



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT **COMMITTEES**

2025-26 Budget Estimates - Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025

Governance, Energy and Finance Committee



Report No. 11

58th Parliament, August 2025

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Governance, Energy and Finance Committee

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All references and webpages are current at the time of publishing.

Acknowledgements

The committee acknowledges the assistance provided by the:

- Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
- Clerk of the Parliament.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided by parliamentary officers who contributed to the work of the committee during the estimates process.

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Chair's Foreword

This report presents a summary of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee's (committee) examination of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 and budget estimates for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the 2025-26 financial year.

Consideration of the budget estimates allows for the public examination of the proposed expenditure through questioning of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Speaker) and other parliamentary officials. This was undertaken through the questions on notice and public hearing process.

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Speaker, the Clerk of the Parliament and officers of the Parliamentary Service for their co-operation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution to the estimates process, and other members whose participation in the hearing provided additional scrutiny of the estimates.

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance.

I commend this report to the House.



Michael Crandon MP

Chair

Executive Summary

On 24 June 2025, the Honourable David Janetzki MP, Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership introduced the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 (Bill) into the Legislative Assembly. The Bill was referred to the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee (committee) for consideration.

The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Bill, the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Government's proposed expenditure.

As outlined in the Bill, the Appropriation for 2025-26 for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland and Parliamentary Service is \$146,459,000.¹

On 28 July 2025, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and other witnesses.

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined including information contained in the:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- answers to questions taken on notice during the hearing.

The committee made one recommendation (found at page v of this report) that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Bill, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

¹ Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, s 2.

Recommendation

Recommendation 1 2

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Glossary

AV	Audio visual
Bill	Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025
Clerk	Clerk of the Parliament
committee	Governance, Energy and Finance Committee
SDS	Service Delivery Statement
Speaker	Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

1. Overview of the Budget Estimates Process

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 (Bill) was introduced by the Honourable David Janetzki MP, Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership on 24 June 2025 and was referred to the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee (committee) by the Legislative Assembly on 27 June 2025.

The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Bill, the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Government's proposed expenditure.

The Appropriation for 2025-26 is \$146,459,000.²

The committee's examination of the Bill is in relation to the:

- Legislative Assembly of Queensland, and
- Parliamentary Service.

1.1. Inquiry Process

On 28 July 2025, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Speaker) and other witnesses.³

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined. The committee considered information contained in the:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- answers to questions taken on notice during the hearing.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Speaker with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all questions were received.

A list of any substitute Members and Members granted leave to ask questions at the committee's hearing, answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice, documents tabled during the hearing and answers to questions on notice taken by the Speaker during the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

1.2. Participation by other Members of Parliament

At the public hearing, the Honourable Mick de Brenni MP, Manager of Opposition Business and Member for Springwood, substituted for Mr Lance McCallum MP, Member for Bundamba, pursuant to Standing Order 202.

² Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, s 2.

³ Hansard, Record of Proceedings, Estimates Hearings – 28 July 2025, Brisbane.

The committee also gave leave for other non-committee Members of the Legislative Assembly to participate in the hearing pursuant to Standing Order 181(e).

The Honourable Mark Ryan MP, Member for Morayfield, participated in the public hearing.

1.3. Should the proposed expenditure be agreed to?

In accordance with Standing Order 187(1), the committee is required to determine and report on whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

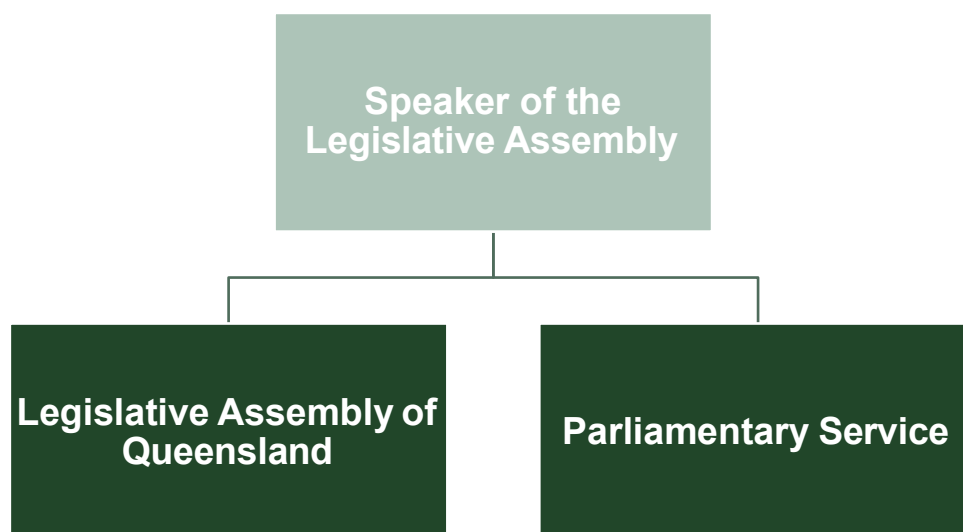


Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

2. Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service

The Honourable Pat Weir MP, Speaker, has responsibility for the following agencies, services and statutory entities:



The Legislative Assembly of Queensland consists of 93 Members who discharge a range of important constitutional, legislative and constituency responsibilities.

