

# 2013–14 Budget Estimates

Report No. 25  
Health and Community Services  
Committee  
August 2013

# HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

<b>Chair</b>	Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP, Member for Kallangur
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP, Member for Bundamba
<b>Members</b>	Ms Ros Bates MP, Member for Mudgeeraba Mr Steve Davies MP, Member for Capalaba Dr Alex Douglas MP, Member for Gaven Mr John Hathaway MP, Member for Townsville Mr Dale Shuttleworth MP, Member for Ferny Grove
<b>Staff</b>	Ms Sue Cawcutt, Research Director Ms Lee Archinal, Principal Research Officer (part-time) Ms Kathleen Dalladay, Principal Research Officer (part-time) Mr Karl Holden, Principal Research Officer (part-time) Ms Stephanie Cash, Executive Assistant
<b>Contact details</b>	Health and Community Services Committee Parliament House George Street Brisbane Qld 4000
<b>Telephone</b>	+61 7 3406 7688
<b>Fax</b>	+61 7 3406 7070
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:hcsc@parliament.qld.gov.au">hcsc@parliament.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Web</b>	<a href="http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/hcsc">www.parliament.qld.gov.au/hcsc</a>

## Acknowledgements

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the assistance provided by Queensland Health, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, and the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing during the estimates process.

# Contents

<b>Chair's Foreword</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Role of the Committee	1
1.2 Aim of this report	1
1.3 Other Members' participation	1
<b>2. Recommendation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Health</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Queensland Health	4
3.2 Hospital and Health Services	5
3.3 Health Quality and Complaints Commission	8
3.4 Queensland Institute of Medical Research	9
3.5 Queensland Mental Health Commission	10
<b>4. Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	11
4.2 Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian	14
<b>5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Issues</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	15
5.2 Family Responsibilities Commission	17
<b>6. National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1 Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and Stadiums Queensland	18
6.2 Stadiums Queensland	19
6.3 Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board)	20
<b>Statements of Reservation</b>	<b>21</b>
Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP	21
Dr Alex Douglas MP	37



## Chair's Foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the Budget Estimates for the 2013–14 financial year.

Consideration of the Budget Estimates allows for the public examination of both the responsible Ministers and Chief Executive Officers of agencies within the committee's portfolio area. This public examination was undertaken through questions on notice and a public hearing process.

The committee has made one recommendation.

On behalf of the committee, I wish to thank the Minister for Health, the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, and the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, their departmental officers and the officers of statutory bodies for their cooperation in providing information to the committee and providing evidence at the committee's hearing on 24 July 2013.

I would also like to thank the other members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Ruthenberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Trevor Ruthenberg MP**  
**Chair**

August 2013



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Role of the Committee

The Health and Community Services Committee (the committee) is a portfolio committee of the Queensland Parliament established under the Standing Rules and Orders, as required by section 88 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.

The committee's areas of responsibility are:

- Health, including the Health and Quality Complaints Commission, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Queensland Mental Health Commission and seventeen Hospital and Health Services
- Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, including the Commission for Children, Young People and the Child Guardian
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, including the Family Responsibilities Commission, and
- National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, including Stadiums Queensland and Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board).

On 4 June 2013, the Appropriation Bill 2013 and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.<sup>1</sup>

On 24 July 2013, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and other witnesses. A copy of the transcript of the committee's hearing can be accessed at:

[http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/2013/2013\\_07\\_24\\_EstimatesHCC.pdf](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/hansard/2013/2013_07_24_EstimatesHCC.pdf)

## 1.2 Aim of this report

The committee considered the estimates referred to it by using information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- additional information given in relation to answers.

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses were received to all the questions.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice; documents tabled during the hearing; answers and additional information provided by Ministers after the hearing; and minutes of the Committee's meetings are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

## 1.3 Other Members' participation

Under Standing Order 202, the Leader of the Opposition appointed as replacements for the Member for Bundamba at the Estimates hearing of 24 July 2013:

<sup>1</sup> Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

- Mrs Desley Scott MP, Member for Woodridge, for the initial session of the examination of the Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services portfolio
- Mr Curtis Pitt MP, Member for Mulgrave, for examination of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs portfolio, and
- Mr Bill Byrne MP, Member for Rockhampton, for examination of the National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing portfolio.

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing. The following Members participated in the hearing:

- Ms Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Leader of the Opposition and Member for Inala
- Mr Tim Mulherin MP, Member for Mackay
- Mr Bill Byrne MP, Member for Rockhampton
- Mrs Desley Scott MP, Member for Woodridge, and
- Mr Curtis Pitt MP, Member for Mulgrave.

## 2. Recommendation

Standing Order 187(1) requires the Committee to state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

**Recommendation 1**

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2013 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

### 3. Health

The Minister for Health has responsibility for the Department of Health, 17 independent Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) and three statutory bodies – the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Health Quality and Complaints Commission and the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

#### 3.1 Queensland Health

##### *Funding overview*

On 1 July 2012 Hospital and Health Boards commenced operation and Queensland Health's former Corporate Office transitioned to become the Department of Health.<sup>2</sup>

The department is responsible for managing the public health system. This includes leading the implementation of the *Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland*, policy development, managing state wide planning, industrial relations and major capital works, purchasing health services, monitoring service performance and collating, validating and providing state wide performance data to the Australian Government.<sup>3</sup>

The department purchases services from 17 HHSs and other organisations, including Mater Health Services, St Vincent's Hospital, Noosa Hospital and the Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital.

The department and the HHSs are collectively referred to as Queensland Health.<sup>4</sup> The appropriation for Queensland Health in 2013–14 is as follows:

<b>Appropriation</b>	<b>2013–14 \$'000</b>
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
departmental services	8 109 547
equity adjustment	1 109 633
<i>Administered Items</i>	32 499
<b>Vote</b>	<b>9 251 679</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2013, Schedule 2, p.13

A breakdown of the funding provided to each HHS is provided at section 3.2, Health and Hospital Services.

Queensland Health has an estimated operating budget of \$12.326 billion for 2013–14, an increase of \$532.7 million on the 2012–13 estimated actual operating budget.<sup>5</sup>

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Health portfolio (including the department, HHSs and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research) for 2013–14 includes capital purchases of \$1.746 billion and \$5.7 million for capital grants.<sup>6</sup>

The total cost of concessions provided via the Oral Health, Patient Travel Subsidy, Medical Aids Subsidy and Spectacle Supply Schemes administered by Queensland Health is estimated at \$310.2 million for 2013–14.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *State Budget 2013–14, Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.35

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.35

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.4

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.4

<sup>6</sup> *State Budget 2013–14, Capital Statement – Budget Paper No. 3*, p.64

<sup>7</sup> *State Budget 2013–14, Concessions Statement*, p.6

### ***Key funding initiatives in 2013–14***

Some of the key funding initiatives and activities for Queensland Health in 2013–14 include:<sup>8</sup>

- \$5.8 million to provide cochlear implants to patients with moderate or profound hearing loss
- \$28.3 million over four years for additional Hospital in the Home services to be provided by the private sector and non-government organisations
- \$147 million over four years in increased funding to develop, deliver, monitor and report on a backlog maintenance program
- \$51.9 million over four years to enable better access to health care services in regional, rural and remote communities
- \$30.9 million over four years to establish a Rural Telehealth Service
- \$384.3 million over four years in additional funding to operate, maintain and enhance the Queensland public health rostering and payroll systems
- facilitating mental health first aid workshops by non-government organisations in rural communities affected by drought, and
- funding non-government organisations to provide mental health information, advice and support to patients in the north Burnett and Bundaberg regions affected by ex-Cyclone Oswald.

