures that the members of an industrial organisation have their say when it comes to taking that action. The bill revises the regulation of registered industrial organisations consistent with the recommendations of the report. All members of the review panel recognised the importance of strong, effective and transparent governance, accountability and reporting obligations for all—and I repeat for all—registered organisations.

In line with the recommendations of the review, the provisions in this bill promote democratic control of organisations and good governance by ensuring that reporting, training and other obligations are directed at ensuring accountability to members rather than unnecessary and unproductive red tape. The bill will see employer and employee organisations are treated equally and makes the financial reporting requirements for industrial organisations and the training requirement for officers with financial management duties similar to those of the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009. This will assist those organisations with counterpart federally registered bodies manage their administrative burden while ensuring registered organisations in this state are accountable to their members. The bill further provides the Industrial Registrar as an independent statutory officer with the authority to investigate suspected breaches of industrial organisations' obligations.

The bill introduces significant new protections for workers in the state jurisdiction. I am proud to report to this House that the bill fulfils the government's commitment to provide paid leave for victims of domestic and family violence recommended in the *Not now, not ever* report by Dame Quentin Bryce into the scourge of domestic and family violence. Queensland is leading the way by being the first state to put this entitlement into law. In addition, the bill will establish a general protections jurisdiction to protect workers against adverse action taken during employment or leading to dismissal from employment and a system to address workplace bullying the same as that which is available to private sector workers under the Fair Work Act.

The bill also aligns Queensland's minimum employment standards with the national employment standards for parental, carers and compassionate leave and the requirement to give an information statement to an employee when they start work. The bill also introduces a right for all workers to request flexible work arrangements. This will give workers the ability to better find that balance between their work and the rest of their daily lives.

In regard to strengthening Queensland's industrial tribunals, the bill provides the QIRC with exclusive jurisdiction to deal with all workplace related anti-discrimination matters, including those taken under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991. These matters will still go to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland in the first instance but, if they cannot be resolved through conciliation and they are work related, the matter will be referred to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

The bill also amends legal representation arrangements in line with the recommendation of the review so that representation by a lawyer or other paid agent in the QIRC is only permitted with the leave of the commission. In considering whether to grant leave, the commission is required to consider how complex a matter is and whether it is unfair not to allow legal representation. Under the bill, legal representation will not be permitted at all in enterprise bargaining arbitration matters before the full bench and only with the consent of all parties in wage recovery action in the Magistrates Court or in the commission. This strikes the appropriate balance between maintaining the commission as a layperson's tribunal while recognising the need for legal representation to be an option in more complex legal matters.

The bill also amends the Public Service Act 2008 to ensure there is no overlap in the directive-making powers of the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Public Service Commissioner. Other state government employing acts are amended to ensure these do not impede the rights of employees to have access to enterprise bargaining for their terms of employment. The bill also enables the Industrial Registrar to partition the local government industry modern award into three awards. This will be based on the three occupational streams in the new local government award to be made in accordance with my award modernisation ministerial request of 6 June. This partitioning is an administrative function only to assist employers and workers by making the award more user-friendly.

I note the significant progress that has been made by the parties with the assistance of the QIRC. The QIRC issued an interim award today with the three occupational streams in line with my ministerial request, which was recently confirmed by the Supreme Court. I encourage parties to continue that good work and welcome ongoing constructive discussions.

Additionally, this bill also includes an amendment to the Holidays Act 1983 to make Easter Sunday a public holiday from 2017. Declaring Easter Sunday as a public holiday will bring Queensland into line with New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory where Easter Sunday is already a public holiday. The change recognises the religious and cultural significance of Easter Sunday and will ensure that work on Easter Sunday is treated and remunerated in the same way as the Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Monday public holidays that surround it.

As announced yesterday, alongside our decision to declare Easter Sunday a public holiday in 2017, the government will also be conducting a review of the state's retail trading hours arrangements under the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act to be chaired by QUT School of Justice Associate Professor and former Speaker of this House John Mickel. The review will report back with recommendations in time for the proposed new Easter Sunday public holiday in 2017.

As I said, I am proud to introduce this bill to the House. It delivers on the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to restore fairness to Queensland's industrial relations system and industrial laws. It follows a comprehensive review of the state's industrial relations laws, the first in nearly 20 years. Since then, there have been significant changes to Queensland's industrial relations landscape, such as the fact that these laws will largely cover public sector workers and local government. The new Industrial Relations Bill reflects these changing realities while delivering on one of our key election commitments to create fairer workplaces in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. G GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.14 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

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

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

Hon. G GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.15 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 136, the Finance and Administration Committee report to the House on the Industrial Relations Bill by 28 October 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Order of Business

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.15 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 2 to 5 be postponed to enable commencement of the private member's motion debate immediately after the completion of all stages of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill today.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3320, on motion of Ms Jones—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.16 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the bill before the House. I want to start by acknowledging the teachers in my life who have put me here today and who have formed who and what I am as a member of this House. I think the most important teachers in our lives are, in fact, our parents. At a very early age they instruct us, they guide us and, from those early days, we find the personality and the psychology of the people whom we become over time. I also want to thank the teachers of St Kevin's—the Josephites and the lay teachers as well—and the teachers at St Columban's College at Albion at the time—the brothers and the lay teachers—the teachers who taught me at university and all of those who along the way in my life have taught me many things, including my wife, who continues to teach me many things on a day-to-day basis. I think it is always important to acknowledge your wife or partner as a teacher, just in case it goes public. All of those people in all of our lives become teachers and form us to become who and what we are and the decisions that we make.

In relation to this bill, without doubt, education is the most important avenue through which to develop a career path. Education opens many doors and expands our horizons. By the same token, on many occasions it has been said that, the more we know, the greater our ignorance grows. That is correct. The education of our children is a pivotal component of our society that can lead to those in prep today to jobs across the globe. As such, what we do today has major and long-term effects on the future of this nation.

I understand that research supports—and supports strongly—the need for children to attend a prep year before entering year 1. I note at page 3 of the committee's report that one of the benefits that flows from the prep year is the 'lower rates of mental illness'. As an aside, I want to endorse the comments of the member for Clayfield and the health minister yesterday on the issue of suicide and mental health respectively. Although I acknowledge that many bodies and organisations provide help and assistance for those suffering from mental health or having suicidal thoughts, as a nation, we need to start talking about the why of suicide, not the how. We have shone the light on and debated issues such as domestic violence and child sexual abuse. It is time we deal with that great taboo, with the guidance of experts and a sure and steady approach to this very difficult subject.

In 2015, around 400 children in the state school sector did not attend prep prior to enrolment in term 1. Clause 8 of the bill amends section 156 of the Education (General Provisions) Act to ensure that a child must complete a prep year before they can be enrolled in year 1.

I note further that there are a number of other provisions that relate to that principle. Having said that, the current level of attendance is at 97 per cent and it is difficult to see how this bill will increase attendance rates above that. Coupled with this flows a requirement for additional reporting and a red-tape burden being imposed on schools and parents. It is important that this burden does not impact on the quality of outcomes either for the teachers, the students or the schools. I would ask the minister for an assurance in relation to that when she sums up the debate.

As I said earlier, the value of education cannot be overstated. It is the bedrock of our future as a nation and our children's future as individuals. As other members in the House have done, I want to pay homage and tribute to the teachers, teacher aides and all those who work in the schools in the state seat of Caloundra. We know that collectively they provide the wisdom in young minds who in times to come will become leaders of our electorates, our state and our nation. Without them, the young minds would not form into who and what we want them to become and, more importantly, allow them to grow and prosper intellectually and philosophically.

The member for Stretton concluded his contribution by attacking the former education minister in a debate that was cordial and civilised. I think the record must be put straight. When we came to government in 2015 we were saddled with a \$300 million bill for maintenance in schools because of year in, year out neglect by the Labor Party. The minister at the time, John-Paul Langbroek, took that on board and wiped that debt off. That led to, for the first occasion in the history of this state, enrolments in state schools exceeding non-state schools. When the government stands in this House and tries to put across an argument that the LNP government failed to undertake the appropriate measures to gain the best educational outcomes, it should look very closely at its own record.

The planning by the Labor government in successive years was so poor that in 2014 we were not able to open new schools. The lead time to acquire land and construct schools is significant. John-Paul Langbroek, the then minister, had to take that on board and got on with a plan to open 11 new schools where in 2014 we could not open one. That was poor planning and left the students and parents in this state in a much worse situation than they were in before. Eleven new schools were planned and I believe we opened two before we lost government in early 2015.

The LNP put in place a Schools Planning Commission, which was the first occasion in this state where we gathered together all sectors, Catholic, non-state school and state school sectors to plan comprehensively right across Queensland for the betterment of the children of this state. If I recall correctly, that has now been unwound by the ALP government. That is a backward step because coordination in the delivery of education resources, manpower and outcomes is critical if we are going to garner the young minds of today to develop this state the way we want it to occur.

The bill before the House is a good step, but I think it is a bit rich for any member of the ALP government to stand here and point the finger at the LNP government when we picked up so many errors, so many mistakes and so many tragedies and turned it around. The ALP government should acknowledge the great work undertaken by the then education minister and the current shadow health minister in this House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (3.23 pm): I rise to speak to the debate on the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I would particularly like to refer to report No. 14 of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee. I note that the committee did some very good work in examining this bill. In doing that work they were able to reach the conclusion that the committee recommends that the bill be passed. That was a unanimous recommendation, despite some of the contributions from those opposite having some reservations in respect of some parts of the bill, which I will get to in a moment.

I note that the purposes of the bill, the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which are set out in the explanatory notes, are to implement the Queensland Labor government's policy objectives of making prep the compulsory first year of school education in Queensland; improving the regulation of the teaching profession in Queensland, including by providing a contemporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers and improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the college to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students; introducing a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement; and strengthening the oversight of non-state schools by enabling the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to disclose relevant information with law enforcement agencies and reduce red tape for non-state schools by reducing requirements for the provision of school survey data.

I firstly acknowledge the outstanding work done by teachers in our schools in Queensland. I particularly want to pay tribute to the teachers in the Morayfield state electorate who go above and beyond in caring for the students in their classrooms, in their schools, but also for giving those kids the flying start that they need to achieve their potential. In acknowledging all of those people who contribute to the welfare, wellbeing and outcomes that our young people in the Morayfield state electorate will achieve because of the quality education that they get through our schools, particularly our public schools, I acknowledge the teacher aides in the Morayfield state electorate ahead of Teacher Aide Day tomorrow. I would particularly like to thank them for their contributions to the Morayfield state electorate schools.

It was a Labor government that introduced prep in 2007. I have some great memories of attending prep classrooms during my first term in government. One was with the then parliamentary secretary to the minister for education, Peta-Kaye Croft, who is a former member for Broadwater. We were at the Burpengary Meadows State School in one of their prep classrooms and we were reading some books with the children. I remember this little girl—she is in prep so she would be 4½ to five years old—went over to the bookshelf and grabbed a book. She came over and plonked the book down in front of me and said, 'I'm going to read this to you.' The words in this book were huge words, I thought, for a 4½-year-old. I do not think I could have read them at 4½; I do not think I could read them now! There were words like 'caterpillar' and 'butterfly' and she was reading this book with such confidence. At that moment I knew that the investment that the Labor government was making in education in Queensland was worthwhile because that little prep girl had so much confidence picking up that book. The thrill that she had with reading and learning overwhelmed me.