The Parliamentary Service, established under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988*, provides administrative and support services to the Legislative Assembly. The objectives of the Parliamentary Service are to:

- support the Legislative Assembly (and its committees and Members) in fulfilling its functions within the institution of Parliament
- support Members of the Legislative Assembly to engage with and represent their electorates
- provide information, corporate and facility management services
- safeguard, promote and strengthen the important institution of Parliament.⁴

The activities of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service are coordinated through 2 main service areas:

- Members' Salaries, Entitlements and Electorate Office Services
- Parliamentary Precinct Support Services.⁵

The Members' Salaries, Entitlements and Electorate Office Services area administers the direct remuneration and entitlements of Members of Parliament and provides resources and support services to assist in maintaining Members' electorate offices.⁶

⁴ Queensland Budget 2025-26, Service Delivery Statement (SDS), Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 1.

⁵ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, pp 3-4.

⁶ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 3.

Parliamentary Precinct Support Services is responsible for providing:

- advisory, information and support services to assist the Parliament, its committees and Members to fulfil their constitutional and parliamentary responsibilities (including Chamber, Education and Communication Services, the Committee Office, the Parliamentary Library and Parliamentary Reporting Services)
- services to promote the institution of Parliament and raise community awareness and understanding of its important role and functions
- services to provide a safe and secure parliamentary precinct, including Security and Attendant Services
- accommodation and hospitality services that provide Members, staff and guests of the Parliament with an appropriate working environment
- organisational services that support the activities of Members and their staff, and deliver and administer a range of entitlements afforded to members pursuant to the Members' Remuneration Handbook, including Information Technology Services, Human Resource Services, and Financial and Administrative Services.⁷

To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates and in keeping with the requirements of Standing Order 177A, the Clerk and other Parliamentary Service executives were present at the hearing on 28 July 2025.

2.1. Budget Overview

The following table taken from the Bill illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for 2025-26, compared with the budgeted and estimated actual cash appropriations in 2024-25.

Appropriations	Budget 2024-25 \$'000	Est. Actual 2024-25 \$'000	Vote 2025-26 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	136,437	141,844	141,901
equity adjustment	(4,502)	(4,502)	4,558
<i>Administered Items</i>
Vote	131,935	137,342	146,459

Source: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, Schedule 1, p 6.

As highlighted in the table, the \$146.5 million proposed appropriation for 2025-26 represents an increase of \$9.1 million from the estimated actual for 2024-25.⁸ The almost \$4.6 million in equity adjustments is net cash provided by or used in financing activities.⁹

⁷ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 4.


⁸ Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025, Schedule 1, p 6.

⁹ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 10.

The difference between the 2024-25 budgeted amount and the 2024-25 estimated actual amount is due to one-off funding for a number of initiatives, including election related costs, reimbursement of unbudgeted select committee and Members accommodation costs, and deferrals from 2023-24. The 2025-26 budget also provides increased funding for enterprise bargaining costs.¹⁰

i. Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Bill for the Vote against spending over the previous three years.

	2022/23 Est. Actual \$,000	2023/24 Est. Actual \$,000	2024/25 Est. Actual \$,000	2025/26 Est. Sought \$,000
	131,757	164,560	137,342	146,459
<i>Percentage Change</i>		24.90	-16.54	6.64

The total expenses for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for 2025-26 is estimated to be \$144.1 million, which is equivalent to the 2024-25 estimated actual amount.¹¹

It is proposed that this \$144.1 million in operating expenditure will be funded through:

- the proposed appropriation of \$141.9 million for departmental services (down by \$33,000 on the estimated actual appropriation in 2024-25)
- approximately \$2.2 million in user charges and fees and other revenue (consistent with equivalent such revenue in 2024-25).¹²

2.1.1. Budget Highlights – Parliamentary Service

The 2025-26 budget highlights of the estimates for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service include:¹³

Delivering the remaining stages of the Parliamentary Annexe Refurbishment program to address remaining building compliance issues, improve security management across the precinct, and deliver more modern and flexible workspaces.	\$28.1 million over 4 years
Upgrading ageing security and access control systems across 97 electorate office sites throughout Queensland	\$2.9 million over 4 years
Delivering priority electorate office relocation and refurbishment projects	\$11.2 million over 3 years

¹⁰ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 7.

¹¹ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 7.

¹² Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, pp 5, 8.

¹³ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 2.

The 2025-26 key deliverables for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service include:¹⁴

- implementing a new organisational divisional structure with increased focus on key strategic transformation projects and centralised strategy development. The new structure will also establish a dedicated Electorate Office support Unit to better coordinate and improve service delivery to Members and staff located across Queensland
- continuing to implement a new enterprise Parliamentary Information Management System to replace a portfolio of existing bespoke IT applications which directly support the operations of the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary committees
- delivering modernised workforce recruitment, induction and performance management processes to support the Parliamentary Service Workforce Strategy
- replacing end of life audio visual (AV) broadcast system infrastructure in the parliamentary precinct.