## **3.2 Hospital and Health Services**

### ***Funding overview***

The HHSs are responsible for providing health services in their local area. Service delivery is monitored by the department through individual Service Agreements which identify the health services to be provided, funding arrangements for those services and defined performance indicators and targets to ensure outputs and outcomes are achieved.<sup>9</sup>

The operating budget for each HHS in 2013–14, compared to 2012–13, is as follows:

<sup>8</sup> *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, pp.6–7

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.35

**Hospital and Health Service operating budgets 2013–14**

Hospital and Health Service	2012–13 Budget (\$ million)	2013–14 Budget (\$ million)	Percentage increase (%)
Cairns and Hinterland (p.54)	581.0	620.4	6.8
Cape York (p.65)	67.9	82.0	20.8
Central Queensland (p.76)	431.9	447.1	3.5
Central West (pp.85 & 88)	51.1	51.1	–
Children’s Health Queensland (p.93)	300.9	303.8	1.0
Darling Downs (p.105)	540.9	568.3	5.1
Gold Coast (p.117)	827.8	964.0	16.5
Mackay (p.134)	287.8	295.9	2.8
Metro North (pp.139 & 144)	2,034.6	2,036.2	0.1
Metro South (pp.149 & 155)	1,638.2	1,751.3	6.9
North West (p.162)	126.7	135.5	6.9
South West (p.174)	107.8	108.9	1.0
Sunshine Coast (p.184)	634.9	639.9	0.8
Torres Strait – Northern Peninsula (p.193)	81.1	87.5	7.8
Townsville (p.203)	699.4	737.2	5.4
West Moreton (p.213)	373.3	418.6	12.1
Wide Bay (p.226)	440.9	449.2	1.9

**Source:** *State Budget 2013–14, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health*, pages as indicated against the name of the particular HHS.

***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Queensland Health (the department and HHSs) at the public hearing included:

- changes in Commonwealth funding provided to Queensland for health related purposes
- changes in health expenditure in the 2012–13 Budget
- compensation paid by the Commonwealth to Queensland for health services provided to Papua New Guinea nationals
- evidence of asylum seekers using the Papua New Guinea–Queensland border as a gateway to Australia and the medical treatment of asylum seekers arriving via Papua New Guinea in Queensland hospitals
- arrivals to Queensland from Papua New Guinea receiving treatment for tuberculosis in Queensland hospitals including whether the state had raised the issue with the Commonwealth
- a Metro North Hospital and Health Service letter of July 2013 to staff about staffing changes and voluntary redundancies for nurses and action taken
- photographing of nurses attending union meetings
- root cause analysis and independent investigation into a still birth at Rockhampton hospital and liaison with, and support for, the family

- total funding for Queensland Health in 2013–14
- expenditure on lunch by the Minister at meeting with journalist in Cairns
- the salaries and salary packages of the Minister's staff
- the increase in salaries for nurses and midwives in the 2013–14 budget
- the total dollar amount of services contracted out to the private and non-government sector over the last four years and its proportion of the health budget
- comparative efficiency studies between public and private hospitals for equivalent services for equivalent patients in Queensland
- closure of the major public sexual health clinic for south east Queensland at Biala
- public health campaign on HIV/AIDS
- possible conflict of interest relating to the work of the chair of the Metro North HHS Board
- improvements made to midwifery services by Cairns HHS
- progress by Cape York HHS in meeting Closing the Gap targets relating to equity and access and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- availability of and access to dietician services in Cape York and impact on health
- proposed model of care for the Moura Hospital
- increase in incidence of sexually transmitted diseases and how best to address this
- benefits of telehealth service delivery to remote regions of Queensland
- petition and complaints from senior doctors about patient safety at the Gold Coast Hospital
- plans for the operation of the Queensland Children's Hospital
- options for the current Herston site of the Queensland Children's Hospital
- update on the Sunshine Coast University Hospital
- KPMG reports on the Queensland Children's Hospital, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and the Gold Coast University Hospital
- renal dialysis services at Ipswich Hospital
- the position of social worker clinical specialist supporting burns patients in the intensive care unit of the Royal Brisbane Hospital
- update on the progress of development of the Gold Coast University Hospital, and
- Commonwealth funded aged care beds managed by hospital and health services.

### 3.3 Health Quality and Complaints Commission

#### *Funding overview*

The Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC) is a statutory body established under the *Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006*. The Commission provides oversight and review of the quality of health services and independent review of health complaints.<sup>10</sup>

The operating budget for the Commission is estimated to be \$10.191 million in 2013–14, a decrease of \$235,000 from the 2012–13 Budget.<sup>11</sup> This decrease is due to the HQCC payroll project funding ending in the 2012–13 financial year.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Key activities in 2013–14*

Key activities in 2013–14 for the HQCC include:<sup>13</sup>

- continuing to deliver its statutory functions, under the *Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006*, and
- contributing to the implementation of new and more accountable complaints reporting arrangements, including the establishment of a Health Ombudsman.

#### *Issues raised at the public hearing*

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the HQCC at the public hearing included:

- transitional arrangements for information and staff of the HQCC in establishing the proposed Health Ombudsman
- interim arrangements for the Medical Board of Queensland, and
- the benefits of the proposed Health Ombudsman.

---

<sup>10</sup> *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.235

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.239

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.242

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.235

### 3.4 Queensland Institute of Medical Research

#### *Funding overview*

The Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR) is a statutory body established under the *Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1945*. The Institute's research strategy focuses on three major areas – cancer, infectious diseases and mental health and complex disorders.<sup>14</sup>

The Institute receives funding from government and non-government sources. In 2013–14 the Institute will receive \$18.9 million from the Queensland Government, representing 17 per cent of total revenue and an increase of 34.7 per cent on the Queensland Government contribution for 2012–13 of \$14 million.<sup>15</sup>

Total expenses for the Institute are estimated to be \$106.791 million in 2013–14, an increase of \$10,149 from the 2012–13 allocated Budget.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Key activities in 2013–14*

Key activities in 2013–14 for the QIMR include:<sup>17</sup>

- launching a five year study on the role of Vitamin D in preventing disease
- using experimental immunotherapy treatments on patients with aggressive brain tumours
- launching animal trials for a new gene therapy treatment for HIV patients
- continuing to test immunotherapy treatments on patients with aggressive throat cancer
- working on the largest skin cancer research study in Australia
- conducting a two year trial of a rheumatoid arthritis medication to treat asthma
- continuing to test anti-malarial drugs on humans infected with malaria parasites, and
- working towards the first diagnostic test for depression.