That tradition of Labor governments investing in education continues to this day. We see that today with this bill before the parliament making prep universally the compulsory first year of schooling for our young people here in Queensland. Prep has been well received and taken up in Queensland. I note that the statistics show that 98 per cent of all year 1 students attended a year of schooling before commencing in year 1. The number of children who may miss out on the benefits of prep at the moment is around 500. We know that by exposing our children to structured learning and educational opportunities earlier they have better outcomes in life—they have better academic outcomes in life, they have better life outcomes. We know that by passing this bill today we will encourage more young people into prep and ensure that they too have those academic outcomes. It is very important that we continue to invest in education and our young people to ensure that our young people do have a flying start to their education and a flying start to life.

I want to touch briefly on improving teacher registration in Queensland, particularly around the matter of disciplinary action. We have been hearing some contributions from those opposite about vexatious claims and how that might somehow be influenced by the passing of this bill today.

Ms Davis: The Teachers' Union was concerned.

Mr RYAN: No. If you look at the submission, all stakeholders—

Ms Davis interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask members to direct their comments through the chair, please.

Mr RYAN: It is interesting that the shadow minister seeks to interject, because all stakeholders support the bill and her members on the committee support the bill. If they had any problems with it, they should have expressed that in a statement of reservations in the report. Unanimous is unanimous. Unanimous means that you support the provisions of the bill. To come in here and use some weasel words now is a pretty ordinary way of treating the committee process.

The fact of the matter is that all we have to do is look at the bill and the explanatory notes. There are sufficient safeguards in this bill to ensure that matters that require disciplinary action are investigated appropriately. The really important point is that, if a matter is raised for investigation, the college must have a reasonable belief before taking disciplinary action. That prevents the college from acting on rumour or innuendo. A safeguard is built in. Therefore, it is a fairly ordinary approach for those opposite to try to use some weasel words to create some sort of hysteria around vexatious claims, when in their submissions the stakeholders express support for the bill and members opposite express support for the bill through the committee's report.

The final matter I want to touch on is cutting red tape for the non-state school sector. The proposed amendments will ensure that there is improved data collection and reduced red tape on the non-state school sector. Also, and this is really important, the oversight body, the Non-State School

Accreditation Board, will now have the ability to disclose matters to law enforcement agencies. That is really important when we talk about not only ensuring compliance with the law but also creating a culture of compliance with the law. It is very important that our non-state school sector has that oversight and also the reduced red tape that will arise from this bill.

I am very pleased to support the bill. I wish to acknowledge the hard work of the committee in preparing their report and, of course, the hard work of the education minister, who is a passionate supporter of education in Queensland and a great advocate for our young people. She is an advocate who will ensure that our young people in schools all over Queensland get the best start in life, a flying start to their education. I support the bill.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that every child in the state receives the full extent of what the schooling system can offer. The Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill does exactly that. When I think about education, I think about a Tibetan proverb that I read many years ago which says that a child without education is like a bird without wings. In 2015 in Queensland, there were 500 children who were not able to start developing the wings of their education. They were the children who did not attend prep. This bill will ensure that all of the state's children will begin developing their wings and will benefit from compulsory prep at the start of 2017.

I commend education minister Kate Jones, the Palaszczuk government and the education committee for taking the initiative to implement compulsory prep for our children and improve the regulation of the teaching profession. Currently for many of us in Queensland prep is still a fairly new concept. Less than 10 years ago many of our children, including my own two, simply attended preschool three times a week, at the most. Under the previous Labor government, a bold step was taken to move Queensland into line with many of the other states of Australia and make prep a reality for our children. That is something that I commend members past and present for establishing.

Prep is an incredibly fundamental part of a child's learning experience and comes at a vitally important age to begin learning. Children who attend prep are given the perfect opportunity to become school ready, to understand what is involved once they move into year 1 and to experience all of it in a safe and friendly environment. Last year's year 7s were the first full prep cohort and the result of that was Queensland's best ever results in reading, spelling and numeracy.

In my electorate of Ipswich, I have the pleasure of representing 20 very diverse schools but without exception fabulous schools that all received excellent NAPLAN results. I make special mention of Blair State School as an excellent example of a school achieving those results. Under the leadership of Principal Peter Lund, this year the year 3 results were the best ever seen at the school and were comparable to the national year 3 cohort of students. Year 3 students at Blair State School have never been comparable to the nation in mean scale score or the upper two bands, until now. That fantastic result is a credit to the school and the staff and I do not hesitate to say that a part of that success is as a result of having students attend prep in the preceding years.

Excellent NAPLAN results are not the only reason for making prep compulsory for our students. International evidence suggests that prep education provides such long-term benefits as higher levels of education completion and employment and reduced rates of mental illness. With all of those benefits, it would appear that the writing is on the wall and prep education is one of the greatest gifts we can give our children when it comes to their education. I am not the only person to commend this action. The President of the Queensland Association of State School Principals, Michael Fay, is on the record as saying that prep gives children the best possible start to their education. By making prep compulsory, we are sending a strong message that prep is a vitally important part of school education. It lays a strong foundation for the primary years that follow and it will allow our children to grow their wings.

While the first year of education is vital, I believe that the people providing education are just as crucial to the development of the state's children. The legislation will provide guidelines to our principals, state and non-state, that they can follow to determine a child's readiness for year 1. Essentially children will not be accepted unless they either have completed prep, undertaken education in another jurisdiction that is equivalent, registered for home education in the year prior to enrolment or the principal is personally satisfied that the child is ready. That will ensure that all of our children are given the best opportunity to engage with their learning and their peers. I will be proud to say that it was our government that ensured this.

Just as starting our children off on the best foot is essential for their learning and education, so too are our teachers. When visiting the many schools in my electorate, I am frequently impressed by the passion and determination that so many of our teachers have. It seems appropriate to add

congratulations and a big thank you to all the teacher aides in the Ipswich electorate and wish them a very happy Teacher Aides Day tomorrow. I know that the Palaszczuk government is also aware of the dedication of our teacher aides and teachers, and the importance of our schools.

I commend the government's commitment to the schools in my electorate. This year's budget saw a commitment of \$10.4 million to build new classrooms at Claremont and Ipswich West special schools, on top of another \$400,000 to upgrade the classrooms at Churchill State School, which is the wonderful school that my two children attended many years ago. That school is powering ahead under the leadership of Principal Kelly Harvey. This government's \$16.6 million education investment in the Ipswich electorate will be an invaluable addition to the schools. It will benefit the schools, the students and the teachers, that is, those who put themselves in the firing line.

I am proud that there are many people in the community committed to the lofty goal of teaching and I commend every single teacher who has taught and inspired our children. However, there are occasionally exceptions to the rule when it comes to all professions and teaching is not exempt from that. While the bulk of our teachers are committed to maintaining a high standard of work, there are a small minority who do bring down the reputation of their schools and the profession. Therefore, it is imperative for our government to ensure that teachers are held to the highest standard and that our teachers can and will be disciplined in an efficient manner and held accountable for their actions. Our government will achieve this by improving the regulation of teaching in Queensland, by providing a temporary and streamlined governance structure for the Queensland College of Teachers, and by improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the college to protect the safety and wellbeing of all Queensland students.

It is important to note that this government consulted with all stakeholders on these particular amendments and all stakeholders were in agreement with the findings of the committee, without exception. That agreement came about because we understand that the welfare of our children is paramount; it is the most important thing when it comes to making these decisions.

As I have emphasised, school based education is one of the most vital introductions to education and learning. It is here that our children will learn what their passions are, what their desires are and, mostly importantly, shape the kind of people that they want to be. In most situations our children are provided with a teacher or teachers who are equally as passionate, ones driven by a desire to see the children unlock their potential and have the greatest opportunity in life, whether through university, a trade or the many other options. I applaud and congratulate our government for introducing this amendment and for elevating the standards and expectations that we place on our teachers.

One of my great pleasures as the member for Ipswich is working with my school communities. Schools are the cornerstone of our communities and educational reform is the cornerstone of good governance. These amendments proposed by the Palaszczuk government are the sort of changes that will make a tangible difference to the children of Queensland and will ensure that their education is the best it can be. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McEACHAN** (Redlands—LNP) (3.40 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. From the outset, I put on the record my strong advocacy for public schools and private schools throughout Queensland, particularly in my electorate of Redlands.

I attended a number of state schools—Long Street Primary School, Forestdale Primary School, Central State School and Albert State School and Maryborough State High School. I had the benefit of being taught by some wonderfully dedicated teachers. One of the first that comes to mind is Mrs Morgan. She was a wonderful mentor for me and she saw me through my weekly detentions where I gained valuable skills. That was my prep. Those detentions were nearly every week for the entire year. I think they were beneficial in terms of me improving my skills.

An opposition member: What did you do?

Mr McEACHAN: I liked to ask a lot of questions. Some of those questions were unwarranted. I did also like to entertain the class and sometimes my entertainment was not desired. I spent a fair bit of time in detention. She was wonderful and helped me through what was a difficult transitional period for me. It was about grade 4 or 5.

Mr Krause: Nothing has changed.

Mr McEACHAN: Nothing much has changed, no. I had subsequent teachers who were terrific. One other that stands out was my history teacher at Maryborough State High School. He said, 'If you learn one thing from me, it is this'—I think it is something that those in the Labor Party would do well to learn—'There ain't no free lunch.' That is advice that our friendly socialists on the other side of the chamber should take on board.

My daughter attended prep in the Redlands. She has now moved on to high school. I am a strong supporter of state education. There are some things that I have concerns about, despite the admirable intentions of the bill. I will use the Redlands experience to highlight what might be some problems in the rest of the state.

In the southern Redlands, which is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland, we have Redland Bay State School, Mount Cotton State School and Carbrook State School. They are fabulous schools with great teachers and principals, wonderful P&Cs and wonderful kids. All those schools are on enrolment management plans. If we are to increase the take-up of prep I would like to know from the education minister how we are going to take on those extra kids in that area. Does it mean we will have more classroom space? Will we have more teachers? Are we looking at new facilities in that part of Redlands?

The other side of the coin are the issues that we experience on the southern Moreton Bay islands. Macleay Island State School and Russell Island State School have an underrepresentation of kids starting grade 1 who have done prep. We have significant issues that need to be addressed now before we embark on further legislation and further problems arise from that.

I would urge the education minister to look closely at that. As the education minister knows, I have an outstanding invitation for her to come and meet the teachers and P&Cs in the Redlands and look at some of the issues we have. One of those issues is that teacher aides who support our wonderful teachers and help our kids on the islands do not get a travel subsidy. Our teachers get a travel subsidy to get to the islands but our teacher aides, who are coming from the mainland, do not get a travel subsidy. They have out-of-pocket expenses in the order of 4½ thousand dollars a year so they can get to work and be part of our education system. It is my firm view that that treats them as second-class employees.

I believe that teacher aides are equally important and are absolutely integral to the fabric of our education system. I would urge the education minister to have a look at that situation and help the teacher aides get to these schools. We have problems on the southern Moreton Bay islands in terms of equity of education. I would urge the education minister to look at that. One of the other things we need is to have better paediatric support on the islands. The current attendance levels across the state are 97 per cent. That does not reflect what is happening in the Redlands.