2.1.2. Capital program

The total planned 2025-26 capital expenditure for the Legislative Assembly is \$13.1 million.¹⁵ Planned expenditure comprises the final stages of the Parliamentary Annexe refurbishment program, electorate office relocations and refurbishments, and upgrading electorate office security and access control systems. Other capital projects include the replacement of ageing AV broadcast system infrastructure, and capital improvements and plant and equipment purchases for the parliamentary precinct and electorate offices.¹⁶

2.2. Matters raised during the Estimates Process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service are below:

Matter Description	Pre-Hearing QoN	Transcript Page No
New organisational structure for the Parliamentary Service	1	-
Parliamentary Annexe refurbishment	2	9, 16
Upgrade of ageing electorate office security systems	3	-
Activities undertaken by the Parliamentary Service to safeguard, promote and strengthen the important institution of Parliament	4	-

¹⁴ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 1.

¹⁵ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 6.

¹⁶ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, Legislative Assembly of Queensland, p 6.

Matter Description	Pre-Hearing QoN	Transcript Page No
Digital transformation program of the Parliamentary Service	5	16
Impact of Cyclone Alfred on the parliamentary precinct and electorate offices	6	-
Electorate office relocations and refurbishment projects	7, 14	-
Parliamentary Service support for the transition of Members to the new Parliament	8	-
Activities and programs delivered by the Parliamentary Service Education team	9	-
Number of guests that visited the parliamentary precinct during the 2024-25 financial year	10	-
Consideration of Bills in the Legislative Assembly	11	-
Responses by Ministers to Questions on Notice	12	16-17
The number of Matters of Privilege, warnings, withdrawals at the direction of the Speaker and Members ordered by the Speaker to resume their seat	13	-
Work undertaken during the 58th Parliament to Ministerial Offices, and bedrooms occupied by the Premier, the Deputy Premier and other Ministers	15	-
Procurement of services by the Parliamentary Service from Workforce Resilience	16	-
Expenses attributed to the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the Clerk for catering and/or entertainment purposes	17	-
Overseas travel by the Speaker	18	-
Parliamentary Service user charges and fees and anticipated revenue	19	-
Meetings with, and training of, Temporary Speakers	20	-
Comparison of Estimates processes held in 2024 with amended arrangements for 2025, including costs associated with these	-	3-5, 13-14

Matter Description	Pre-Hearing QoN	Transcript Page No
arrangements and increase in time dedicated to hearings		
Use of charter aircraft during the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee's examination into the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 and potential conflicts of interest	-	5-6, 17
Initiatives to honour the first female member of the Legislative Assembly, Irene Longman	-	6-7
Staffing increases for the parliamentary precinct	-	7
Inclusion of Queensland produce in the dining choices on offer to visitors to the Parliament and the general public	-	7-8
Promotion of Parliament's unique artefacts and heritage collections	-	8-9
Fringe benefits tax liability in relation to accommodation provided to members or members' families when used for purposes other than parliamentary business	-	9-12, 16, 17-18
Speaker's management of the daily running of parliament, in particular the chamber, and communications with the Premier or Deputy Premier	-	12-13
Heritage fence restoration project	-	14
Parliamentary Service Workforce Strategy and initiatives to modernise induction processes	-	14-15
Parliamentary Service support for charities and other community organisations	-	15

Statement of Reservation

Statement of Reservation

**Governance, Energy
and Finance Committee**

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland.

We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This artwork by The Hon LEEANNE ENOCH MP is called "The Power of Many" from her "Connections" series. It represents the paths we take to reach our goals and the many important and often powerful connections we make with each other along the way.

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The Queensland Labor Opposition thanks public sector employees right across Queensland for the work that they do each and every day on behalf of all Queenslanders. Without over 270,000 full-time equivalent public sector roles in Queensland undertaking that work, Queenslanders would not have access to the services and support that they need and deserve.

In particular, the Queensland Labor Opposition thanks all public servants involved in the preparation of Budget Estimates. Preparing for a Budget Estimates process is a monumental task that can involve hundreds of staff to not only attend the public hearings but also prepare briefing materials and gather information.

PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE

The Queensland Labor Opposition supports the passing of the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025* and in doing so thanks the work of the Queensland Parliamentary Service. The work undertaken by all staff, led by the Clerk of the Queensland Parliament is appreciated and valued to ensure the effective and efficient running of the people's house.

FRINGE BENEFITS TAX

It was revealed during the Budget Estimates process that the Queensland Parliamentary Service is liable for fringe benefits tax when Members of Parliament use their bedrooms in the Parliamentary Annexe for private usage. The Clerk of the Parliament stated:

Mr Laurie: The Parliamentary Service is liable to pay fringe benefits tax on certain benefits provided to employees and members of parliament. One of those that we have to pay for is housing that is used in the Parliamentary Annexe when it is not relating to parliamentary business. Members are asked to declare that in time for the FBT year ending on 31 March every year.

It was uncovered during the Estimates hearing that Members of Parliament's rooms are valued between \$195 to \$280 per night, depending upon the room type, based on the size of the room. The Clerk of the Parliament stated:

Mr Laurie: It is members' declarations of personal nights, and the total amount for that FBT year was \$8,073.