#### *Issues raised at the public hearing*

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the QIMR at the public hearing included:

- plans for the QIMR into the future and major areas of growth, and
- internal processes for focussing research on uniquely Queensland issues.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p.245

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.245

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.249

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.247

### 3.5 Queensland Mental Health Commission

The Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC) was established on 1 July 2013, as an independent statutory body under the *Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013*. The QMHC will provide strategic leadership for a united, cross-sectoral approach aimed at fostering contributing lives for Queenslanders living with, or vulnerable to, mental illness or substance abuse.<sup>18</sup>

The operating budget for the QMHC for 2013–14 is estimated to be \$7.1 million.<sup>19</sup>

#### ***Key activities in 2013–14***

In 2013–14 the QMHC will undertake activities to operationally fulfil its legislative responsibilities, under the *Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013*. These will include:<sup>20</sup>

- establishing the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council
- implementing a QMHC communication and engagement strategy, which includes developing a whole of Government strategic plan
- developing and implementing the annual QMHC report card
- continuing State and national whole-of-Government mental health reforms, including collaboration and alignment with the National Mental Health Commission agenda, and
- developing service standards for reporting in the 2014–15 Service Delivery Statements.

#### ***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the QMHC at the public hearing included:

- the Barrett Adolescent Centre
- funding responsibility for community based mental health services and in particular the mental health carers support hub in Cairns
- consultation between HHSs and the Mental Health Commission regarding staffing and service delivery, and
- the achievements of the Commission to date.

---

<sup>18</sup> *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.255

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p.258

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p.256

## 4. Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

The Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services has responsibility for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. The portfolio includes the Commission for Children, Young People and the Child Guardian.

### 4.1 Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

#### *Funding overview*

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services provides services to protect children and young people from harm or the risk of harm, provides adoption services, leads disability policy and programs and provides and funds disability and community care services. It also coordinates volunteering, carers, seniors, youth and women's policy and community recovery efforts across government and funds community services to support vulnerable individuals, families and communities.<sup>21</sup>

The appropriation for the department in 2013–14 is as follows:

<b>Appropriation</b>	<b>2013–14 \$'000</b>
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
departmental services	2 565 892
equity adjustment	3 494
<i>Administered Items</i>	257 451
<b>Vote</b>	<b>2 826 837</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2013, Schedule 2, p.7.

Total expenses for the department are estimated to be \$2.580 billion in 2013–2014, an increase of \$16.270 million from the 2012–13 Budget.<sup>22</sup> The increase is additional funding for the transition of DisabilityCare Australia, population growth and grants and subsidies indexation, offset by a reduction in deferred funding from 2012–13 into 2013–14 when compared to funding deferred from 2011–12 into 2012–13 and the full year effect of fiscal repair savings measures commenced in 2012–13.<sup>23</sup>

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for 2013–14 includes capital purchases of \$40.3 million and \$22.1 million for capital grants.<sup>24</sup>

The total cost of concessions provided via the Electricity Rebate, Pensioner Rate Subsidy, South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy, Home Energy Emergency Assistance, Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate, Electricity Life Support Concession and Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Schemes is estimated at \$223.6 million in 2013–14.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, pp.7–8

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p.16

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.16

<sup>24</sup> Capital Statement, p.23

<sup>25</sup> Concessions Statement, p.4

***Key funding initiatives in 2013–14***

Some of the key funding initiatives for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services in 2013–2014 include:<sup>26</sup>

- \$25.1 million over four years for Foster and Kinship Carer Allowances to meet demand from increasing numbers of children in out-of-home care
- \$55 million over four years to provide assistance for up to 1,200 young people with disability leaving school
- \$117.2 million over four years to provide support for up to 256 young adults with disability exiting the care of the state
- \$26.4 million over four years to provide support for up to 108 people with spinal cord injuries to leave the Princess Alexandra Hospital and live in the community
- \$16.065 million over three years to trial sustainable living options for adults with a disability when they can no longer be cared for by their parents
- \$7.4 million to continue the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative to 31 December 2013 to maintain support for at risk youth (the program will be transferred to the Department of Education, Training and Employment in 2014), and
- \$15.2 million over four years to continue the Emergency Relief program and Neighbourhood Centres, formerly funded under the Community Development initiative.

***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services at the public hearing included:

- staffing numbers by service area across the department at end of 2012–13
- detail of the underspend on total capital purchases in 2012–13 and what projects were not delivered
- implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- the estimated reduction in employment costs for Disability Services in 2013–14 and the impact on staffing and provision of services
- an update on the Your Life Your Choice initiative and current uptake
- the number of departmental staff on sick or stress leave due to staffing reductions
- delivery of the Parent Connect program.
- the status of services for young people with a disability in independent living arrangements
- an explanation of disability services provided in the Ferny Grove electorate
- recurrent funding for disability services for families
- provision of aids and equipment for people with a disability

---

<sup>26</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

- guidance on production of departmental briefing material
- the increase in the Child Safety budget and the challenges of the disjointed nature of the system
- health and development assessments and early access to services for children entering care
- Medicare cards for children in foster care
- implementation of the Fostering Families trial and family supports for children at risk of entering child protection system
- foster carer processing times and number of applications waiting to be processed
- care plans for children in foster care
- 'Is there room' campaign to attract new foster carers, assessments and support needs allowances
- provision of regional telephone counselling services for children in regional and remote areas
- increased availability of sexual abuse counselling services for children in care in Far North Queensland
- appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake an independent financial and governance audit of the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay, the Minister's interactions and meetings with the Association, departmental contact and staffing
- provision of concession and rebate schemes
- addressing of issues raised by Adoption Loss Adult Support (ALAS) in relation to forced adoptions
- impact of the reduction in supplies and services funding for the department
- use of research and learnings from the 1974 floods in informing current development of appropriate programs for community recovery
- funding for financial counselling services, and
- access to contemporary, relevant and targeted programs and initiatives for Queensland's youth.

## 4.2 Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian

### *Funding overview*

The Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian is a statutory body established under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. The Commission provides independent oversight of the child protection and youth justice systems and administers the Blue Card system, which regulates organisations providing services to children and young people.<sup>27</sup>

Total expenses for the Commission are estimated to be \$47.393 million in 2013–14, an increase of \$741,000 from the 2012–13 Budget.<sup>28</sup>

The total cost of the concession provided for volunteer applicants for Blue Card assessments is estimated at \$9.8 million for 2013–14.<sup>29</sup>

### *Key activities in 2013–14*

Key activities in 2013–14 for the Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian include:<sup>30</sup>

- continuing to deliver its statutory functions, under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*
- implementing relevant government responses to the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry that affect functions administered by the Commission
- visiting and advocating for 17 year olds in adult correctional facilities
- improving the efficiency of the Commission's community visitor program, and
- streamlining the Blue Card application process.

### *Issues raised at the public hearing*

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian at the public hearing included:

- monitoring of the Blue Card system, its benefits and how it reduces risks to Queensland children and young people
- consideration of the recommendations of the Carmody report
- clarification of payment of the Blue Card application fee by volunteers, the impact of the application fee increased and possible impacts on the Safety House Program, and
- the purpose of the increase in funding for the Commission in 2013–14.

---

<sup>27</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.30

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p.34

<sup>29</sup> Concessions Statement, p.4

<sup>30</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.31

## 5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Issues

The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs has responsibility for the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs. The portfolio includes the Family Responsibilities Commission.

### 5.1 Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs provides whole-of-Government leadership to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It focusses on achieving better client outcomes in the areas of economic independence, quality frontline services, culturally vibrant communities, and safety and resilience.<sup>31</sup> The appropriation for the department in 2013–14 is as follows:

Appropriation	2013–14 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
departmental services	54 222
equity adjustment	...
<i>Administered Items</i>	5 600
<b>Vote</b>	<b>59 822</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2013, Schedule 2, p.7.