Labor has a very poor track record of looking after schools. When we came to government in 2012 there was a \$300 million black hole in the school maintenance program. We had schools in my electorate where paint was peeling off the walls, there were holes in the roofs and there were problems with maintenance. It was the former education minister who took that problem on and came up with the maintenance program that got those schools up to scratch so that the current government could carry on and fix up all the issues.

The Palaszczuk Labor government likes to duplicate, complicate, pontificate but not create solutions. I urge those opposite to fix the problems that we have right now rather than create more problems for the future.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This is yet another great Labor educational reform. However, I note the bipartisan support for the legislation. I pick up the last speaker's note about needing to improve education. Of course, we do need to improve, but let us reflect on some of those other great reforms. They are the fact that we have prep in the first place and the fact that we now have year 7 in high school. Students I have known for many years whom I have seen move into high school in year 7 in the last few years have absolutely blossomed. I have had nothing but positive feedback from families about that change. We see the standards increasing.

Let us talk about the future. The Advancing Education plan is a magnificent step forward. I recently took many of the P&Cs and P&Fs in my area down to the Autism Hub and the Reading Centre—great facilities. They are great initiatives providing great support for families who have children on the autism spectrum and providing great support for students no matter what their reading level, as well as for teachers and parents. I think about the coding and robotics aspects of that plan. I do not have to think too hard. I can go out and visit many of the schools that are already well advanced in this area, schools like Mount Gravatt State School, which recently received Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow funding. It is a great program. They are working with prep right through to grade 6 in the coding and robotics space—amazing.

I had the great pleasure earlier in the year of going to the Brisbane School of Distance Education Futures Academy night where we watched groups of students who had collaborated together to use robots to solve a common problem. They did not just use them; they designed them, they 3D printed

them, they built prototypes and rebuilt them. That is impressive for any group of students, but these students were not just based here in Brisbane but based right around Australia and the world and they were doing this virtually—amazing outcomes, and that is where we have to go.

This bill, amongst many other things, focuses on the need to start education as early as we possibly can. We know that international research backs this. It is important that this is backed. We see yet another great achievement of the Palaszczuk government in this space. If I can divert for a minute, I wish to talk about the playgroup announcement—free membership for children under the age of 12 months. It provides great opportunities for families to get support and provides great opportunities for families to start that socialisation process early. That is a very important step in the ongoing educational process.

Prep is so important. I know that from personal experience. My children are a tad past the prep stage. It made such a difference to them. I saw both of my daughters blossom thanks to the dedicated Mr McGregor at Greenslopes State School. He is a fantastic teacher and an absolute institution at Greenslopes State School and has devoted his teaching career to the teaching of prep students.

Last week I had a great opportunity to visit all of the primary schools and also all of the childcare centres in my electorate for Book Week. I love Book Week. It is a fantastic week. You get to go out and visit many schools and read to many children. It was great to spend time with the librarians and the teachers and to watch them inspiring a love of reading in young people. It was really very special for me to go to Mount Gravatt East State School and read *Oliver's Grumbles* to the prep students. That book was illustrated by a local dad Giuseppe Poli. It is a great book that teaches kids how to deal with having a hard day. What was really special about that day was that when I was finished reading to those children, they wanted to get a sample of the writing that they had done and read it to me. It took me a long time to get out of there because they all wanted to have a turn. The teachers and librarians in that school and in all of the schools in my electorate have done a fantastic job of inspiring that love of reading.

I support this bill because it does something very important: it starts the education process early. We know from international research that the earlier we start education the better. The sooner we pass this bill the better. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (3.53 pm): It is a pleasure to rise to speak in support of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I would like to take this opportunity, and indeed every opportunity, to put on record my appreciation for the contribution that the many passionate principals, teachers and teacher aides make to the pursuit of education in schools, state and non-state, across my electorate.

The primary objectives of the bill are to make the preparatory year the first compulsory year of school education in Queensland; to improve the regulation of teaching in Queensland by streamlining governance, improving the disciplinary framework and strengthening the ability of the Queensland College of Teachers to protect students; to improve the administration of Commonwealth and state funding to non-state schools by establishing statutory arrangements for the recovery of state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlements; and to improve oversight of non-state schools by allowing the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to share information with law enforcement agencies and reduce the collection of unnecessary school survey data.

I note that all members of the parliamentary Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee support the bill. I thank the chair and members of the committee for the time they have taken to consider and report on the bill. The minister and those members who have spoken before me have addressed the policy objectives of the bill in some detail and I do not seek to replicate those comments. Rather, I would like to restrict my remarks specifically to the preparatory year amendments.

I have spoken many times in this House about my passion for education, as someone who has had the benefit of it, who has seen it change the circumstances and opportunities of many, and now as a parent traversing the years of early education with my eldest son currently completing his prep year and my youngest two years away from doing the same. The bill implements the government's commitment to make prep the compulsory first year of school education in Queensland by providing that a state or non-state school principal must not enrol a child in year 1 unless the child has undertaken prep in a state or non-state school in Queensland or in another jurisdiction where the education is equivalent to prep.

Importantly, the bill does not change the age at which a child may be eligible for enrolment in prep or alter the minimum compulsory school age of six years and six months. It provides flexibility for parents to determine whether their child should enter prep in the year they turn five by 30 June or in the

following year, to cater for children who may not be developmentally, behaviourally or emotionally ready to commence school based education at the age at which they may be enrolled in prep. This flexibility is something that many parents have told me they want, and I thank the education minister, a mother of two young children herself, for her considered approach in this regard.

Since prep was introduced in 2007, we have seen an improvement in Queensland's NAPLAN results. It was a pleasure to have the Premier and Minister for Education at Virginia State School in my electorate recently to announce and celebrate Queensland's recent positive NAPLAN results.

Ms Jones: That's right—your old school.

Ms LINARD: Thank you. I take the minister's interjection. Quality early childhood programs make a difference. Evidence indicates that children who participate in such programs gain significant long-term benefits including higher levels of completed education and subsequent employment. This is recognised by most Queensland families, with the vast majority of children undertaking prep before commencing year 1. However, with prep not currently compulsory, there is a small number of children who do not undertake this full-time preparatory year. These children are missing out on the benefits of prep.

It has been a pleasure to see these benefits firsthand in schools across my electorate but also in my own home over the past eight months as my son has absolutely flourished in his prep year. Jordan and his peers' development and mastery under Mr Wilkins—a fabulous teacher—of reading, writing, language—both English and Japanese—mathematics and design, has been extraordinary. He reads independently, passionately explained the virtues of solar power to me last night and just last month made a stop-motion animation video. He also drew on my couch, bit his brother and threw a 40-minute tantrum last week, so he is still a five-year-old, but prep has seen his world and confidence expand exponentially as he prepares for year 1.

This bill ensures that all students reap the benefits of undertaking the prep year of schooling. It was a Labor government that kick-started universal prep in 2007, addressing a great disadvantage for our youngsters—something I as a Labor member in this House am tremendously proud of. The years since have clearly shown just how beneficial a prep year is, with last year's year 7s the first full prep cohort returning their best ever results for reading, spelling and numeracy. Prep gives children the best possible start to their education, and this bill sends a strong message that prep is a vitally important part of school education, laying a strong foundation for the primary years which follow.

The bill also strengthens the Queensland College of Teachers' powers to suspend a teacher's registration to keep our children safe. The bill makes significant amendments to the regulation of the teaching profession to strengthen the ability of the Queensland College of Teachers to act in the best interests of children, to protect the safety and wellbeing of Queensland students and to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession. It will provide a contemporary and more streamlined governance structure for the college and improve the teacher disciplinary framework. Accordingly, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.58 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to place on record my thanks to all of the teachers, the teacher aides and the principals across my electorate, especially those teachers who do an amazing job at the School of Distance Education and also the School of the Air. It is a very difficult situation when they are teaching children whom they cannot see. It is very difficult for them to interact, but they do an amazing job for those students.

The purpose of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 is to make the preparatory year a compulsory first year of school education in Queensland; improve the regulation of the teaching profession in Queensland; and introduce a statutory debt recovery mechanism to recover state and Commonwealth funding paid to non-state schools in excess of their entitlement. I wish to focus on the introduction of the compulsory prep year and explore some of the issues that isolated and itinerant families may face with the introduction of this legislation. I am concerned that there has not been enough effort from the government to clearly articulate what this legislation will mean for those isolated and potentially itinerant families and how this legislation will work in practice for them.

Prep was introduced in Queensland schools in 2007 to provide a foundation in early learning areas of literacy and numeracy prior to entry to year 1. We are advised that since its introduction there has been a notable improvement in NAPLAN results for Queensland schools. According to the explanatory notes, the long-term benefits of participation in high-quality prep and equivalent education programs include improved relationships, better educational and employment outcomes, and lower rates of mental illness.

Currently there is no requirement in Queensland for a child to undertake a prep year of learning. Whilst prep enrolment and attendance in Queensland is very high, there remains a small cluster of children who are not participating in prep. We are advised that in 2015 approximately 400 children in the state schooling sector did not attend prep prior to the enrolment in year 1. Of those, approximately 17 per cent were Indigenous and 63 per cent were from metropolitan areas. I note, however, that there are another 20 per cent of students who did not attend prep and were unaccounted for in these figures. Are these students living in rural and remote communities? Are they geographically or data isolated families? This question needs to be answered and it needs to be addressed.

I am not sure that the government has appropriately investigated the reason why these 400 students are not attending. Are they going somewhere else in the private sector? Are they geographically or data isolated? Are they unable to access a school campus or are they unable to afford to access education services? We know there is a problem. We do not know exactly what the cause of the problem is. Perhaps we should understand it more fully before we try to legislate to resolve that problem.

Clause 8 amends the enrolment provision in section 156 of the Education (General Provisions) Act by inserting subsection 1A. The subsection provides the criteria on which the principal must be satisfied before a child is enrolled in year 1. In other words, the principal must not enrol a child in year 1 of schooling at a school unless they are satisfied the child was registered, or provisionally registered, for home education in the year before the proposed year of the child's enrolment in year 1 of schooling at the school. I can see how the other provisions in this section will work in practice, as they are straightforward. However, there are matters relevant to provision (c) for those families who do not have day-to-day access to a traditional school campus.

As a child who was a kindergarten distance education student, although it was some time ago, I do remember that my mother found it very difficult to teach kindy as well as teaching an older sibling distance education. I am particularly interested in how this legislative change will impact on families who do not have day-to-day access to a school campus and the available parent—and many of them across my electorate already are—is already engaged in educating their older children through distance education by either correspondence or the School of the Air, or if a parent is unable to teach prep schooling due to work commitments and this falls to another extended family member. I am interested in the government's expectations for outcomes and benchmarks of those who are registered, or provisionally registered, for home education in the prep year. This was canvassed in a committee hearing, and I commend my colleague the member for Broadwater for raising this very issue.

Miss Barton: You are welcome.

Ms LEAHY: I take that interjection from the member for Broadwater. The member for Broadwater asked this question with respect to prep and home schooling: how will the department of education be able to ensure that the minimum prep standard is being met for them to be able to advance? Is the curriculum provided? The departmental response was that there is a range of resource materials available on the homeschooling website to support students through that process. Further, the department replied that the parent of a child is required to provide the department their proposed education program philosophy so the department is able to see what is being proposed to be taught to that child and also requirements to provide samples of work performed by the child throughout the year. That is what provides some oversight of the standards and quality of the education.