The memorandum from the Office of the Clerk which was tabled¹ during the hearing defines "private usage" as:

- a Member uses parliamentary overnight accommodation as their usual place of residence;
- a Member and/or guests of a Member (including family) use an overnight room(s) for private purposes; and/or
- any occasion where a Member's immediate family make use of overnight room(s) in the absence of the Member.

This means that a Fringe Benefits Tax could be liable if a Member of Parliament uses the bedroom for a private reason not connected with their duties or if a family member of the Member of Parliament stays in the accommodation during the absence of the Member for Parliament. For example, if a Minister is travelling the state for work purposes and the family member is residing in the bedroom without the Member of Parliament present, then Fringe Benefits Tax would be liable.

¹ <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/GEFC-11EE/C20252026-9701/Tabled%20Paper%20July%2028%202.55pm%20-%20Chris%20Whiting%20MP%20REDACTED.pdf>

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In respect of the total cost of fringe benefits tax for that period, the Clerk advised that it related to the following:

***Mr Laurie:** The most recent FBT reportable period was the FBT year ending 31 March 2025, and 13 members declared private use of the members' accommodation in the annexe. In total there were 39 nights declared as being used for private purposes during the FBT year ending 31 March 2025.*

Based on the evidence provided during the Estimates hearings, there were 39 nights self-declared by Members of Parliament, from 13 Members of Parliament who used those rooms for private usage. While the Member for Morayfield and the Member for Scenic Rim self-identified during the public hearing that they were part of the 13 Members of Parliament, it was unclear who the remaining 11 Members of Parliament were.

The record of proceedings shows that the Member for Sandgate moved a motion to require the information regarding which Members of Parliament declared private usage for Fringe Benefits Tax reasons. However, as the record reflects, the motion was not carried in a private meeting of the committee, noting the parliamentary committee structure enables the government Chairperson the casting vote.

A media article was tabled during the Estimates hearing entitled “*Queensland ministers Tim Mander and Amanda Camm's secret relationship outed*”,² where it stated “... Mander has been holed-up for about three months in his taxpayer-funded digs in the Annexe ...”.

Based on the information in the media article, the obvious observation can be raised, that if Minister Tim Mander was residing in the parliamentary annexe for an extended period of time, such as three months, then it could give rise to the Queensland Parliamentary Service being liable for fringe benefits tax, as this could fall into the “*usual place of residence*” category.

The following question was put to the Clerk of the Parliament:

***Mr RYAN:** Three months is 90 days on my account. Clerk, based on this information, has the member for Everton reported his personal affairs to you that he is using the annexe accommodation as his usual place of residence or for personal or private reasons, thereby triggering an FBT liability for the parliament?*

The Clerk of the Parliament responded:

***Mr Laurie:** What I can say is that at some point in the future there will be an FBT return that will be produced and the member will have to make that declaration as it is. What I would also say is that the member is a minister of the Crown and, like other ministers of the Crown, they stay in the annexe quite regularly during periods—for example, during periods when they are here for cabinet or other ministerial meetings, whatever the case may be. It will be for the member at the end of the period that we are talking about to make the declaration and then we will deal with that accordingly.*

If the information in the media article, referred to above, regarding Minister Tim Mander using the parliamentary annexe to live is true, then only time will tell what is disclosed in the future.

Noting, that Queenslanders will only know at the next Budget Estimates process when similar questions can be put, as the information regarding fringe benefits tax and the number of nights used by Members of

² <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/GEFC-11EE/C20252026-9701/Tabled%20Paper%20July%2028%202.58pm%20-%20Chris%20Whiting%20MP.pdf>

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Parliament as private usage, is not publicly reported by the Queensland Parliament. This is in contrast to the public report that is tabled each year, which outlines travel costs of individual Members of Parliament.

The issue of Minister Tim Mander potentially residing at the parliamentary annexe, as was reported, raises more questions than answers.

MINISTERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Under the Westminster system of government, Ministers of the Crown are answerable to the Parliament. In Queensland, Ministers are responsible and answerable to the Queensland Parliament.

There are multiple ways this occurs including questions in the Legislative Assembly during Question Time and through Questions on Notice, which allows Ministers 30 days to answer questions of Members of Parliament, usually from non-government Members of Parliament.

During the debate of the Economics and Governance Committee Report into the budget bills in 2021, the Member for Broadwater, the then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier stated in reference to estimates *“at the very least we need to set up a system where Ministers must answer questions otherwise it is all a sham”*.³ This same logic must then apply to Ministers answering Questions on Notice at any time.

Pre-hearing Question on Notice number 12 outlines information regarding the responsiveness of Crisafulli LNP Government Ministers in answering Questions on Notice. It made for sobering reading, outlining that a number of Crisafulli LNP Government Ministers are not living up to their commitment to treat the parliament with respect.

It was revealed that Crisafulli LNP Ministers routinely do not answer questions within the 30-day period required. The data shows that 17% of Questions on Notice have not been provided on time, that is within the 30-day time period by Crisafulli LNP Ministers. A breakdown of Ministers answering late can be found in **Appendix A**.

The Queensland Labor Opposition is also aware that in some cases answers to Questions on Notice from some Crisafulli LNP Ministers have taken up to two months to respond to, completely outside the requirement of 30 days.