Total expenses for the department are estimated to be \$110 million, a decrease of \$4 million from the 2012–13 Budget. The decrease reflects the full year impact of staffing reductions made part way through 2012–13, and the reduction in Remote Indigenous Land and Infrastructure program spend between the two years.<sup>32</sup>

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs for 2013–14 includes capital purchases of \$2.7 million and \$16 million for capital grants.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Key funding initiatives in 2013–14**

Some of the key funding initiatives and activities for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs in 2013–2014 include:<sup>34</sup>

- developing and implementing a whole-of-Government policy to increase economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders
- investing \$11.3 million over four years in the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program
- providing \$5.7 million to extend the Cape York Welfare Reform trial (including the Family Responsibilities Commission) to 31 December 2014
- supporting cross-agency and inter-governmental efforts to improve the barriers to home ownership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders

<sup>31</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.2

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*, p.12

<sup>33</sup> Capital Statement, p.19

<sup>34</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, pp.3–4

- addressing land tenure and infrastructure planning issues in the 16 discrete Indigenous local government areas
- developing and implementing a whole-of-Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability and Engagement Framework
- supporting communities to review Alcohol Management Plans
- developing a new cultural diversity policy, and
- providing additional funding of \$0.4 million for the Multicultural Queensland Partnerships Program.

***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs at the public hearing included:

- the delivery of the justice strategy foreshadowed in the 2012–13 service delivery statement and mechanisms and strategies underway to support improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- freight costs and freight subsidies for food in Far North Queensland communities
- responsibility for provision of fresh water in communities
- the changing cultural mix in Queensland and its implications for the delivery of government programs and services, and
- the review of alcohol management plans.

## 5.2 Family Responsibilities Commission

The Family Responsibilities Commission is a statutory body established under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*. The Commission supports community members in the Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) trial communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge to restore socially responsible standards of behaviour, local authority and wellbeing for themselves and their families.<sup>35</sup>

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs administers payments to the Commission under the CYWR program.<sup>36</sup>

Total expenses for the Commission are estimated to be \$3.926 million in 2013–14, a decrease of \$560,000 from the 2012–13 Budget.<sup>37</sup>

### ***Key activities in 2013–14***

Key activities in 2013–14 for the Family Responsibilities Commission include:<sup>38</sup>

- continuing to deliver its statutory functions, under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*, in support of the trial's extension to 31 December 2014, and
- implementing improvements informed by the CYWR evaluation findings released in March 2013.

### ***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the Family Responsibilities Commission at the public hearing included:

- funding of the Cape York Reform trial and the decision to extend the trial to the end of 2014, and
- exploration of how the Commission is contributing to better life outcomes.

<sup>35</sup> *Service Delivery Statements Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs*, p.22

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, p.10

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, p.26

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p.22

## 6. National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing

The Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing has responsibility for the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. The portfolio includes Stadiums Queensland, which manages and operates major sporting and entertainment facilities on behalf of the Queensland Government and the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board, which is the control body for the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing.

### 6.1 Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and Stadiums Queensland

#### *Funding overview*

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing manages protected areas including national parks, custody and management of State forests, recreation areas, marine parks management and fish habitat areas. It encourages active participation in sport and recreation and ensures the integrity of the racing industry in Queensland.<sup>39</sup> The appropriation for the department for 2013–14 is as follows:

Appropriation	2013–14 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
departmental services	310 887
equity adjustment	(39 688)
<i>Administered Items</i>	26 766
<b>Vote</b>	<b>297 965</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2013, Schedule 2, p.10.

Total expenses for the department are estimated to be \$ \$366 million in 2013–2014, an increase of \$ \$17.1 million from the 2012–13 estimated actual Budget.<sup>40</sup> The expenditure increase is predominantly due to the deferral of committed expenditure from 2012–13 and mainly relates to an increase in grants and subsidises of \$28 million, partially offset by a reduction in employee expenses of \$13.9 million.<sup>41</sup>

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing for 2013–14 includes capital purchases of \$32.1 million and \$64.6 million for capital grants.<sup>42</sup>

The total cost of concessions provided via park tour fee and access permit concessions and concessional usage rates for Active Recreation Centres is estimated to be \$1.2 million in 2013–14.<sup>43</sup>

#### *Key funding initiatives in 2013–14*

Some of the key funding initiatives for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing in 2013–2014 include:<sup>44</sup>

- providing funding of \$23.1 million for Get in the Game projects to support sport and recreation at the grassroots level

<sup>39</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, pp.2 & 8

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p.18

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, p.18

<sup>42</sup> Capital Statement, p.85

<sup>43</sup> Concessions Statement, p.5

<sup>44</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, pp.2–3

- finalising a review of protected areas to ensure the land is being used for the greatest benefit
- facilitating ecotourism opportunities on national parks and delivering key actions in the Queensland Ecotourism Plan
- improving access to protected areas through red tape reduction and enhanced consumer experiences
- providing \$1 million to fund country race meetings to rejuvenate country racing
- providing \$2.5 million for the Queensland Thoroughbred Investment Scheme to support the Queensland thoroughbred racing industry, and
- continuing to fund major racing industry infrastructure projects.

### ***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing at the public hearing included:

- provision of funding for country race meetings and the impact on racing
- the benefits of funding to support thoroughbred racing and impact on movement of bloodstock and trainers out of Queensland
- action to increase the participation of women and girls in sport
- performance of the Get in the Game initiative and funding eligibility
- circumstances in which sections of national park estate might be degazetted and transitioned towards a different type of tenure in order to facilitate ecotourism development
- the cardinal principle of national park management and the Minister's commitment to it
- management of feral animal pests (particularly deer and wild cats)
- the 2013–14 parks and wildlife capital budget and related projects
- the amount and type of disease testing within national park feral animal populations and the involvement of Biosecurity Queensland.

## **6.2 Stadiums Queensland**

Stadiums Queensland manages and operates nine international standard sporting and entertainment facilities on behalf of the Queensland Government.

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing administers funds on behalf of Stadiums Queensland to support the maintenance and operation of its facilities.<sup>45</sup> Budgeted capital purchases for Stadiums Queensland are \$16.7 million.<sup>46</sup>

### ***Issues raised at the public hearing***

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Stadiums Queensland at the public hearing included use of the Boondall Entertainment Centre for sporting activities and consultation with grassroots sporting organisations on its future use.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p.15

<sup>46</sup> *Capital Statement*, p.86

### 6.3 Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board)

The Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board was established as the control body for the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing in May 2013. The All Codes Board is responsible for cross-industry issues such as funding and infrastructure needs with separate control boards for each code responsible for assisting the All Codes Board in the management of their respective codes of racing.<sup>47</sup>

#### *Issues raised at the public hearing*

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board at the public hearing included:

- Tatts Bet payments under the exclusive wagering agreement for 2011–2012 and the impact of this arrangement ceasing in June 2014, and
- problems printing authorised betting tickets for greyhound and harness racing after sale of GoPrint.

---

<sup>47</sup> Service Delivery Statements Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, pp.3 & 9

# Statements of Reservation

Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP

## Statement of reservation

This statement of reservation is submitted by the Member for Bundamba, the Deputy Chair of this committee, on behalf of the Labor Opposition.