Parents advise me that they find this very difficult and find it is insufficient for the development of their children to meet the year 1 requirements. To say that there is a range of resource materials on a website is somewhat out of touch with data droughts isolated families experience. My distance education parents inform me that they struggle at times to search the internet for a child's assignment, let alone download or browse the resource materials.

This brings me to the data drought. I know that the federal government is working very hard and it has done a fantastic job to address the situation of data for isolated children with the Sky Muster satellite. There are improvements. However, there are many more families yet to connect. I recently sat in a demonstration lesson at the Charleville School of the Air at their 50-year celebration, and the question was asked: can the teacher play a video so the students can see it during the on-air lesson? The response was not from the demonstrating teacher—who was absolutely fantastic, I might add—but from a parent in the room who said, 'No, we can't play a video during the lessons because we would have no data download left for a month. We just can't do that because there isn't enough data.' I spoke to this mum during the week. She is very hopeful that her Sky Muster connection will be up and running this Friday.

The standard Sky Muster configuration allows for up to three students at one site. Sites with more than this are on a special configuration. Families pay for the education port plan, but if they are enrolled at the Queensland School of Distance Education the cost will be offset by an internet allowance paid by Education Queensland. Minister, the data is not cheap for these isolated families. Will the internet allowance be paid by Education Queensland, and will it be extended to prep students who are registered, or provisionally registered, in 2017?

I will give the minister a scenario which is not uncommon in my electorate. A family of five lives 50 kilometres from Thargomindah with no school bus and no day-to-day access to a school campus. Two students are already on the School of the Air with mum at home as the tutor. In 2017 mum will have two students in the School of Distance Education and the youngest child will be eligible for compulsory prep. Isolated families would really appreciate advice as to how this legislation will affect this particular family's scenario. What will the costs be? How will children be assisted to meet the necessary benchmarks and prepare for their future schooling to make sure they are prepared appropriately for year 1? I look forward to the minister enlightening the House as to how this legislation will impact on that scenario.

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (4.08 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contribution to the debate. I also thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its detailed consideration of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The committee tabled its report on 2 August supporting the passage of the bill, and I thank the committee for its consideration.

I note that before preparing its report the committee received a briefing from the Department of Education and Training and considered written submissions from a number of education stakeholders. I thank the chair, the member for Townsville, and all committee members from both sides of the House for their comprehensive report on the bill. I am pleased that the committee unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. I also acknowledge the contribution of stakeholders for their valuable input into the committee's consideration of the bill and their general support of the bill.

The committee recommends that two amendments be made to the bill to correct minor drafting errors. The government supports this recommendation. I intend to move these two minor technical amendments during consideration in detail. An amendment to clause 115 will correct an incorrect chapter reference. The second amendment will clarify the application of section 288(6) of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 which deals with the removal of certain information from the register of approved teachers.

The proposed amendments will make it clear that the section applies not only to a person whose registration is cancelled but also to a person whose permission to teach is cancelled in the relevant circumstances. I now table a copy of the Queensland government's response.

Tabled paper: Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 14—Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, government response [[1439](#)].

I would also like to address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the debate. I will first deal with matters raised by the shadow minister, and in particular data about children not currently enrolled in prep. Out of the cohort of children eligible to attend prep in 2015, there were 47,646 state school students enrolled. Of the approximately 400 state school children not enrolled in prep in 2015, 17 per cent were reported as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. These non-participating students come from across urban, regional and rural geographical areas. Data available indicates that around 63 per cent of children not currently enrolled in prep are from metropolitan areas and the remaining 37 per cent are broken up as follows: 8.5 per cent from areas surrounding metropolitan areas; 10.9 per cent from remote areas; and 17.6 per cent from rural areas.

A question was raised in the debate about whether prep changes will increase enrolment. By making prep compulsory, we will ensure that the small number of children who may have previously enrolled directly into year 1 will now have a solid foundation to their education. We will help to get these children off to a successful start by developing the understanding and skills required for the Australian Curriculum. The shadow minister asked whether these reforms will improve prep enrolment numbers. It is true that Queensland does have a high participation in prep. The focus of this reform is ensuring that prep becomes the compulsory first year of schooling here in Queensland.

However, I do want to stress that the government does respect that parents who know the needs of their children better than anyone have flexibility about when their child commences prep. Parents will therefore retain the ability to either enrol their child in prep from the age of 4½ or delay their entry until

their child reaches the compulsory school age. This means parents can consider a child's developmental, behavioural or emotional readiness for schooling in deciding when to enrol their child in prep, providing the child commences prep by the time they reach the compulsory school age.

Another issue that was raised was how these changes will support improved attendance. The shadow minister in her remarks also asked about how schools are supporting prep attendance. Schools closely monitor student attendance and use a broad range of systems and school based strategies for maintaining and improving student attendance. Last week in Cairns I launched the government's new Every day counts strategy which promotes both enrolment and attendance at school regardless of year level. We know that attendance has a direct correlation with a student's achievements. By making prep compulsory, Queensland is providing clarity for parents about the importance of prep as the first year of school. A range of communication activities are proposed to inform the sector and families about the upcoming changes.

In relation to the changes made to teacher registration, a number of members talked about what mechanisms are in place to protect teachers against vexatious or false claims. The shadow minister and a number of her colleagues raised concerns about teachers who find themselves the victim of vexatious or false claims. Obviously, I share this concern as well. The legislation regulating teachers needs to achieve the right balance between ensuring a high standard of teaching profession that has the confidence of the public and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children with the rights of teachers. I believe we have achieved this balance here in the current act and through our proposed amendments. I know the member for Morayfield in his comments also talked at length about the safeguards that are in the legislation.

It is also important to note that the college has a power under the current provisions in the act to refuse to deal with a complaint if it reasonably believes that it is trivial, unreasonable or without substance or that the complaint concerns frivolous matters or is made vexatiously. Changes implemented in this bill allow the college to receive information about potential disciplinary matters in an informal manner, such as through news media, and then make an assessment to determine whether a ground for disciplinary action exists. This will support the college to be more responsive to protect students.

Despite this, in order to commence disciplinary proceedings, the college must first hold a reasonable belief that a ground for disciplinary action exists. This means the college needs reliable evidence—for example, from the teacher's employer or other relevant sources, not just media reports, to form the reasonable belief, regardless of whether the matter initially came to the college's attention formally or informally. This would prevent the college acting on rumour or innuendo and other unreliable evidence.

Under section 76 of the act, schools must notify the college when the school investigates an allegation of harm caused or likely to be caused to a child because of the conduct of a teacher. By the definition of 'harm' in the act, these reports should only be about significant harm. These notifications assist the college to determine whether an immediate registration action needs to be taken against the teacher to protect Queensland students. The proposed amendments in the bill clarify when a school should notify the college of allegations of significant child harm by a teacher. They do not change the existing policy intent of the provisions or the reporting requirements. The college has undertaken to provide guidance to the sector to assist them in understanding the reporting requirements under section 76 and to avoid over-reporting.

Finally, the bill will strengthen the capacity for the college to protect students by lowering the threshold for suspensions of teachers where there are serious concerns about harm to children. The new test of 'unacceptable risk of harm' is consistent with the test used in the early childhood sector to a person working in early education and care services. When assessing whether it is appropriate to suspend a teacher's registration under the new threshold, the college will consider facts such as: the number of allegations against the teacher, the type and severity of the harm being alleged, and the nature and degree of the risk and the possible harm that would flow in that particular case. All teachers against whom disciplinary action is taken by the college are afforded natural justice during the college's investigation and through the disciplinary committee process. The college does not disclose information about its investigations. Only once disciplinary processes are completed is disciplinary action taken against the teacher recorded on the teacher register.

A significant amount of consultation was undertaken in developing these reforms and it received unanimous support. There was a bit of talk about whether the Teachers' Union supports these amendments. I want to assure all members that I have been in constant discussions with the body that represents almost 95 per cent of teachers working in state schools to make sure we get that balance

right. I want to acknowledge and thank them for understanding that in this day and age there is a higher expectation that we take all necessary steps to protect our children and keep them safe while also of course providing the balance for our teachers in their workplace. I want to assure members that they have been heavily involved in the discussions and they are comfortable with where we have landed here.

The member for Albert talked about PISA results. From our point of view, and as most members articulated in their contributions, prep provides the foundation for a child's success at school by developing the understanding and skills outlined in the Australian curriculum. We know that a high-quality prep program—like the one that we use here in Queensland—delivers quality curriculum that optimises learning for all prep students in the early years. This sets Queensland students up for strong results in national and international assessments, such as NAPLAN and PISA. Madam Deputy Speaker Linard, in your contribution you spoke about your old primary school. We have consistently seen that the students who have had access to prep have been doing better in NAPLAN and our NAPLAN results continue to improve. Indeed Queensland is the standout in that regard.

The member for Caloundra also made some comments in regard to this potentially adding red tape. That is not a concern that was ever raised with me in any of the consultation here in regard to compulsory prep. This is just saying very clearly to all Queenslanders that we believe the very first year of schooling is essential. All of the academic research demonstrates that it does make a big difference. The debate today has been quite cordial but I do want to advise him that we have not done away with the commission. In actual fact, I am maintaining that in an advisory role. This was negotiated in consultation with all sectors. There was a \$260 million backlog of maintenance when I became the minister, so this idea that they had actually addressed all of that is not correct. For the benefit of members, I need to make that point here.

I am happy to sit down with the member for Warrego, if she would like, to have a broader conversation about how we can support families more. All of the resources that are currently available for compulsory schooling from year 1 will be made available for students in prep as well, including any subsidies, because we are now making this part of our education. I do note the member for Warrego's heartfelt concerns for her constituents. Since I have been the minister, I have met with isolated parents a number of times. She is very correct in saying that they do have significant challenges in providing excellent education for their children.

We often joke that we work hard here, but I do not know how people like the mother the member opposite talked about with five kids who tries to homeschool them does it. They really are a testament to the grit we have in outback Queensland. I am happy to sit down with the member and talk about the issue more broadly if she wishes.

In conclusion, the bill delivers on the government's commitment to make prep the compulsory first year of schooling for all Queensland students. Compulsory prep will ensure students have a consistent learning experience going into year 1. Positive learning experiences in the early years improve children's educational outcomes, an effect that is particularly significant for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. I am so passionate about any reforms in education because, as a number of members from all sides of the House have articulated this afternoon, we know that in relation to children from disadvantaged backgrounds in particular who do not have security and safety at home, having a good quality education as early as possible makes a significant difference to their lives and their outcomes.

This bill also makes important reforms to strengthen the teacher registration system. This will ensure that our very high standards of teaching are maintained and there continues to be public confidence in the teaching profession.

I conclude by adding also to remarks made by all members of the parliament who have spoken on this bill today about how hard our teachers work. We have a great teaching profession here in Queensland, which includes our teacher aides. Tomorrow is Teacher Aide Day and I will be at Ashgrove State School tomorrow morning on tuckshop duty. I will be talking to some of the teacher aides there tomorrow.

The importance of education is something that I think all of us agree on. These reforms will help us build the best possible education system here in Queensland and provide confidence in our teachers and teaching profession.

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 114, as read, agreed to.

Clause 115—



Ms JONES (4.22 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 115 (Amendment of s 231 (College's discipline and enforcement functions))

Page 59, line 22—

omit, insert—

2;

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

Tabled paper: Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Kate Jones's amendments [1440].