Congratulations goes to Attorney-General Frecklington and Treasurer David Janetzki for their efforts in ensuring that their Questions on Notice are tabled on time. Their dedication to democracy should not go unnoticed and the Queensland Labor Opposition thanks them for their efforts.

Conversely, the Queensland Labor Opposition condemns the 17 Crisafulli LNP Government Ministers who failed to answer Questions on Notice from Members of Parliament within the 30-day timeframe.

LEGISLATION DEBATE – TRUNCATION

It was revealed through pre-hearing questions from the Queensland Labor Opposition that there have been many debates in the Legislative Assembly of the Queensland Parliament guillotined by the Crisafulli LNP Government. Guillotining debate denies elected Members of Parliament the opportunity to contribute to the debate and ask detailed questions of Ministers during consideration-in-detail.

While timeframe motions for legislation are not new, the Crisafulli LNP Government when in Opposition made an issue out of lack of time for debate of legislation. The then Crisafulli LNP Opposition on multiple occasions called out the need for more time to debate legislation, however, despite this, when they have

³ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/speeches/spk2021/David_Crisafulli-Broadwater-20210223-813779640410.pdf

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come to government, it appears that they have ignored their own calls, ignored their own values, and have seen fit to guillotine and stifle debate.

On the information provided by the Speaker, the Crisafulli LNP Government has guillotined or cut short all or portions of a bill 11 times, including in the:

- *Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill*
- *Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill*
- *Trust Bill*
- *Queensland Academy of Sport Bill*
- *Health Legislation Amendment Bill*
- *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill*.

It should be noted that the Crisafulli LNP Government has also moved the questions are put during consideration-in-detail on a few occasions, including during the *Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill*, which denied Members of Parliament the right to ask questions.

It is disappointing, but not surprising, that the Crisafulli LNP Government said one thing before the election when they were in opposition, but their actions when in government are completely different.

COMMITTEE AIRCRAFT USE

The use of aircraft to travel the state is appropriate where required to ensure that all Queenslanders are heard and engage in the democratic process. However, the following was uncovered during the hearing:

Mr WHITING: *Mr Clerk, I can advise that we were on the tarmac waiting to leave and I witnessed government members in discussions with the pilot and the member for Mirani. Subsequently, the flight route was changed and the member for Mirani was seated in the copilot seat—*

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: *Member, do you have a question?*

Mr WHITING: *And the flight was made longer near one of the member's own properties. My question is: is it appropriate that taxpayers' funds are used to divert a plane at the whim of a member of parliament who is not a committee member and whose property adjoins a wind farm and may be materially affected by the legislation? Is that a conflict of interest?*

...

Mr WHITING: *I note that I just tabled some verification—a picture of the flight with the member for Mirani in the copilot seat.⁴*

While it should be noted that the Clerk of the Parliament could not comment on information that was tabled during the hearing, regarding the observation that the flight path had been changed, it was revealed that the total cost of the flight was \$13,842.65. It is unclear how much extra the charter may have been due to the diversion as outlined by the Member for Bancroft.

It is a slippery slope when publicly funded aircraft used for an inquiry are being diverted near or over a Member of Parliament's property. Questions still remain regarding any potential conflict of interest issues that may have arisen.

⁴ <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/GEFC-11EE/C20252026-9701/Tabled%20Paper%20July%2028%202.26pm%20-%20Chris%20Whiting%20MP.pdf>

BEDROOM WORKS

Pre-hearing question on notice 15 outlined that “*no capital works were undertaken to any bedrooms*”. Unfortunately, time did not allow for further questioning on what the definition of “capital works” is. This is because after the election, the Queensland Labor Opposition was advised that painters were heading to level 23 to undertake painting in the suite occupied by the now LNP Premier.

ESTIMATES HEARINGS

The Budget Estimates process is a cornerstone of our democracy in Queensland. For years it has been an opportunity for elected Members of Parliament, in particular non-government Members of Parliament to ask questions of Ministers and senior public servants to hold the elected government to account.

During the 2024 estimates process, the former Labor Government under the direction of then Labor Premier Steven Miles insisted that additional transparency measures were put in place to ensure that non-government Members of Parliament had ample opportunity to hold the elected government to account. These included:

- Providing crossbench Members of Parliament the ability to ask a pre-hearing Question on Notice for any Minister, regardless of if they were a member of the portfolio committee.
- Strictly allocating government and non-government Members of Parliament time in respect of questions. That being that government Members of Parliament questions should not exceed 30% of the total allocated time and the remaining time, 70% for non-government Members of Parliament.
- Of the time allocated for non-government Members of Parliament it should be proportioned between Opposition and crossbench Members of Parliament, based on the proportion of the makeup at the time.
- Only one opening statement per Minister for their entire portfolio of no longer than five minutes, with the Premier allocated no longer than 10 minutes.

These transparency enhancements to the Budget Estimates process, introduced by the former Labor Government were discarded by Premier David Crisafulli and the LNP Government.

This is despite in 2020 the Courier Mail revealing the then LNP Leader of the Opposition’s views on the Estimates process, reporting:

- He [David Crisafulli] said that if the government did not accept “the need to make changes”, he would introduce them as Premier from the first hearings of the next term in 2024 – if the LNP wins power at the 2024 election.