### Minister for Health

The Labor Opposition offers the following comments on the committee procedures in the spirit of ensuring Estimates committees are able to truly examine the government's appropriations and ensure the Executive is held accountable to the people of Queensland. Estimates hearings are an important part of the democratic process in Queensland, more so than in other jurisdiction as Queensland has no separate house of review for government policy and for budget appropriations.

The Opposition notes the Minister's recent interest in immigration policy and in the health of refugees and of citizens of Papua New Guinea. After a detailed search of the Service Delivery Statement for Health, the Opposition was unable to find reference to the matters raised by the Minister in this regard. The Minister's concerns about the epidemiology of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDRT) on both sides of the Torres Strait provided a unique insight into his strategic thinking about priorities for the Queensland health system.

These insights did not, however, include references to the substantial investment by the Federal Government through AusAid in assisting PNG prevent and treat MDRT. Nor was there any reference to the Minister's unsuccessful attempt to close the Queensland Tuberculosis Control Centre at the Princess Alexandra Hospital late last year.

### No cuts in federal health funding

More enlightening was the acknowledgement by the Director-General of Queensland Health that federal funding for Queensland hospital and health services had increased every year since 2009-10 and is to increase to more than \$4 billion in 2016-17. This is somewhat at odds with the Minister's frequent assertions in the media that significant reductions in staff and in service provision were the result of the mid-year adjustment to payments under the National Health Reform Agreement.

This adjustment to federal funding, within total funding that continues to grow, appears to have been well managed in New South Wales where budgets for local hospital and health services were maintained across 2012-13. The basis for the adjustment to funding under this agreement required underpayments and overpayments to be reconciled monthly. However given the potential impact on health services, the Federal Treasury gave the affected states six months to reconcile the relevant overpayments.

This process seems to have been beyond the competence of the Minister and the Treasurer who immediately placed the burden of mid-year budget adjustment on the

Hospital and Health Services rather than where it more appropriately lay with the Department of Health and the state's Treasury. This is particularly the case here when \$40 million of the federal overpayments in 2011-12 were made to Queensland Health prior to the establishment of the Hospital and Health Services.

#### Failure to admit LNP budget cuts

The Director-General was less forthcoming in acknowledging the \$3 billion in 'savings' over four years anticipated in the 2012-13 budget through a net reduction of 2,754 full-time equivalent staff positions, cuts to grant funded community organisations and a 3% 'efficiency requirement' imposed on all Hospital and Health Services (HHSs). For Metro North HHS, this 3% 'efficiency requirement' meant a \$61 million budget cut in 2012-13, and for Metro South a cut of \$49 million. It is these reductions in state funding for hospital and health services that have reduced service provision as much as the Minister's inability to manage agreed adjustments to growing federal funding.

The presentation of 2013-14 HHS budgets in this report is disingenuous as estimated actual expenditure for 2012-13 is ignored. If actual 2012-13 expenditure is compared with the projected budget estimates for 2013-14, six HHSs budgets are actually less than last year. This is the case for Metro North (-\$36.4 million); Children's HHS (-\$9.1 million); Sunshine Coast (-\$6.8 million); Wide Bay (-\$2.5 million); Central West (-\$1.5 million); and South West (-\$1.8million).

While government members of the committee provided the Minister with an opportunity to explore his recent interest in "*aliens*" and immigration policy, they appear less prepared to question the Minister on reduced hospital performance in the areas of elective surgery and outpatient services or the impact of the service reduction and increased waiting times on their constituents.

#### Queensland now performing worst in elective surgery

The May 2013 report on hospital performance by the COAG Reform Council found Queensland was the worst-performing state for meeting the National Elective Surgery Targets. Queensland is the only state that failed to clear the longest waiting 10% of overdue surgery patients for all categories of clinical urgency and the only state to fail to reduce the average overdue waiting time for all categories of patients. This is despite the Federal Government providing Queensland with an additional \$90.7 million to achieve these targets.

The 2012 LNP election campaign promise of 40,000 additional outpatient appointments has never been met. The current budget clearly states that the Newman Government expects to reduce these services by 70,000 appointments in 2013-14. The people of Queensland are waiting in pain and some are dying, while this government continues to cut vital public hospital services

While clinical nurses from the Metro North HHS rallied outside Parliament during Estimates to express their outrage at the use of threatening letters and workplace harassment, the Minister offered a half-hearted apology for his government's mismanagement of health workforce planning. The Minister appeared, though, to be less willing to apologise for his self-interested campaign against the Queensland Nurses Union and its members.

#### Failure to commit to the Barrett Adolescent Centre

Labor members asked the Minister to confirm the continued operation of the Barrett Adolescent Centre but he was unable or unwilling to make this commitment when the opportunity was provided. The Minister's response to this question during the committee hearing was:

*"It is true that the Barrett centre is under review. It has been for a significant period of time. We will have a different model of actually delivering those services in the future, keeping at the front of our minds the need to ensure there is an appropriate mix of supported services that are in places such as Barrett delivered closer to home with more community options around it."*

(Hansard 24 Jul 2013 p.22)

#### Sexual health services to close

With regard to the provision of public sexual health services, the Minister firmly stated that he supported the decision of the Metro North board to close the sexual health clinic at Biala in Roma Street and retain only a small service for complex HIV patients. The Minister holds the view, unsupported by research evidence or by experts in this specialist field, that Medicare Locals can provide a comparable health service. This is blatantly incorrect as Medicare Locals do not provide clinical services and if he is, through some convoluted logic, inferring that fee-for-service general practices are willing and able to take on more than 6,000 sexual health patients in the metropolitan areas, he is either mistaken or ill-advised.

A HIV-focused mass media campaign is not a substitute for a well-respected public sexual health clinic. It is also unclear from the Minister's response whether all public sexual health clinics across the state, including those in our northern regional centres will also be closed and patients instructed to go to see a GP.

Many of the patients of this clinic do not have Medicare cards or are unlikely to be able to afford the co-payments now charged by many corporate for profit general practices. Biala patient have clearly appreciated the anonymity, confidentiality and convenience of the public clinic adjacent to the Roma Street Transit Centre. The Opposition did not get the opportunity to ask the Minister if this service closure also included the potential sale of another public asset.

### Three new public hospitals to be privatised

The Minister saved his major announcements for the end of the Health Estimates hearing, with the government confirming that it was going to vigorously pursue a privatisation agenda for the three new public hospitals funded by Queensland taxpayers. The Minister tabled a heavily redacted report by KPMG recommending privatisation of many of the clinical services of the new Children's Hospital in South Brisbane, what he called a "partially outsourced model".

The Minister finally confirmed that "Pathology is also part of a broader review around contestability and potential outsourcing". The Minister's language in describing 'contestability' now makes it clear he is talking about outsourcing and privatising clinical and clinical support services across Queensland public hospital and health services. No public employee in health care can now feel secure in their employment.