As I said in my summing-up remarks, this proposed technical amendment will ensure that chapter five part 2 of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 is correctly referenced.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 115, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 116 to 132, as read, agreed to.

Clause 133—



Ms JONES (4.22 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 133 (Amendment of s 288 (Register of approved teachers to be kept))

Page 69, lines 18 to 27—

omit, insert—

- (a) if the person's registration or permission to teach was cancelled under section 56—as soon as practicable after the person stops being an excluded person in relation to the cancellation under section 57(3); or
- (b) if the person's registration or permission to teach was cancelled under section 160 and the order prevents the person reapplying for registration or permission to teach for a stated period—the day on which the stated period ends.

This is an amendment to clause 133 and amends section 288(6). The proposed amendment clarifies that section 288(6) of the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act applies to a person whose permission to teach is cancelled under the prescribed circumstances as well as to a person whose registration is cancelled under the same circumstances.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 133, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 134 to 140, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (4.23 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. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (4.24 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.

MOTION

Organised Crime



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (4.24 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the government to:

1. protect Queenslanders against the return to Queensland of organised criminal activity of all kinds;
2. guarantee to this House that the effective existing laws in regards to anti-association and 'stop search and detain powers' for police will not be watered down; and
3. ensure that existing clubhouses remain closed and no new clubhouses will be opened.

It has only been a few days since the Premier and the police minister announced the weakening of the current criminal motorcycle gang laws and already the community unrest is palpable. The government have sugar-coated the proposed weakening of the laws with an inane policy of banning bikie club colours, a policy that cannot be policed and a policy that is simply meant to be a facade for the weakening of the laws that will happen over the next few weeks. They posture and pretend to be tough on criminals but, make no mistake, the public are not fools nor are the criminal motorcycle gangs. Their track record in this area speaks for itself. Laws under the Bligh government that the police said were totally ineffective, again, were sold as a 'get tough on crime measure' but proved to be totally ineffective. The funding for Taskforce Maxima, the task force put together to tackle organised criminal gangs, has been gutted by a third by this government.

The LNP introduced the current tough legislation because the bikie situation in this state, particularly on the Gold Coast, was out of control. Shock and awe tactics to deal with bikie gangs were needed to show that they were not in control. Extraordinary laws were needed for extraordinary circumstances. The LNP's laws were all about giving powers to the police to prevent and disrupt criminal activity. Those laws have been adopted by the Labor government of South Australia and are being examined at the moment by the Labor government in Victoria—and they are very keen to take these on because they have seen the success of them in this state—and they have survived a High Court challenge.

What have the current LNP laws done? They have closed down criminal motorcycle gang clubhouses, the clubhouses where the criminal motorcycle gang members came together to consort and plan their criminal activity; we shut them down completely. What are we hearing from the current minister quoted in today's *Courier-Mail*? We are hearing that the current clubhouses will not be open but clubhouses may be allowed to open up as a 'restricted premises'. What does that mean? Does that mean they are only open between nine and five?

Mr Costigan: Like banks.

Mr MANDER: Will the industrial relations minister allow them to open on public holidays? Are they only working banking hours now? I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. Make no mistake, under this government bikie clubhouses will be back.

What did we also do under our laws? We made the streets of Queensland, particularly those on the Gold Coast, safe again. Families can once again eat out at local restaurants and feel safe. Businesses no longer have to pay protection money and are not frightened to come out and talk about the fact that they had been extorted because they knew they had a government behind them and a legal framework that would protect them.

What do we read in the newspaper this week? A hundred Hell's Angel bikies took over the streets of Waterford causing delays in traffic. One member of the public said it was intimidating, as it would be seeing a hundred patched Hell's Angels. The Gold Coast police commander admitted—

We have given leeway because it was a funeral (but) it appears they have clearly overstepped.

Give these people an inch and they will take a mile.

The bikies are positioning themselves to come back. What the CCC investigation into criminal organisations said is coming true. As Mr MacSporran stated—

It may be inferred that OMCs (outlaw motorcycle gangs) perceive that the laws will be repealed or reduced, and are positioning themselves to take control of 'turf' once any relaxation occurs.

Make no mistake, colleagues: the bikies are back and Labor is to blame!

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (4.30 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'against' be deleted and the following words inserted:

1. organised criminal activity of all kinds;
2. guarantee to this House that police have the powers they need to tackle organised crime, including keeping OMCG clubhouses closed;
3. ensure appropriate oversight forms part of Queensland's organised crime laws; and
4. support proper consideration and scrutiny of organised crime legislation through the parliamentary committee process.

What we hear from those opposite and what we have heard for the last four and a half years is the typical tough-on-crime rhetoric that we have heard from the LNP every time, whether they are in government or whether they are in opposition. They go out with a whole fear campaign to scare people, but they never, ever put thought into what they are doing. Why do we need to change these laws?

Mr SPEAKER: Before the Attorney-General gets her breath, the Attorney-General's voice is not as loud as the member for Everton's, so I would urge members to allow me to hear the Attorney-General just as clearly.

Mrs D'ATH: There are three volumes of comprehensive reports: the commission of inquiry into organised crime and two volumes from the Taskforce on Organised Crime Legislation. This is a comprehensive body of work which has been done over the past 18 months to make sure that we have the best laws going forward to tackle all organised crime in this state, not just outlaw motorcycle gangs. What did the LNP do? They shut down all the clubhouses completely; the only problem is that they are sitting there fully fitted out. Their laws stop only the clubhouses in relation to a list of 26 organisations, so if those premises are being used to operate a boiler room fraud operation can they be caught up under section 60B of the VLAD laws? No, they cannot. If they are operating paedophile rings to make and distribute child exploitation material would they be caught up under section 60B? No, they would not because they are not one of the 26 outlaw motorcycle gangs that those on the other side targeted because it was all about bikies and nothing else.

Our laws will make sure that we are tackling organised crime more broadly. We hear from those opposite that families are safe now and they can go into restaurants safely because of the LNP's laws, but on 12 February this year John-Paul Langbroek was convinced that bikies had never truly left the Gold Coast. The member for Surfers Paradise is quoted in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*—

"I think they are still here," he said.

"The arrests we have had in the last few days with alleged associations with bikie gangs and the drugs with large amounts of cash show that they never left.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I hear the shadow police spokesperson say, 'Restricted premises; what does that mean?' What an extraordinary statement! I think the member for Everton has just accidentally admitted that he has not read the task force report in any way whatsoever, because if he had he would see that it has been clearly explained in detail what restricted premises are and why the task force recommended those offences be used in the new framework to tackle organised crime, yet the member for Everton wants me to explain it. Pick up the task force report and do your job; that is what I say to the member for Everton. Do your job. If you want to be the shadow spokesperson for police, do your job and read the task force report. The opposition's motion—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I cannot hear the Attorney-General!

Mrs D'ATH: The opposition's motion—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Albert, you are warned under standing order 253A. Member for Whitsunday, I think you were also speaking at the time. You are also warned under standing order 253A. Were you or were you not speaking? If you were not, I apologise.

Mr COSTIGAN: Mr Speaker, I was not speaking.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat. I call the Attorney-General.

Mrs D'ATH: The LNP motion talked about retaining the anti-association provisions, but in 2009 the member for Southern Downs said—

No amount of new laws dealing with association will stop criminal activity. But giving police and public prosecutors the power to seize all unexplained assets will.

It goes on to say, 'Mr Springborg said recent hearings in the federal parliament into anti-association laws heard over and over from almost every law enforcement agency the best way to fight organised crime was to follow the money trail.' I also have quotes from John-Paul Langbroek, who said that anti-association laws do not tackle the problem, yet here they are today relying on them again.

We are determined to deal with all forms of organised crime. These laws will tackle child exploitation and financial crimes, both of which leave victims in their wake and in some cases take lives. These are serious crimes that ought to be tackled. We will tackle drug trafficking. It is not just about bikies: our laws will be tough on all organised crime.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.35 pm): There you see a prime example of what is wrong with this state when the Labor Party is in charge. Unfortunately, the Labor members over there have completely missed the point of the issue. Why would they not know what is going on in the Gold Coast? The fact is that they do not have any members down there. They never come to the Gold Coast so they cannot see what the issues are. This whole issue was triggered by problems that occurred at Broadbeach. This is about the safety of the people of Queensland; this is about the safety of our families; this is about the safety of our children; this is about the safety of our parents—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, I apologise for interrupting. Minister for Police and Attorney-General, you will be warned if you persist with your interjections.

Mr HART: Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker. Like I need it from those over there, because they are quite lily-livered. They have no idea about what the issues are on the Gold Coast. The LNP's very strong laws shut down bikies on the Gold Coast. They shut down bikie clubhouses in my electorate. I had the Hells Angels in my electorate in Lemana Lane. They had fortified their clubhouse. They had brought people up from Sydney. They were entrenching themselves in Burleigh. The Black Uhlands were in Harley Drive out in West Burleigh. Their clubhouse is closed down but it is still there. Then the Hells Angels came along and tried to set up another clubhouse in Ern Harley Drive which was discovered in 2014.

If we take the foot off the neck of these bikies they will come straight back. I do not think anybody on this side of the House really believes for a second that the bikies disappeared off the face of the earth. They are still around and they are still breaking the law, but they are not visible on the Gold Coast and that is what scares everybody on the Gold Coast. It is the bikies who go into restaurants and it is the bikies who go down the street in their colours that scare people. People on the Gold Coast feel much safer because of the strong LNP laws, and if the members opposite try to take those laws away I can tell you that they will never, ever win a seat on the Gold Coast because the people of the Gold Coast will not ever vote for them. You only have to look at the *Gold Coast Bulletin* to see how the people of the Gold Coast think of the Labor Party. Here is a cartoon from yesterday which shows a cuddly pet and a bikie—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. There have been rulings made about props in the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, will you please table it. Just table it.

Mr HART: I am—

Mr SPEAKER: Just table it.

Mr HART: I am—

Mr SPEAKER: Just table it. No. Our staff are standing behind you so table it, please.

Mr HART: Mr Speaker, I will table—

Mr SPEAKER: I will warn you. Just table it.

Mr HART: I am tabling the document, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Now you can continue.

Mr HART: I also table two documents—from yesterday's *Gold Coast Bulletin* and *Courier-Mail*—that talk about 100 bikies that came through Waterford in a very intimidating way.

Tabled paper: Bundle of newspaper articles, various dates, regarding outlaw motorcycle gangs [1441].

The people who observed that were undoubtedly intimidated. I can tell members opposite that the moment the Labor Party was elected bikies on the Gold Coast got back on their bikes, got into their colours and roared out on to the streets—the following day. That happened in my electorate, with a dozen bikies going wild up the street, revving up their Harleys and completely flouting the law. We have laws in this state for a very good reason. They are there to protect our citizens.

A government member interjected.

Mr HART: I take that interjection from the member opposite. They are our laws and they worked. The Labor Party intends to completely unravel those laws.

We heard the Minister for Industrial Relations a short time ago when she introduced a bill. She is there to wipe out what the former LNP government did. That is also what the changes to these laws will attempt to do. It does not matter whether what we did was good, bad or indifferent; it is apparently bad and has to be excised from the books.

Ms Donaldson interjected.