The changes that were being referred to included:

- increasing the time available to examine the expenditure to ensure adequate questioning can occur;
- an Opposition or cross bench member to chair the committees to help ensure a fairer go;
- limiting the opportunity for ‘Dorothy Dixier’ questions from Government members which exist simply to allow ministers to wind down the clock.

While on paper there was more time overall for the hearings, the way in which Government Members conducted themselves with points of order to chew up time, and the removal of the 70% vs 30% time split,

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actually resulted in less time for the Opposition and Crossbench to ask questions to hold the government to account.

These actions were the very things that then LNP Leader of the Opposition David Crisafulli criticised. In the article referenced, he said:

“We’ve also seen ministers answer questions directed to independent public servants and Government members interrupting with tedious points of order to use up Opposition members’ time.

It is the view of the Queensland Labor Opposition that the promises made by the then LNP Leader of the Opposition have been broken by the Crisafulli LNP Government. This Budget Estimates there was nothing revolutionary about the way the hearings were conducted - ‘dorothy dixers’ still occurred and frivolous points of order were constantly taken.

The Queensland Labor Opposition acknowledges that all of the hearings were chaired by the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker and no commentary will be provided regarding that decision or process. However, the Queensland Labor Opposition notes that for any individual to sit in an Estimates hearing for the length of time the Speaker and Deputy Speaker did is significant, and on behalf of the Queensland Labor Opposition their service is appreciated.

The biproduct of having someone else chair the meetings, was that there was an LNP Government Member paid chairperson, ready, willing and able to interfere in lines of questioning that the government Members or Ministers did not like. There were countless examples of points of order being taken by the Chairpersons of the portfolio committee, some of which were not accepted by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

During the hearings it was uncovered by the Queensland Labor Opposition that an LNP Government Member who is appointed a chairperson of a portfolio committee attended a practice session for estimates with not only the Minister but public servants. When the question was asked, the Member of Parliament in question interjected with a point of order on relevance, however, the question was ultimately allowed, which uncovered that the Member for Nicklin, the LNP Chairperson of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee attended practice or mock estimates with the Minister and the Queensland Police Service.⁵

This action is unprecedented and calls into question the overall integrity of the estimates process. It also gives rise to further questions, such as why was the LNP Member for Nicklin at the mock estimates? What advice was the Member for Nicklin providing? Was points of order with the Minister and independent public servants from the Queensland Police Service occurring during the meeting?

Did other LNP Chairpersons attend practice or mock estimates with their Ministers and the public service? This apparent politicisation of the estimates process does not accord with the LNP Premier’s commitment for an open and transparency estimates and parliament process.

POINTS OF ORDER

What was different this year, was the Leader of the House being a guest member of all Estimates hearings to take points of order throughout the sessions. The Leader of the House is also a member of Executive Government as an Assistant Minister to the Premier and as such, having them on all of the hearings drew the eye of many, particularly when the Leader of the House attended the Premier’s estimates hearings to take points of order throughout the hearing.

⁵ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_05_EstimatesJIC.pdf page 36

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As was reported in the Courier Mail⁶, an LNP source said that a number of Ministers required protection from the Leader of the House. The article reads:

“Anyone watching the budget sessions last week would have noticed Dr Rowan running a heavy protection cordon around ministers, leaping to stop proceedings when questioning got a little too hot for the government.

“Not only did he constantly interject with points of order, he also at times directed the chair.”

While the stamina of the Leader of the House to attend all the hearings is in no doubt, his attendance and motives appear questionable, even from his own side of politics it seems.

The following statements made in the Legislative Assembly in respect of previous Estimates are interesting:

- *“The year’s estimates process could only be described as a farce, with Labor government committee chairs and Labor members of the various committees running a protection racket for Labor Ministers”⁷*
- *“We saw the absolute farce of the estimates hearings of blocking questions from the opposition – reasonable questions – because those opposite do not want to come under scrutiny.*

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr Mander: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill. It was a protection racket”⁸.

While the Queensland Labor Opposition does not suggest this occurred by the individuals chairing the meeting in 2025, it is reminiscent of similar behaviour of the Leader of the House, which was reported in the media.

During 2024 the Queensland Labor Opposition has been advised in respect of points of order made during the hearing:

GOVERNMENT – LABOR	OPPOSITION – LNP	CROSSBENCH
24	73	5

The Queensland Labor Opposition has done a brief analysis of the Record of Proceedings for the 2025 estimates hearings, which shows the number of points of order taken this year to be approximately:

OPPOSITION – LABOR	GOVERNMENT – LNP	CROSSBENCH
321	504	5

Further analysis reveals that of the approximately 830 points of order identified:

- 212 or 26% were from the LNP Leader of the House
- 209 or 25% were from LNP Chairs of Committees
- 83 or 10% were from Government Members of Parliament, including Ministers
- 68 or 8% were from the Manager of Opposition Business

⁶ <https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/qld-politics/george-st-beat-ex-labor-mp-jason-hunt-celebrates-orgasm-day/news-story/b4ac5fea2ab59a9f8d6c4b1504a33051>

⁷ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2018/2018_08_22_WEEKLY.PDF#page=76

⁸ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2018/2018_09_04_WEEKLY.pdf#page=36

Queensland Labor Opposition

- 253 or 30% were from Opposition Members
- 5 or 1% were from Crossbench Members.