When asked about the privatisation of the Herston site of the Royal Children's Hospital and the adjoining building that make up one-third of land available for the potential future expansion of the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, the Minister acknowledged that "I must admit that I have not been following that right down to the nth degree". The Minister's ignorance in this matter could have been reversed by reading the documents provided on the Treasury's website:

<http://www.treasury.qld.gov.au/projects-queensland/projects/royal-childrens-hospital-site/index.shtml>

The Minister also appeared ignorant of the concerns of many senior medical practitioners about his decision to privatise the new public hospital due to open on the Gold Coast in a few months and the \$1.8 billion public investment in the Sunshine Coast University Hospital at Kawana.

Further the Minister did not appear to take seriously concerns for the safety of patients in the transition from the current Gold Coast Hospital to the new Gold Coast University Hospital. It has been reported that the overwhelming majority of the senior medical and surgical specialists at the GCH have lost confidence in the executive of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. Appropriate representation of senior medical staff in the HSS executive is essential to manage the transition of patient services to the new facilities at the GCUH.

In a farcical stunt gone wrong, the Minister tabled the KPMG report on the full privatisation of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and then apparently in error tabled the 2008 business case of the former Labor Government to build the Gold Coast University Hospital. The Minister acknowledged that "*maybe we are living in a parallel universe, and that is possible*" when he tabled these documents.

Subsequently the Minister has attempted to 'untable' the 2008 business case and it is noted that this HCSC report still refers to three KPMG documents on privatising

public hospitals, when in fact the analysis for the partial or full privatisation of the Gold Coast University Hospital is authored by PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

Queenslanders can only hope that the Minister, his staff and departmental advisers are more careful in preparing the contracts that hand over our public hospitals, and their clinical and clinical support services, to private providers.

What is evident from the consultant's reports the Minister is using to justify his political agenda of Americanising our health system is that more health workers will lose their jobs, there will be fewer career opportunities for new graduates, and those jobs that remain will be for lower paid and lower skilled staff working in more casualised working conditions. The quality and safety of patient care under these conditions will inevitably be compromised.

### **Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services**

The second budget of the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is best summarised by the Queensland Council of Social Service in its budget commentary, which states:

*"This budget, however, does not put Queensland in a strong position to support vulnerable Queenslanders for the long-term, or lead the way in delivering high quality prevention and early intervention services to reduce demand on 'crisis' services – a key message in the Queensland Commission of Audit Final Report".*

It is disappointing that when the Minister was presented with this statement, she was unable to provide a satisfactory answer, reverting to the disingenuous position that "it is the previous government's fault", rather than taking responsibility for the funding cuts that she has presided over, and that have had a major impact on frontline services and frontline staff.

Overall, it was disappointing to note that the Minister constantly kept referring to terms such as 'fiscal repair' and 'efficiencies' in a portfolio that should be focussed on people and the community. When these terms are used, two things are overlooked: that the portfolio is primarily dealing with people in need; and that the department is responsible for essential services.

It was clear throughout the Estimates hearing that the Minister was struggling to provide detailed and knowledgeable answers to questions from the Opposition and cross-benchers. Not only did she deliver a long opening statement, she also allowed the response to a government question by one of her former ministerial colleagues to proceed for more than 20 minutes.

It was disappointing that questions from the Opposition to the Commissioner for Children, Young People and Child Guardian relating to the impacts of the recent Carmody Report were ruled out of order. This was despite the Opposition being able to identify clear Service Delivery Statement references. These actions were in direct contravention to the Premier's so-called open and transparent government.

### **Moreton Bay Regional Community Association**

The Opposition notes that the Minister has failed to answer many questions in relation to the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association. In particular, when asked a question on notice (Estimates Question on Notice, Number 5), to outline what interactions or meetings she had involving the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association, including the date of any meeting, who attended the meeting and the purpose of the meeting, the Minister merely referred to the public release of her ministerial diary.

However, when the Opposition reviewed the public releases of the Minister's diary, no mention of meetings or interactions with the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association could be found. Further, there was no evidence that the Minister had met with anyone from that organisation or within her department about the issue. This raises further questions, as the Minister would clearly have had to have had briefings with her department about the issue, but refuses to reveal when she met with them and with whom she met.

This is another example of the Minister's actions falling short of the government's claims to be open and transparent.

The Opposition was disturbed to learn that the Minister has not attempted to make any contact with the workers or volunteers of the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association, to offer them her personal support. When asked whether the staff have received their entitlements, the Minister responded *"that is not a matter for government"*. This is just another example of a Minister who is so caught up with trite terms such as 'fiscal repair' and 'efficiencies' that she has already lost sight of the purpose of her portfolio, to assist and support the community and people.

The Minister has claimed on several occasions that her department was deployed to the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association site quickly, however during the Estimates hearing, on page 84 of the transcript, she was unable to clarify when she gave the instruction for staff to attend the Moreton Bay Regional Community Association, stating: *"I think that needs to be a question to the departmental officers who were doing that"*.

It is unfortunate that this situation has occurred. In particular, it is unfortunate for the people of Redcliffe who rely on these vital services, but it is equally unfortunate that the residents of Redcliffe now find themselves dealing with a Minister who is not hands-on and a local Member who is missing in action.

#### Grant funding

It is also unfortunate that the matter of grant funding remains an issue for the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. During last year's budget and estimates process, it was revealed that millions of dollars had been ripped out of her portfolio. This had a dramatic effect on frontline staff and frontline services, both within her own department and the non-government sector.

In particular, during last year's budget process, it was identified that \$259.7 million would be stripped from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services budget over four years, with only \$38 million of that money being accounted for. The Department's Chief Financial Officer stated during last year's Estimates:

*"We will go back to the minister as part of the 2013-14 budget work-up to discuss strategies on how we can achieve the \$98 million in that third year"*

Therefore, it was concerning to read the Minister's response to the Queensland Parliament Question on Notice, Number 451, where she refused to list in detail which organisations will receive funding and what reductions they will receive. It motivates the question as to whether the Minister is concealing information, as she was more forthcoming during last year's Estimates process and released in detail where funding was being directed to, by organisation. The Opposition, and the people of Queensland, deserved similar openness this year.

One of the surprising developments during the Minister's Estimates hearing was her answer regarding an underspend of \$28.8 million for total capital purchases, which amounts to more than half of the budget underspend.

In the Minister's answer, she began by rehashing the failed attempt of responses to Estimates Question on Notice Number 2, before she deferred the rest of the answer to the Chief Financial Officer for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. The CFO informed the Estimates committee of the following project deferrals:

- Cherbourg Safe Haven, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Morningside Island Safe Haven Women's Shelter, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Coen Safe Haven NGO organisation staff accommodation, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Doomadgee Men's Space, deferred to 2014-15
- Morningside Island NGO organisation staff accommodation, under the Safe haven Program, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Coen Safe Haven Services Club, deferred to 2014-15
- Cooktown office accommodation, deferred to 2013-14
- Torres Strait, services for Indigenous communities' safe houses, deferred to 2013-14
- Atherton Residential Care Small Group, deferred to 2013-14, pending further consideration
- Dinmore supported accommodation, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Yungah supported accommodation, deferred to 2013-14
- Woombye Positive Futures Accommodation, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Mount Isa Neighbourhood Centre, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Chinchilla Neighbourhood Centre, deferred to 2013-14 and 2014-15
- Banksia Positive Futures accommodation, deferred to 2013-14.

It is deeply concerning to note that many of the capital works projects that were deferred are located in Indigenous communities where safe haven buildings and infrastructure are vitally needed.