Mr HART: I can tell the minister what will happen down there. We will see an explosion in drugs. We will see an explosion in crime. We are already starting to see that, because the bikies and criminals of every type on the Gold Coast appreciate that the Labor Party is weak on crime and weak on law and order and they intend to come roaring back. As I said, this is about the safety of our children, our parents and our families. They deserve better than the Labor Party.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Ferny Grove, I note that the member for Bundaberg has been very vocal during this debate. I urge you to consider your comments or you may join the list.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (4.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment. Eighteen months ago the Palaszczuk government was elected on the basis of a commitment to keep Queenslanders safe. Our state budget delivers on that commitment with an additional \$39.1 million over four years for the Queensland Police Service to specifically target serious organised crime. We are also delivering an additional \$5 million each year for four years for police to target organised crime, alcohol fuelled violence and ice. The Premier also announced \$3.2 million for Taskforce Orion to specifically target online sharing of child exploitation material. These combined funds deliver a further boost to police resources and give our law enforcement agencies the tools and technology they need to tackle organised crime in all its forms.

Police have been relentless in targeting serious organised crime, and they will continue to exploit every opportunity to target criminal activities—anywhere, anytime. Taskforce Maxima continues to operate against the organised crime activities of outlaw motorcycle gangs and other organised crime syndicates. It has never stopped. Officers with specific skills are assigned to Taskforce Maxima. The number of officers on the task force varies according to operational needs. This flexibility and agility means the officers can be deployed to any part of Queensland to target serious organised crime, should the need arise. That is why it is a nonsense for those opposite to link task force numbers with results. It reflects a complete lack of understanding of contemporary policing practices and the combined might of police resources.

What we see time and time again from this inept opposition is a persistence to mix policing with politics. It got them into trouble in the Bjelke-Petersen era, it got them into trouble in the Borbidge era and the Newman era, and it will get them into trouble again. They have not learned the lessons of the past. The LNP has never understood or respected the doctrine of the separation of powers. Any decisions about where to dispatch police officers in Queensland should be made by police, not politicians. It is the government's role to ensure police have the resources they need, and that is exactly what the Palaszczuk government is doing. Some 2,200 new body worn video cameras are being rolled out across the state. That is over and above the 500 we have already provided to police on the front line.

Police remain resolute in their pursuit of crime gangs and all forms of serious organised crime. Since Taskforce Maxima began, more than \$17.5 million in cash and assets have been seized or restrained. Recent arrests and charges reinforce the government's resolve and that of the Queensland Police Service. The results are on the table. The Palaszczuk government backs police efforts every step of the way. We said that our new serious organised crime laws would be the toughest in the country, and they will be. They will be rigorous and they will withstand scrutiny. Importantly, they will keep Queenslanders safe.

During the lunch break I had the opportunity to do a little bit of research. I came across some evidence from an unlikely ally, the member for Kawana. In his contribution to the second reading debate of the Criminal Organisation Bill in 2009 he actually agreed with the laws proposed by the Palaszczuk Labor government. He said—

We do not need to enact laws aimed directly at bike gangs or other groups ...

That is precisely what these laws will do. We will have laws directed at the whole of organised crime. I am not sure whether this was the same member for Kawana, but he said—

... there must also be the protection of personal liberties such as the freedom of association.

He went on to say—

This bill encroaches on their personal freedoms and liberties.

We heard the exact opposite when he introduced the VLAD legislation in 2013. That demonstrates the hypocrisy of the member for Kawana.

Our laws are also supported by the Commissioner for Police. He said outright in the *Brisbane Times* that these will be the toughest laws in the country. That is endorsed by the police union, for which I proudly worked for a number of years. The president has recently said—

I am very pleased with the outcomes as proposed. Banning outlaw motorcycle gang colours altogether in Queensland is a move we should be proud of and all other states should follow our lead.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (4.46 pm): The tone of the debate we hear from the government side of the chamber can be easily summed up: the talk is tough but the action is ineffective. The figures speak for themselves. During our time in government, reported crime decreased by over 12 per cent across the state. We see from the budget papers that in Labor's time, for the last year, assaults are up by 9.8 per cent, robbery is up by 7.7 per cent, unlawful entry is up by 2.8 per cent and motor vehicle theft is up by 5.8 per cent.

The secret to the fall in crime rates during our time is inherently linked to the strong bikie legislation that we brought in, and the secret for the increase during Labor's time is precisely what the CCC reported to the Wilson task force looking at repealing these laws—that is, the bikies already sensed that the laws were going to be weakened. The report by Mr MacSporran to former justice Wilson made it very clear—he repeated it at estimates this year—that the bikies sense the laws are going to be weakened and they are already taking action.

During the week we saw the unseemly and frightening spectacle of 100 or so bikies thundering through the Gold Coast and, once again, putting fear into the hearts of people. Yesterday on the Gold Coast we saw the Minister for Police saying that the new laws, in his view, will allow the growth of new clubhouses which will then have to have action taken against them, through complex court proceedings, to close them down.

We have seen all this before. I am surprised that the member for Ferny Grove was game to mention the Criminal Organisation Act. This was Labor's last attempt at dealing with this issue, in 2009. It was an absolute failure. We have already seen that.

This is what former justice Wilson, who reviewed the laws, said about this—the Wilson review that Labor does not like to talk about. He said—

It is apparent that COA's—

Criminal Organisation Act—

methodology, its attempts to maintain safeguards against such an intrusion, and the remedies it provides, mean that in practice it has not proved useful and holds no promise of becoming so.

He went on to talk about the one application that was unsuccessfully made under the Criminal Organisation Act—one application that did not get anywhere. He said this—

Only one COA application has ever been brought, and it did not run to completion. It was against an OMCG, the Finks Motorcycle Club. It was interrupted by proceedings about COA in the High Court. Later, it was discontinued after the Finks disbanded and 'patched over' to another OMCG (the Mongols) and, coincidentally, the 2013 suite of laws was introduced.

Once the 2013 suite of laws was introduced, we did not have to proceed with the ineffective COA anymore because we had laws that did work and worked effectively, and the figures show that. What we have seen of Labor's anticonsorting laws and many of the issues that have been spoken about—we have only seen legislation by press release on this issue because the government has not got its legislation together—has echoes of COA coming back again, with anticonsorting laws and the reinforcement of all of the things that have already failed coming back again. In 2008 Commissioner Stewart said this about the consorting laws, which are what, it seems, Labor intends to bring back—

Traditional consorting laws were repealed in Queensland in 2005, and when in place those laws were increasingly difficult to police. The Queensland Police Service considered there were greater priorities for investigative staff than enforcing consorting laws which had been enacted in the 1920s. Contemporary communications technology, including mobile phone SMS and online forums make criminal consorting less reliant on physical contact and therefore much more difficult to police.

It comes back, really, to the same issue: where is it that these laws are said to be failing? The figures show that crime reduced after the institution of these laws. The figures have only gone up again when the bikies have come to know that the laws were going to be weakened, and that was clear in the report from the CCC—our highest crime-fighting body—to Mr Wilson's review. Why is it that what is working is going to be set aside? Queenslanders need to be worried about that. This government should put aside its political attempt to discredit these laws and it should stick with them because that would ensure that Queensland remains a safe place to live.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.51 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved to the motion. The amended motion will be much like what will be introduced into this House—that is, our government's well considered and comprehensive package to target organised crime. All I have heard so far in the debate from those opposite is a demonstration that the Liberal National Party cannot establish a consistent narrative on this topic, and it has not been able to do so for quite a period of time. I will point to a few things in that regard later on, but what we are doing as a government is new funding, new resources, new laws and the collective will of nearly 11,500 sworn officers. It is regrettable that the opposition does not share the same level of support for our police and for the tools and resources we will give them to get on with the job of dismantling organised crime.

Those opposite have form on this. In 2009 the member for Surfers Paradise was quoted in the *Sunday Mail* saying that association laws, which is what they have been arguing for, did not strike at the nub of the problem. That shows how much they understood then, as they do now! He also said that the police—this is another antipolice quote—have said that they will not abuse the laws and he said that that is not exactly ringing endorsement. These comments came after members of the Liberal National Party opposition had been dealing with and meeting with patched members of criminal organisation gangs. I have never met with a patched member of a bikie gang officially and never will I. Tonight the opposition has been leading with its chin. The member for Everton's commentary was posturing idly and standing up for nothing because the LNP has never been sure-footed on this issue. Organised crime is a disease and hot air—which is what we have seen this evening—is its recommended cure. If history is any indicator, the people of Queensland can be prepared to be underwhelmed by the LNP's unpredictable—that is right, unpredictable—useless response. Those opposite are standing up for one per centers—the one per centers in the white shoe brigade on the Gold Coast and the top echelons that support their party. Tonight they are standing up for them and they have history of standing up for one per centers, and I will get to that in a minute.

Members voting on this motion should be aware of the history of our parliament's response to organised crime, and the LNP has had some interesting form in the last seven years. It was for and pro bikie interests in 2009 when the member for Kawana championed the civil liberties of bikies. This is a very interesting piece of commentary that has been much reported in the media, that is that the Liberal National Party—

... will also sleep secure in the knowledge that we fought to maintain the fundamental right of free association. Labor members by contrast should be haunted by the spectre of their bans on free association. Labor members should be condemned—

this is fantastic—

to the eternal nightmare which follows their trampling of centuries of established legal rights of every Queensland citizen into the dirt as they are doing today.

Going forward three years under the Newman government, we have the then attorney-general and member for Kawana saying—

The Newman government does not think anti-association laws are the right way to deal with rogue bikie gangs and other organised crime syndicates.

That is over the three or four years leading through that process. Those opposite had been standing as the great civil libertarians, but in 2012 Campbell Newman ruled out banning bikie colours. We just heard members opposite talk about how intimidating they are, but the then premier said that his party would not do anything about them. He said—

The team that I lead believe that you shouldn't be sort of penalised for wearing your footy team uniform or jersey ...

That was at the same time when then Commissioner Bob Atkinson was saying that bikie groups were underrated and were one of the greatest challenges facing police. This great appreciation that has been demonstrated by those opposite has been a failure—an unmitigated failure. Let us not forget that everything that is in place now is under their regime. The laws as they apply have been set up by

those opposite and their own statements this evening demonstrate what an abject failure they have been in effect. When we introduce our legislation those opposite are going to see well considered and well thought through legislation that will do serious damage to organised crime.

(Time expired)

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 44:

ALP, 42—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, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

NOES, 42:

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House calls on the government to:

1. protect Queenslanders against organised criminal activity of all kinds;
2. guarantee to this House that police have the powers they need to tackle organised crime, including keeping OMCG clubhouses closed;
3. ensure appropriate oversight forms part of Queensland's organised crime laws; and
4. support proper consideration and scrutiny of organised crime legislation through the parliamentary committee process.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Port of Townsville, Pilot Vessels

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (5.03 pm), by leave: In question time today I was asked about the Port of Townsville pilot boat tender. I gave a commitment to come back to the House with a comprehensive response. As a government owned corporation, the Port of Townsville Ltd has, as I have mentioned, an independent board and management. As a GOC, specific procurement decisions are a matter for the business. As I said in question time today, they operate under a commercial mandate.

I am advised that, in 2013-14, the Port of Townsville Ltd undertook an expression of interest for the provision of a new pilot boat vessel. In March 2016, the Port of Townsville issued a closed tender to five boatbuilders, which had been selected from the 2013-14 expression of interest process undertaken by the previous government. Two of these builders were from Queensland: Townsville based O'Brien Boats Pty Ltd and Brisbane based Norman R Wright & Sons. The remaining boatbuilders were from New South Wales, New Zealand and Malaysia.