It should be noted that the majority of points of order taken by Opposition and Crossbench members were to deal with either Ministers not being relevant or to counter numerous points of order initiated by LNP Government Members of Parliament which appeared to be frivolous or vexatious.

Collectively, approximately 61% of the points of order were from LNP Government Members led by the Leader of the House, with the remaining 39% by non-government Members trying to hold the government to account and answer questions.

TIME ALLOCATION

Throughout the hearing, the Queensland Labor Opposition took note of the time being afforded to government and non-government Members of Parliament in respect of questions of Ministers and public servants.

It should be noted that the records that were kept are indicative only and are based on stop clock calculations and analysis taken by hand and may differ slightly to the official record which is realised in due course by the Queensland Parliamentary Service, post the timeframe that Statements of Reservation are required.

However, the analysis shows that of the total time for questioning, approximately 41% was used by LNP Government Members of Parliament and 59% were used by non-government Members of Parliament, which includes Opposition Members of Parliament and crossbench Members of Parliament.

This split is a far cry from the mandated 70% non-government Members of Parliament and 30% government Members of Parliament split required under the former Labor Government, instituted by former Labor Premier Steven Miles. In fact last year, the final split was approximately 75% of the total question time was used by non-government Members of Parliament and 25% was used by government Members of Parliament.

In short, the Crisafulli LNP Government has implemented an estimates system which reduces time available for non-government Members of Parliament to ask questions and hold the government to account.

CONCLUSION

The 2025 Budget Estimates process was an opportunity for the Crisafulli LNP Government to deliver on its promises – promises to reform, to do better, for a fresh start. Instead, the bar was set so low it was on the floor.

Instead of delivering for Queensland, the Crisafulli LNP Government is delivering for itself. When it comes to accountability, this process laid bare the truth of a government that has failed to live up to its own words. What resounds is that the Crisafulli LNP Government continues to choose secrecy over transparency and political games over genuine accountability.

The LNP Government's obsession with self-interest over public interest was glaring. The people of modern Queensland expect a government that acts for them, not for themselves. They want a government that embraces the values of openness, fairness and integrity – after all, that's what they were sold at the 2024 Election.

Instead of being an opportunity for genuine interrogation of the 2025 Budget, the Estimates process was muddled to avoid scrutiny. By placing political convenience above the democratic process that is Budget Estimates, the Crisafulli LNP Government outed itself as out of step with the priorities of Queenslanders.

Queensland Labor Opposition

This is not the “fresh start” that was promised, it is a step back.

Queenslanders deserve better.



CHRIS WHITING MP
MEMBER FOR BANCROFT
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE
SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS



LANCE MCCALLUM MP
MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA
SHADOW MINISTER FOR ENERGY



BISMA ASIF MP
MEMBER FOR SANDGATE
SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURALISM AND CITIZENSHIP
SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE QUEENSLAND LABOR OPPOSITION

Queensland Labor Opposition

APPENDIX A – LATE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

LNP MINISTERS ACCOUNTABILITY FAILURE BOARD



MINISTER	%
Camm	38%
O'Connor	35%
Gerber	34%
Simpson	33%
Bleijie	29%
Perrett	25%
Crisafulli	24%
Nicholls	18%
Minnikin	17%
Mander	16%
Mickelberg	16%
Bates	15%
Last	13%
Langbroek	7%
Powell	5%
Leahy	5%
Purdie	3%
Frecklington	0%
Janetzki	0%

Tabled by: Ms. Emma ASE MP
At: 3:30pm
Date: 28 July 2021
Signature: 

APPENDIX B – MEDIA COVERAGE

Which MPs are staying in House

Hayden Johnson

Thirteen state MPs have stayed an average of three nights each in their parliamentary accommodation outside of business needs in the past year, leaving taxpayers with a \$8073 fringe benefits tax bill.

But Queenslanders can't know which MPs or how many days each they stayed in the Parliamentary Annexe for personal reasons as the declarations are confidential and a

parliamentary committee voted to keep it that way.

This was revealed after the Opposition, on the first day of budget estimates, sought to understand how many nights Premier David Crisafulli and Sport Minister Tim Mander had declared as personal use.

Almost all of Queensland's 93 MPs are provided with accommodation in the newly renovated annexe for overnight stays during sitting weeks.

But any overnight stay for personal use, or by a family member, triggers a fringe benefits tax liability and must be declared to parliament.

Clerk of the parliament Neil Laurie told Monday's Estimates session 13 MPs stayed in

the annexe accommodation for personal reasons in the 12 months to March 31 this year.

This cost \$8073 in FBT, with Mr Laurie acknowledging he would "probably get a tax bill" if the ATO found MPs or their families were staying at the annexe for personal reasons and had not declared it.

The Opposition asked about media reports Mr Mander had lived in the annexe for three months after separating from his wife. Opposition Whip Mark Ryan asked Mr Laurie if Mr Mander had reported using the annexe accommodation as his usual place of residence or for personal or private reasons.