#### Financial counselling

It is disappointing to note that the government has not committed any funding for financial counselling in the forward estimates, for Queensland families under

financial stress. While the Opposition understands that some of the current financial counselling services were provided through disaster-associated funding, the lack of future funding in this area will result in Queensland being the only State that does not provide funding for this service.

It is concerning to see that while the Minister is participating in making a contribution to the cost of natural disasters of more than \$18 million over the forward estimates, no funding has been put aside for financial counselling services for natural disasters in the future.

#### Commission of Audit

The Minister mentioned the Commission of Audit report, stating that it *“set a strong and clear agenda for reforming the way government makes and manages its investments. It stressed very strongly the need for greater contestability and productivity of services.”*

The Minister went on to say that her department has commenced a review into various areas. It is concerning that a department responsible for providing frontline support services to our community, in particular some of the least well off members of our society, would be considering privatising, through the ‘contestability’ process, frontline services.

The Opposition will continue to monitor any such move closely, to ensure that the community is receiving the high level of care and support that it deserves.

#### DisabilityCare Australia

The Opposition supports the Federal Labor Government’s initiative of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, now known as DisabilityCare Australia. Without the forward thinking and effort of the Federal Labor Government, people with a disability right across our country, including from Queensland, would not have as bright a future.

However, it is disappointing to note that the Newman LNP Government played politics with the issue and only signed up to the scheme at the eleventh hour. The Opposition urges the Newman Government to nominate a trial site for Queensland, so that people with a disability in this state can reap the full benefits of DisabilityCare Australia in the future.

#### Child Safety

The Minister seemed unable to answer basic questions relating to the timeliness of processing of application by new foster-parents, whether children in care hold Medicare Cards, and if foster parents are provided their child’s health passport and care plan.

The Queensland Opposition is very disappointed that the potential policy impact stemming from the recommendations of the Carmody report on the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian was not discussed.

#### Forced Adoptions

On the issue of forced adoptions, the Opposition agrees with the Minister's statements that the Queensland Government's apology regarding forced adoptions represented a historic day. However, words without action or substance do not provide any closure for the men and women who lived through that terrible period of time.

As outlined in the Estimates hearing, the Opposition received communication from Adoption Loss Adult Support Australia Inc. (ALAS) indicating that they appreciated and welcomed the apology; however, no developments had occurred in relation to action items put forward at the time.

The Minister was unable to furnish the committee with her progress, raising doubts about what is occurring in relation to this issue. The Opposition encourages the Minister to engage with ALAS and other organisations representing those affected by forced adoptions to build on the progress made as a result of the apology.

### **Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs**

It was disappointing to see that the Estimates hearing transcript for the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs only required ten-and-a-half pages of Hansard, and that the hearing itself lasted only 55 minutes, late at night. This important portfolio – and the issues it manages – deserve more than the current LNP Government appears willing to offer.

On review of the Estimates hearing proceedings, it is clear that the Minister was determined to use as much time as possible in his responses, in order to avoid scrutiny by the Opposition. Firstly, the Minister opted to deliver a lengthy opening address for a session that was already only 55 minutes long. The Minister should have followed the lead of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, and waived his opening statement. Further, one of the Minister's answers to a question spanned the entire length of a Hansard page – indicating a length of about five minutes, or 10 per cent of the available hearing time. From these actions, it was clear that the Minister was keen to avoid non-government members' questions.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

With regard to the Cape York Welfare Reform trial, the Minister's actions on this matter contradict his words. The Minister has stated that he supports elements of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial, but then on 27 March 2013, he announced his decision to defund the program at the end of December 2013. Curiously, this was followed up the next day by a monumental backflip by the Minister in a press release, when he stated that the government would continue funding the Cape York Welfare Reform trial until the end of December 2014.

During the Estimates hearing, the Minister tried to backtrack and claim that he always intended to continue funding for the Cape York Welfare Reform trial, but this is not supported by the Minister's action to issue a press release defunding the trial that made no mention of future plans. It is clear that the Minister does not understand the complexities of his portfolio and his backflip regarding the trial suggests intervention from other parties was required to secure the continuation of funding.

This is supported by the Minister's statement, made during the Estimates hearing and recorded on page 96 of the Health and Community Services Committee Estimates Hansard:

*"The Premier of the day, regardless of which political party and which government, is involved in most decisions that happen around the place. I take a great deal of notice, obviously, of what the boss tells me to do. Can I say for the benefit of Hansard that he is always right".*

This comment was prompted by questioning by the Opposition with regard to whether the Minister was directed to change the decision to axe funding to the Cape York Welfare Reform trial. These comments by the Minister provide a strong indication that the Minister was directed by the Premier to reverse his poor decision and continue funding for the trial.

The Opposition highlighted another instance where the Minister has been found to be at odds with the Premier, specifically in relation to Alcohol Management Plans. While the Minister had claimed earlier in the hearing that the Premier "is always right", the Minister was unable to explain to a satisfactory level the contradictions in comments by the Premier and Minister in relation to Alcohol Management Plans, as reported in the *Townsville Bulletin* on 6 February 2013. The article stated:

*"Mr Newman said they had not worked to reduce alcohol-related violence."*

The article further went on to state:

*"Glen Elmes later said there were signs the plans had been effective in reducing crime and boosting school attendance."*

During Estimates questioning, the Minister dismissed the comments by making light of the status of a regional news outlet, indicating that if the statements indicated a real issue then they would have been reported more widely than the *Townsville Bulletin*. However, it is deeply concerning that the Queensland Government does not have a clear position on the effectiveness of Alcohol Management Plans, with the Premier and the Minister putting forward two very different views.

The issue of Alcohol Management Plans is an important one in which the Labor Opposition has a deep interest. The Opposition supports policy measures that will prevent or reduce the likelihood of vulnerable members of our society – women, children and the elderly – being abused and victimised.

Finally, it is also deeply disappointing that the Minister – who is supported by an Assistant Minister for the Indigenous Affairs portfolio – has not made any progress on his 2012 promise regarding a stand-alone Indigenous justice strategy. His original commitment, located on page 4 of the 2012-2013 Service Delivery Statement for his department, states:

*"In 2012-13, the department will develop a revised whole-of-Government Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice strategy".*

It did not say that it would develop Indigenous justice strategic measures that would be part of other whole-of-government plans.

To date, there has been no tangible policy or strategy document released by the Minister, despite a comprehensive review and wide-spread consultation being undertaken and to develop a new justice strategy *Just Futures* - launched in December 2011, approximately three months prior to the LNP taking Office.

If the Minister was serious about justice strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, he would have continued the work done by the previous government - at a minimum used *Just Futures* as the base for a new standalone strategy. However, that work has been dismissed and the only reason appears to be because it was undertaken by Labor.

Multicultural Affairs

The Opposition had prepared a series of questions to the Minister regarding his responsibilities for multicultural affairs. However, due to the committee's decision to allocate only 55 minutes for examination of the Minister's portfolio areas – and the Minister's poor handling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, as revealed in his responses to the committee – the time for examination expired.

It is astonishing that a Minister responsible for such important areas with a combined annual budget of \$109.625 million – aided by not one, but two, Assistant Ministers – is subject to scrutiny for less than one hour. In reality, with the breakdown of questions between government and non-government members, this means that the Minister is subject to only about 30 minutes of real scrutiny. The Opposition recommends that the committee considers lengthening the time available to examine the Minister's portfolio areas.