Three of the five firms, including Townsville based O'Brien Boats Pty Ltd, did not submit a tender. The two tenders received were from Brisbane based Norman R Wright & Sons and one from New South Wales based Hart Marine. I am advised that a key factor in assessing tenders was the need for the new pilot boat vessel to be delivered by October 2017 to avoid potential financial risks from extended maintenance of the existing vessel, *Petrel II*, in the event of any delay in delivery of the new boat.

Hart Marine's tender included a vessel of proven design and build, having previously supplied other clients with more than 10 vessels of the required size and type. Hart Marine's bid also included the training of a Townsville based apprentice at no additional cost as part of its local participation plan, which was considered favourably by the Port of Townsville.

I am advised that the Port of Townsville believed that the Norman R Wright & Sons submission potentially offered a quality pilot vessel. However, it was noted that Norman R Wright & Sons planned to relocate its workshop from its existing premises during the planned boat build time frame. I understand that the firm believes that this would not have affected its ability to meet the port's delivery deadline. That may be in contention.

I visited the Norman R Wright & Sons shipyard last year with the member for Bulimba, who is a strong advocate for that business and for all the other businesses in her electorate. It was clear to me from that visit that Norman R Wright & Sons, as a firm of 100 years of experience, complete world-class work and support the local economy.

Whilst in this instance the tender was not awarded to a Queensland company, there have been many instances in the past 18 months where significant tenders were won by Townsville and Queensland companies. Of 19 tenders awarded by the Port of Townsville Ltd since January 2015, almost 90 per cent have gone to Queensland suppliers, with the majority of this work being delivered out of Townsville, including the berth 4 upgrade. The primary works contract was awarded to local contractor CivilPlus Constructions in February 2016. In dollar terms, that equates to \$32 million out of a total of \$36 million.

Under the previous government's policy settings, which would have seen the sale of the Port of Townsville, such work would have been at the whim of a private operator without any regard to the Townsville community. The Palaszczuk government has also strengthened the Queensland government local content policy to increase the opportunities for local businesses for government procurement. This policy is also required to be taken into account, as I said this morning, by government owned corporations in their procurement activities.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.06 pm): I move—

That the House at its rising do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 13 September 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.06 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Oakey

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.06 pm): The Oakey township is an integral part of the Condamine electorate. It has a small but extremely vocal community who are proud of their town and its many achievements. There is an active and highly successful small business community that work together to ensure that Oakey is presented in the best possible light. The community as a whole wants Oakey to thrive so that they can all continue to enjoy the lifestyle opportunities and benefits that it has to offer.

The Oakey Beef Exports abattoir will almost double its capacity in the next 10 years, with 11,500 cattle being processed each week and 500 new jobs created. The expansion will involve an upgrade of rail sidings in the south-west to allow direct live cattle deliveries. This large exporting business has made Oakey its base, with most of its employees living and raising their families in Oakey.

I recently visited the local aged-care facility at Oakey, CWA House. This is the only aged-care facility run by the CWA left in Queensland. It has a 40-bed capacity, with 15 secure dementia care units offering permanent and respite accommodation for the aged members of the Darling Downs community. The facility and surroundings are beautiful. It is a credit to the Oakey community that they have created such a wonderful place for the elderly to be cared for, whilst remaining in a rural and regional setting. I understand that the grandmother of the member for Toowoomba South is one of the residents.

Since becoming the member for Condamine, I have visited many small businesses and school and community organisations in Oakey. The common thread with all of the people whom I have met is their strong link to their community and the pride that they have in Oakey. Unfortunately, the Oakey water contamination issue has been portrayed by the media as the end for Oakey as we know it. The

reports are not all in as yet and the contamination does not extend to all of Oakey. However, that has not been reported upon. The last thing Oakey needs is for this negative publicity to continue. It will impact upon real estate sales, people starting new businesses, people deciding to move from Oakey, or not to relocate at all and the economy of Oakey will decline.

I understand that the water contamination issue is of huge concern to all Oakey residents and in particular those directly neighbouring the army aviation base. However, there are a lot of unknowns and until the scientific proof has been substantiated, the media should be reporting upon the facts, not creating unnecessary hysteria about a small community who is desperately trying to grow and attract new people to their town.

MacGregor State School

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (5.10 pm): Since being elected I have been making efforts to improve the safety of students at the MacGregor State School, but my efforts have been frustrated by the Brisbane City Council at every turn. I have tried to progress this project since being elected. I have asked Councillor Steven Huang for the MacGregor ward to advise me in writing what is happening with the stop, drop and go zone for MacGregor State School to ensure the safety of students of that school.

Brisbane City Council keep making promises and breaking them. They say they will fix the problem, but they do not. They will not work with the department of education to advance this project. Councillor Steven Huang promised a feasibility study at the recent council election and then reneged. He promised the parents of MacGregor State School and then again reneged. He promised the students of MacGregor State School and again reneged. The council have promised a stop, drop and go zone but they refuse to take ownership and responsibility for this project.

I, along with the Minister for Education, visited the MacGregor State School at peak pick-up time in the afternoon. I thank the minister for her commitment to this project and for taking time out of her busy schedule to visit the MacGregor State School to meet the teachers, parents and students at this busy time. Whilst the minister was there the question was asked whether the former LNP member had been able to secure funding for the stop, drop and go zone for MacGregor State School. I learnt very early in the piece that no funding had been secured. I also learnt that the most fundamental ask had not occurred. The most fundamental ask was for the Brisbane City Council to request the government to excise the land. That has never occurred and as a result of that not occurring the feasibility study has never been able to be undertaken. Despite the false promises from the councillor we are in a position of a complete stalemate because the Brisbane City Council has altered the way they deal with stop, drop and go zones at about 46 schools throughout the state.

Seniors Week

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (5.13 pm): On Friday, 19 August I hosted the Mount Ommaney annual Seniors Week morning tea. This is the fourth year I have held the event. It was a pleasure to have the member for Clayfield, the Leader of the Opposition, join us on such a joyous occasion. The calibre of our seniors should always be celebrated and never underestimated. Over 200 attendees, including returned servicemen from World War II, attended. We had a range of former professionals, residents, community volunteers and leaders come along. We were very much entertained by the former Wallabies coach, John Connolly.

Mr Costigan: Knuckles!

Mrs SMITH: Exactly. One of the questions to win a prize was why he was named Knuckles, but that is another story. We were highly entertained with tales of his experiences, especially in his former life as coach of a very successful Wallabies team.

Schools in the electorate provided musical entertainment for our seniors which was very much enjoyed. Our talented junior choir sang so beautifully. The morning tea was held when the Rio Olympics was on and the choir performed Rio-inspired themes. Thank you to the Jamboree Heights State School choir and their wonderful music teacher, Ms Jane Hooper. The Corinda State High School clarinet quartet was also in attendance. There was one particular young lad in the quartet who had been at parliament earlier that week for National Science Week because he had been to NASA. He is a very, very talented young man with an extremely bright future. One of the favourite pieces that was played was one members might remember from the movie *The Sting* with Paul Newman and Robert Redford: *The Entertainer*. The four of them played that classic piece so beautifully. All in all, it was an extremely entertaining morning. It was wonderful to have over 200 attendees come along and join in for friendship, fun and celebrations. I think it is important to recognise and appreciate the calibre of our seniors.

Mackay Electorate

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.16 pm): As a former teacher I would like to wish all the teacher aides happy Teacher Aides Day tomorrow. Without them schools would be much worse off. I would also like to pay my condolences to the family and friends of miner Ian Hansen, who lost his life at the Newlands coalmine earlier this week. His death has saddened our community. Many of us from Central Queensland have family and friends in the mining industry, and it sends a reminder to us all that workplace health and safety regulations must be held up on all worksites. What we need to do is bring our loved ones home safe and sound after every shift.

I would like to congratulate the Premier and the Minister for Tourism for their recent Connecting to Asia forum in Cairns. My electorate of Mackay and surrounding regions have great potential to develop a thriving tourism industry based on the natural beauty of our surroundings. Mackay is surrounded by many pristine beaches, Mackay Marina, the Eungella Rainforest, the Pioneer Valley in the member for Mirani's electorate, Cape Hillsborough, the net-free zone where you can dip in a line and catch a fish and we have lots of farmstay experiences. These are just a few of our local experiences. The greater Mackay region has a lot to offer to our tourists, both local and international. When the tourist industry talks about hero experiences, in our region you can ride on the flying fox at Finch Hatton, scuba dive with a platypus and pat kangaroos at Cape Hillsborough on the beach after catching a fish and taking a hike through the beautiful bushland. We have first-class restaurants, cafes and accommodation and conference facilities. We have it all!

Next week the member for Mirani and I will be holding a tourism forum to share with tourist industry operators and emerging operators opportunities that can be tapped into with the emergence of the Asian tourism industry in Queensland. I want my region to tap into the potential of the additional 30,000 jobs and the \$6.8 billion of visitor expenditure expected by 2025. Asian travellers are changing their travel preferences from large organised tours to more independent small groups of friends and family. The new type of Asian travellers are pursuing unique and exotic destinations. They are experienced travellers and are seeking high-quality experiences with a cultural component. Independent traveller numbers have already risen by one million in the past decade. The member for Mirani and I want to see our electorates take advantage of tourism industry opportunities.

(Time expired)

LGBTIQ Community

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—Ind) (5.19 pm): Last week it was with great pride that I marched with the Tropical Mardi Gras float at the Cairns Festival Parade. I have many friends who are part of Cairns' vibrant and active LGBTIQ community, of which I am very proud. It was great to celebrate with them.

It is with a heavy heart that I would like to express my personal sorrow for the way Queensland's LGBTIQ community has been treated in the past, as well as for a number of injustices that continue today. We all know that being a gay man was a criminal offence in this state prior to 1989 and of the injustice and victimisation the LGBTIQ community had been subjected to. While I may lack the stature of a prime minister, premier or even an opposition leader, as a humble MP I say to Queensland's LGBTIQ community, 'I am sorry!'

However, it is not just for past injustices that this parliament should feel sorry, because injustice and inequity continue. Three areas stand out in this regard. The first is criminal convictions for sodomy. It is ridiculous that in this day and age elderly gay men have convictions hanging over their heads from the time when Joh Bjelke-Petersen was premier.

Secondly, the gay panic defence continues in Queensland. A petition tabled this morning draws our attention to the discrimination faced by LGBTIQ people in Queensland through the use of the provocation defence, section 304 of the Criminal Code, colloquially known as the gay panic defence. That partial defence allows for a charge of murder to be downgraded to manslaughter if it is alleged that an unwanted homosexual advance was made by the deceased towards the defendant.

Such an interpretation of this law is completely archaic, has no place in our legal system and affects the way LGBTIQ people live their lives day to day, by curbing freedom of expression and association in the public sphere with the threat of violence. It is impossible to articulate just how offensive, dangerous and destructive it would be to allow this defence to remain unaddressed in our Criminal Code. I agree with these petitioners and likewise request the Attorney General to introduce

legislation to remove the potential for provocation to be used in defence of an individual who has committed an act of murder by enshrining in legislation that an alleged unwanted homosexual advance cannot be used as an application of the provocation defence.