The Opposition also asked how many nights of personal use of the annexe Mr Crisafulli had declared.

Mr Mander and Mr Crisafulli declined to comment.

There is no suggestion of wrongdoing by either.



**Minister
Tim Mander**

All eyes on Estimates as LNP faces hot seat

The Estimates process in our state parliamentary system is one of the results of the Fitzgerald Inquiry. The Electoral and Administrative Commission is designed to ensure public expenditures are properly scrutinised. It is also – for political junkies – a lot of fun.

It is the only time each year when Ministers and their top-ranking public servants are interrogated together. And while the system is – as always in a parliamentary environment – stacked in favour of the government, it is still usually a pretty good show.

Today, David Crisafulli will have to face that music for the first time since he was elected Premier last

October. His four-hour appearance will be followed by Treasurer David Janetzki in the hot seat for four and a half hours. Cue the popcorn.

We urge all of those involved in the process today, and over the next fortnight – the public servants and the politicians, including those from the government and opposition and crossbenches – to remember that the public expects them to be honest and accountable in these sessions. Queenslanders will roll their eyes at too many antics, as fun as those can be for politics nerds.

After a decade of Labor Ministers colluding and dodging questions in the hot seat, it will be interesting to see if LNP MPs perform better.

Responsibility for election comment is taken by Chris Jones, corner of Mayne Rd & Campbell St, Bowen Hills, Qld 4006. Printed and published by NEWSQUEENSLAND (ACN 009 661 778). Contact details are available at www.couriermail.com.au/help/contact-us

1:54 PM Jul 30, 2025

One question at a time please



Taylah Fellows

For the love of estimates, please ask one question at a time or Dr Christian Rowan will come for you.

The Leader of the House has an ear for a double barreled question.

Queensland Labor Opposition

Brisbane Times

Perspective Politics Queensland Queensland government

The LNP promised to change how government is scrutinised. Has it?



Matt Dennien

August 1, 2025 – 8.09pm



Listen to this article

3 min

For more than 40 hours this week, Queensland government ministers and bureaucrats faced questions from the Labor opposition and crossbench in the annual show of scrutiny.

The budget estimates process is one of the staples of the parliamentary year, and so has been keenly anticipated given the context this year: a new government for the first time since 2014.

Having sat though (almost) every one of those hours, here are some key takeaways from the first week. Yes, there is still another to come.



The estimates, and broader parliamentary committee process, is an issue often raised by those on the non-government benches – but less frequently acted on by the governments who control the parliament in majority. MATT DENNIEN

Queensland Labor Opposition

Don't knock the process (any more?)

The LNP came to government promising reform after years of railing against an estimates process previously described by Premier David Crisafulli himself as “broken”, a “farce”, and “a protection racket for underperforming ministers by partisan chairs”.

Crisafulli had called for a review, more questions for non-government MPs and a move to non-government MPs chairing the proceedings.

So, what's changed this year? Essentially, only one thing: the chairing, usually undertaken by the heads of the relevant committees, is instead being done by Speaker Pat Weir and deputy Jon Krause.

That has led to one particular quirk for those on the non-government side now wanting to make their own criticisms of a process they presided over for a decade.

Opposition Leader Steven Miles, after issuing a media release on Monday calling out the lack of change to the process, accused Crisafulli of having “rigged” and “fixed” the system, has now been referred to the ethics committee.

“I will not tolerate imputations against the Speaker or Deputy Speaker when discharging the role of Speaker, whether in the House or in the estimates process,” Weir said.

But never fear, Weir – responding to questions about the lack of change the day prior – noted it was just the first estimates process of a four-year term.

In a statement, Maiwar Greens MP Michael Berkman said Weir and Krause “have done a far better job in chairing the hearings [but] it's absolutely not enough to make estimates serve its purpose”.

‘The previous Palaszczuk-Miles government’

They were only five words. But, given their source, and the history of their use, they raised eyebrows in government and beyond.

Uttering the words was State Development director-general John Sosso, a veteran public servant again serving under Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie as he did in the Newman years.

The phrase took on a derogatory sheen after the Labor leadership handover late in the former government's last term – wielded so much Speaker Curtis Pitt began to crackdown on its use.

But there it was on Wednesday, in the context of Labor's battery strategy. Several sources remarked on the unusual nature of its use by a public servant.

“It was baffling ... I thought with the cloud hanging over his selection to oversee the redrawing of [electoral] boundaries he'd have attempted to present as far more impartial,” one Labor source said, referring to Sosso's April appointment to the Queensland Redistribution Commission.

Further reading

- ‘Build, baby, build’: Bleijie details CFMEU probe amid estimates drama
- Old minister under ‘conflict management plan’ over husband's Queen's Wharf role
- ‘It would be difficult to suggest that a witch's hat is a victim of crime’
- Kids' gender-affirming care pause was a cabinet call, says Crisafulli



Matt Dennien is a reporter at Brisbane Times covering state politics and the public service. He has previously worked for newspapers in Tasmania and Brisbane community radio station 4ZZZ. Contact him securely on Signal @mattdennien.15 Connect via [email](#).