Finally, the Opposition would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms Best, Director-General of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, for her long period of public service. We wish her all the very best with her future endeavours.

**Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing**

The Opposition wishes to place on record its disappointment with the short period of time allocated to examine the budget estimates for the portfolio of the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. Fifty-five minutes is patently an insufficient period of time to be able to question the \$390 million budget of a department which encompasses three significantly different areas.

The Minister refused to provide a guarantee that he would not facilitate the revocation of areas of the national park estate. This is a deeply worrying refusal from a Minister who has already ignored the cardinal principle of national park management in amending the Nature Conservation Act to facilitate permanent private developments within Queensland's national parks. The possibility that the Minister may even revoke national park declarations to facilitate ecotourism should be deeply worrying to all Queenslanders. This potential policy direction was canvassed in a briefing note obtained through the right to information process and based on the Minister's answers appears to still be under consideration by the Newman Government.

Further it appears that the Minister is seriously considering de-gazetting some national park declarations made since 2002 as an outcome of the review which is currently underway. The Minister refused to provide an estimate of when this review will be complete. Once again Minister Dickson made the laughable claim that the Newman Government would come to be seen "*as the greenest government that this state and this country have ever seen,*" despite continued evidence to the contrary.

**Sports**

The Opposition is concerned that grassroots sporting organisations are being forced out of the Boondall Entertainment Centre in the name of increasing profits in the area of corporate catering.

The community groups that use the facility understand they operate on a mixed use model with the business side of the centre and at times will have to cancel competition days. It seems a greater emphasis has been placed on making a profit at the expense of community sport, leading to approximately twelve extra lost days of competition this year which impacts around 1,500 sports participants at the centre.

The Opposition will await the outcome of the review into stadiums and request the Minister to consult with the affected community sports associations so that young people can be encouraged to compete in sport and more importantly stay engaged in sport. In the case of Boondall, the Opposition suggests consideration be given to separating the management of the sports complex from the management of the concert business when the contract is next reviewed, including greater consultation with grass roots user groups.

### Racing – exclusive agreement

The TattsBet exclusive wagering agreement expires in 2014 and the Minister was asked if the deal to be negotiated was going to be more or at least equal to the previous deal and what it meant for racing prizemoney if the figure could not be matched. The Minister was unable to provide any guarantees to the Committee that prizemoney would not be reduced, that regional race meetings would not be cancelled or that tracks would not be closed. He was unable to explain exactly what this would mean for the local racing industry.

The Minister was also unable to guarantee that the deal he negotiated would be as good as or even better than the current arrangement around exclusivity of wagering

We heard that the prize money is vitally important to keep trainers and owners in Queensland and that it is becoming common to see trainers and owners moving or choosing to participate in the industry in New South Wales or Victoria. The Minister seemed to have very few positive plans and instead sought to blame the previous Government.

### Betting tickets

States racing authorities, including the Victorian racing industry, use a system of the government printing blank numbered betting tickets which are then provided to approved printers to over-print the Bookmakers' details before sale to the public. This method has been used in Queensland for years to ensure the integrity of gambling and racing.

Betting tickets formed part of the reserved printing products such as ballot papers and budget papers which were previously exclusively printed by GoPrint within the Department of Housing and Public Works. When the LNP Government decided to sell GoPrint, including the reserved printing services, they either forgot to include betting tickets in the tender, simply decided not to tender the work as it was unprofitable, or put the work out to tender but no suitable tender was received. The evidence provided in the Public Works hearing was that betting tickets had been removed from secured printing prior to the release of the tender.

However, this system remained in place with printers purchasing blank tickets from the Government as late as earlier in the year until such time as they ran out and no one in Public Works or Racing Queensland was apparently able to assist the printers. This issue prompted enquiries being made with the Member for Rockhampton to try to get answers from the Government.

The Opposition office contacted Racing Queensland and a number of other entities only to be informed it wasn't a problem because the thoroughbred racing rules did not require the blank secure tickets. It took the Opposition Office to point out that the Greyhound and Harness Racing rules, being different from Thoroughbred Racing

rules, required Racing Queensland to approve the printer and the form in which the tickets were to be printed

Racing Queensland informed the Opposition Office they had verbally informed one printer to print them anyway they wanted and that the tickets could be printed by anyone in any form. This was clearly against the rules of Greyhound and Harness Racing and has no consideration of the original intent of the rules, to provide checks and balances to the integrity of racing.

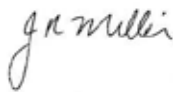
The Opposition Office pointed out any bookmaker that possessed one of these tickets could be in breach of the rules of racing and liable to punishment and the response was that they wouldn't actually prosecute anyone for it.

This is astonishing that the people in charge of enforcing the rules, which go right to the integrity of racing, wouldn't enforce the rules or don't even have an understanding of the rules as they apply to bookmakers and their suppliers.

The CEO of Racing Queensland informed the Committee that the printing of betting tickets for Greyhound and Harness racing was an issue, but that they were addressing it.

If the Minister spent less time working out ways to blame the previous government he may have been across his portfolio enough to answer the question and get to the bottom of very serious issues about the integrity of the industry and the lack of intent to prosecute those potentially in breach of the rules.

Given the Minister was not across this issue, there are concerns that it may point to more significant failings in the Minister's department. If important problems are not being brought to the Minister's attention, where does the responsibility lie? This was despite racing officials telling the Opposition Office they had fielded calls from a journalist the previous day about these issues. At least now Racing Queensland acknowledges a problem exists and will take steps to rectify it. It is unfortunate that the Minister was unaware. Hopefully he will issue a warning to bookmakers they should not possess unauthorised betting tickets until such time as the problem is fixed.



**Jo-Ann Miller MP**  
**Deputy Chairperson**  
**Member for Bundamba**

**Dr Alex Douglas MP**

**Statement of Reservation**

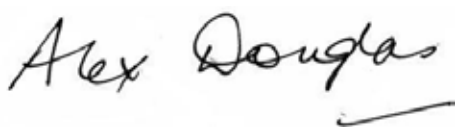
I support the reservations listed by the ALP but would also like to highlight the following reservations.

I have major concerns about the unsafe practices at the Gold Coast Hospital currently that the new medical board and the new CEO refuse to acknowledge. Further both of these individuals appear to have not fully informed the department and the Minister of the extent and nature of representations made by an overwhelming majority of the senior medical and surgical specialists. This is less than 2 months before the existing hospital transfers to the new Parklands site. Financially it seems impossible to quantify the potential impact to the budget due to this. Now, there is a dysfunctional wholly non-medical executive team in control of a major hospital. This is dangerous. The Minister at estimates would not commit to a safety audit as a minimum.

I have lesser concerns about the Racing Minister waiting until the end of the current financial year 2014 to renegotiate the deal with Tattersalls whilst racing is suffering due to a 30%(lower) prizemoney gap between Q'ld and the southern states.

I have concerns that the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs does not either have or understand his whole of government responsibility for the provision of fresh water to local communities in Torres Strait.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Douglas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the name, there is a short, horizontal, slightly wavy line.

**ALEX DOUGLAS MP**

**Member for Gaven**

July 31, 2013