Thirdly, unequal age of consent laws in this state continue to discriminate against gay men. The government has said that it will standardise consent laws, but has not yet done so. I say to the government, draft the legislation and bring on the vote.

To end on a positive note, the Tropical Mardi Gras will take place in Cairns from 30 September, with many wonderful events planned. I look forward to participating and celebrating with Cairns' LGBTIQ community and the wider community.

William (Jim) Sorensen Safety House

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.22 pm): Recently on behalf of the Hon. Bill Byrne, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the people of Pumicestone, I officially opened the William (Jim) Sorensen Safety House, on the corner of Faraday Street and Sunderland Drive, Bribie Island. The facility was the original house of the Bribie Island fire chief. Through an initiative of the Palaszczuk government, the residence has been converted into a brilliant facility. One bedroom and the kitchen of the house are filled with artificial smoke, which sets off the photoelectric interconnected smoke alarms. Local residents and children can come and see that happen, which leaves them with a vivid memory of what the term 'Get down low and go, go, go' really means. The house has large internal windows that allow students to look in and see that the air at floor level is clear. The house also has disabled facilities. For deaf and blind people, there are fire alarms that have a vibrating unit that is placed beneath the pillow. When the alarm is triggered, the unit vibrates and also flashes with lights. With an ageing population, that is a very sound way of saving lives. The Safety House is manned by station officer Trevor Stark and Safety House community officer Bill Goddard. It contains a 35-seat theatre designed to teach fire safety. I reflect on the 11 lives that were lost in a house that was only five doors away from my brother-in-law's house at Wagensvelt Street, Slacks Creek. I am proud of the efforts of the Palaszczuk government in protecting Queensland, through the bill that was passed by the House last night. We cannot afford to lose lives.

The Bribie Island Safety House will save lives in the area. The house doubles as the Pumicestone East Emergency Centre and will be used by the police and Fire and Emergency Services in the event of a major incident. Recently, we lost Michael Newbon and Marion Wallace, two wonderful people who suffered from dementia. They disappeared on the island. The command centre can be activated very quickly and, hopefully, prevent incidents such as that in the future. I honour the late Jim Sorenson, the former Bribie fire officer, for his 30 years of service, the last 16 years spent at the Bribie station.

Gaven Electorate, Road Safety

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (5.25 pm): Since becoming the member for Gaven, I have been working to improve a number of local roads for both motorists and pedestrians. Road safety is an important issue for the people in Gaven and I take this opportunity to update the parliament on my advocacy in this area.

At Nerang, the very busy intersection of North Street and Nerang Connection Road will become fully signalised, with a dedicated right-turn lane for vehicles travelling into North Street from Nerang Connection Road. Construction is scheduled to begin in October 2016 for completion mid-2017.

Meanwhile, out to the west of the electorate in Mount Nathan, locals were calling out for improvements to the Beaudesert-Nerang Road and Arunta Drive intersection. That dangerous black spot now has a wide centre line to separate traffic and the shoulders have been widened, a guardrail installed and the uneven road surface has been upgraded. I met with DTMR onsite to inspect those upgrades, as I know local residents are very passionate about improving road safety in this area. So far, local feedback has been very positive.

Local residents have also raised serious concerns regarding safety at the intersection of Maudsland Road and Nerang-Beaudesert Road at Maudsland. I have been meeting regularly with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to seek a positive outcome to improve the safety for local residents and motorists at that intersection. I will continue to do so until the intersection is improved.

Heading back out to Pacific Pines, the slipway onto the M1 on Binstead Way continues to be a nightmare for local motorists. Mark Boothman, whose electorate of Albert neighbours mine, and I are continuing to progress that matter. We have offered our support for council to seek federal funding for the project, as the state Labor government has declined our request for an upgrade to be funded.

However, there is some good news for the intersection of Grenfel Street and Spender Road, Nerang. I successfully lobbied the Department of Main Roads and Transport to have the intersection upgraded, to provide an additional left-hand-turn red arrow at the intersection to stop traffic, to allow the many elderly residents living within the Earl Haven retirement community to cross the road safely.

Similarly, in Station Street, Nerang, I secured additional signage at the front of the My Centre shopping centre to warn of a pedestrian crossing on the slip lane at the top of Station Street. I am also working on improving pedestrian safety in Tibbing Street, Nerang, at the intersection of Beaudesert-Nerang Road, which is at the entry to the Nerang Fair shopping centre and Petro's Corner. So far the Department of Transport and Main Roads has refused to consider a pedestrian refuge, due to a new policy under this Labor government of steering away from installing pedestrian crossings on slip lanes. I have scheduled a meeting with DTMR in the very near future to question that policy, to ensure the best outcome for pedestrian safety is met. I will continue to work hard to improve road infrastructure in the Gaven electorate, to ensure our area remains a safe place to live, work and raise a family.

Leyburn Sprints

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (5.28 pm): This evening I rise to give a contribution regarding a great community event that I attended recently to represent the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Kate Jones. That event was the historic Leyburn Sprints, and what an event it was. The first thing I learned was that the town is pronounced 'leeburn' and not 'layburn', and by the end of the weekend I finally had that hammered home. It is the 21st anniversary of that legendary motoring experience and the town certainly turned on the hospitality for the event. Yards were impeccably tidied, lawns were mowed and the sense of community pride was incredible. The start line of the sprints is adjacent to the centrepiece of the town, the historic Leyburn pub, once owned by Rugby League legend and Leyburn local Shane Webcke. I understand that the pub is the oldest continually licensed premises in Queensland and was built in 1863. The sense of nostalgia in the place is amazing.

The Leyburn Sprints were started 21 years ago to commemorate the running of the Australian Grand Prix in the nearby disused wartime airfield in 1949. From what I saw, the event is going from strength to strength and year by year is becoming larger than ever. It has always been on my bucket list to attend the Leyburn Sprints, and as a motoring enthusiast I was not disappointed. The field of entrants had over 200 vehicles, spanning 91 years of motoring history. The vehicles ranged from a 1925 Austin to a 2016 purpose-built race car called a 'Fly'. There were Morris Minors and Minis, Cortinas and Corvettes and more Leyland P76s than I have ever seen in one place.

The amazing roar of this vast field of engines had to be heard to be believed; a symphony of pistons some might say. Standout vehicles for me were a 400cc two-stroke Goggomobil Dart—yes, the Dart—a Nascar engined XY Falcon GT and, as the member for Bundaberg would appreciate, several XU1 Toranas. The outright winner for the weekend was Dean Amos in his British built 1997 Gould GR37 with a time of 42.5 seconds. This year was Dean's third straight win. He and his team are doing something consistently right.

I ran into quite a few old friends and acquaintances from over the years. Two of them who were competing were Brendan Lloyd, an old workmate from Powerlink's secondary systems team, in a 2003 Porsche 996 GT3, and Moreton Bay local Jim Hodgson in his 1964 Ford Shelby Mustang GT 350.

The event was commentated on all weekend by Will Hagon, Wes Beadman and Bobby McGee. Will Hagon deserves special mention as the voice of motor racing. His knowledge of motoring and racing history was a pleasure to listen to. Credit must also be given to the Chant and Collins families and the committee for their continuing work in running this great event so smoothly year after year and also the marshals, officials, store holders and residents. I will be going back. This event is worth seeing.

Stradbroke Flyer; Day, Mr G

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (5.31 pm): I recently had the pleasure of celebrating 30 years of the Straddie Flyer and the Groom family business at the launching of their new boat, *Legacy*. This boat is named in honour of Les Groom who began the family business. The Stradbroke Flyer gold cats water taxi service commenced in 1986 and has grown with the times. Together with *Alley Kat* and *Top Kat*, the service now boasts larger, more comfortable vessels for the commute across beautiful Moreton Bay. There would be very few North Stradbroke Island and Cleveland residents who would not be aware of the iconic water taxis or the flyer shuttle bus which winds its way through Cleveland streets to meet with other transport services and the Cleveland shopping precinct.

As a family owned and operated business, commuters are known on a first name basis to the Grooms and the Stradbroke Flyer staff. Parents feel secure in the knowledge that children travelling to and from school on the mainland are in trusted hands for their journey across the bay. Likewise, visitors and tourists only have to ask the friendly staff for assistance and they will be rewarded with as much valuable local information as they need.

I am sure that I speak for many of my constituents, especially those living or holidaying on North Stradbroke Island, in saying a big thank you to the Groom family for their very important contribution to the Redlands. I congratulate the Groom family on 30 years of service to North Stradbroke Island and wish them continued success with their operations.

While I am on marine themes, I would also like to make mention of another local business and businessman in my electorate of Cleveland. Graham Day has been the owner of Wellington Point Marine, a local fishing and tackle store, for the last 15 to 16 years. Graham recently retired from his business in Wellington Point.

This small, local business had a large impact on the local recreation fishing and boating community. The business catered for almost everything one could imagine for recreational fishing, from tackle and rods to bait. Everything was packed into the small but very much loved shop. Graham was always ready to share his local fishing knowledge and advice to local recreational fishing enthusiasts. He has proved his willingness and kindness to share his expertise over many years.

Graham has done a great job in serving many locals and visitors. He knows so much about local fishing matters that he was a one-stop information centre in himself. I personally visited his shop at Wellington Point and invested very heavily over the years in rods, reels and things like that and benefited from his advice. Graham ran a great local business and he will be missed. However, I welcome the new owners, Chris and Donna Joy, and staff and look forward to their long success also.

Stafford Electorate, Sporting Clubs

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.34 pm): I rise today to share with the House the great clubs of Stafford. Stafford is home to a number of different sporting clubs for all ages. From football to lawn bowls, these clubs play an important role in the Stafford community. All 27 of Stafford's clubs give so much to our community. As their local member, I would love to give them the chance to appear in parliament, or at least their club tie or pin.

I say to all the clubs of Stafford, big or small, junior or senior, if their club has a tie or pin, I will proudly wear it in this House. I will donate \$100 to their club for the privilege of wearing the club tie in parliament. If there are any clubs in Stafford that are interested in being a part of democracy in Queensland, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the electorate team.

Last session I proudly wore the Brothers Junior Rugby League Football Club tie in this House. This week, for those who noticed, I was wearing the mighty Fortitude Valley Diehards tie. They too received \$100 for the privilege of appearing in parliament.

These clubs play a critical role in ensuring that all of Stafford, young and old, are staying active. As a doctor, I know the numerous benefits of staying active. Physical activity is an essential part of every child's physical and social development, and as such all Queensland children should have access to regular and well-organised sporting activities.

I am proud to say that the 27 clubs in the Stafford electorate do just that. The Palaszczuk government, through a number of initiatives, is proud to be able to provide more opportunities for Queenslanders to participate in sport and active recreation at the grassroots level. Applications for round 5 of the government's Get Playing Places and Spaces and Get Going Clubs grants are due to close on Thursday, 1 September. I would urge all our local sporting clubs to come forward and apply for funding under these initiatives. They should apply very quickly.

Get Playing Places and Spaces provides up to \$100,000 funding for new or upgraded sport and recreation facility projects in our local communities. In addition, Get Going Clubs provides funding of up to \$7,500 to develop the capacity of our local clubs or deliver projects that improve participation opportunities. I am proud to represent a community that has so many great local sporting clubs, and equally proud to be part of a government that is committed to getting more people across Queensland outdoors, staying active and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.36 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, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, 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