

2014-15 Budget Estimates

Report No. 52
Health and Community Services
Committee
August 2014

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Abbreviations

CCYPCG	Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian
Commission of Inquiry	Child Protection Commission of Inquiry
the committee	Health and Community Services Committee
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform
HHS	Hospital and Health Service
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QIMR	Queensland Institute of Medical Research
QMHC	Queensland Mental Health Commission
Racing Queensland	Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board

Chair's Foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the Budget Estimates for the 2014-15 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 public hearings.

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 hearings on 15 and 17 July 2014.

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



Trevor Ruthenberg MP
Chair

August 2014

Recommendation

Recommendation 1

3

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2014 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

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 Ombudsman, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Queensland Mental Health Commission and the Hospital and Health Services
- Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- 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 6 June 2014, the Appropriation Bill 2014 and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.¹

On 15 and 17 July 2014, the committee conducted public hearings and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Minister for Health, the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, and the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and other witnesses. Hearing transcripts are published on the committee's webpage at:

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/H CSC/2014/estimates2014/trs-ph15Jul2014.pdf> and
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/H CSC/2014/estimates2014/trs-ph17Jul2014.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, and
- 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 Mrs Desley Scott MP, Member for Woodridge, as replacement for the Member for Bundamba at the Estimates hearing for the examination of the National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

1 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.

and Multicultural Affairs, and Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services portfolios on 17 July 2014.

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearings.

No other Members participated in the hearing of 15 July 2014.

The Hon Mr Tim Mulherin MP, Member for Mackay, participated in the hearing of the National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing portfolio on 17 July 2014.

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 2014 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, 16 independent Hospital and Health Services (HHSs),² and three statutory bodies - the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Health Ombudsman and the Queensland Mental Health Commission. From 1 October 2013, the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has also been part of the Health portfolio.³

3.1 Queensland Health

3.1.1 Funding overview

The Department of Health 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.⁴

The department purchases services from 16 HHSs and other organisations, including Mater Health Services and St Vincent's Health Australia.⁵

The department, HHSs and QAS are collectively referred to as Queensland Health.⁶ The appropriation for Queensland Health in 2014-15 is as follows:

Table 1: Appropriation for 2014-15: Queensland Health

Appropriation	2014-15 (\$'000)
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
• departmental services	8 971 194
• equity adjustment	924 342
<i>Administered Items</i>	33 910
Vote	9 929 446

Source: Appropriation Bill 2014, Schedule 2, p.13

A breakdown of the funding provided to each HHS is provided at section 3.1.3 of this report.

Queensland Health has an estimated operating budget of \$13.622 billion for 2014-15, an increase of \$942 million on its 2013-14 adjusted operating budget.⁷

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Health portfolio (including the department, HHSs, QAS and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research) for 2014-15 includes capital purchases of \$1.559 billion and \$1 million for capital grants.⁸

The total cost of concessions provided via the Oral Health, Patient Travel Subsidy, Medical Aids Subsidy, Spectacle Supply and Community Aids Equipment and Assistive Technologies Initiative and

2 Prior to 1 July 2014 there were 17 HHSs. The Cape York and Torres Strait - Northern Peninsula Health and Hospital Services were merged on 1 July 2014 to form the Torres and Cape Health and Hospital Service.

3 State Budget 2014-15, *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.4

4 SDS Queensland Health, p.35

5 SDS Queensland Health, p.5

6 SDS Queensland Health, p.4

7 SDS Queensland Health, p.5. The 2013-14 adjusted operating budget takes into account the move of the QAS into the Health portfolio and exemption from payroll tax from 1 July 2014.

8 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3*, p.54

Vehicle Options Subsidy Schemes administered by Queensland Health is estimated at \$287.1 million for 2014-15.⁹

3.1.2 Key funding initiatives in 2014-15

Some of the key funding initiatives and activities for Queensland Health in 2014-15 include:¹⁰

- \$1.5 million to expand support for rural drought declared communities by facilitating the provision of additional mental health support workshops provided by non-Government organisations to assist communities identify mental health related issues, promote normal recovery pathways, increase resilience and facilitate access to physical, emotional and social supports. The Department of Health will also develop and implement additional mental health and wellbeing programs and services to support individuals and local communities in drought affected areas
- reallocation of \$17.5 million over four years for planning for the establishment of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services at Toowoomba Hospital
- reallocation of \$33.7 million over four years for delivery of a Mobile Surgical Van pilot program for rural and remote communities
- continuing ongoing funding of \$4.1 million per year for hearing health outreach services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under the award-winning Deadly Ears, Deadly Kids, Deadly Communities Program
- investment of \$1.2 million to jointly fund Wellbeing Centres at Aurukun, Hope Vale, Coen and Mossman Gorge with the Australian Government. The Wellbeing Centres deliver community based and culturally appropriate social health services with a focus on drug and alcohol, mental health, and family violence issues
- \$4.5 million over four years to support the Government's Safe Night Out Strategy by delivering compulsory counselling for certain individuals involved in alcohol related violence, and
- allocation of a further \$5.5 million through the revitalisation of regional, rural and remote services program to five HHSs to enhance ambulatory and primary health care models with a focus on mental health, chronic disease, emergency care and outreach services.

The Department of Health achieved savings of \$96 million in 2012-13.¹¹ These savings will support a range of initiatives in 2014-15 including:

- additional hospital activity and service improvements targeting patient's outpatient appointments
- commencement of the implementation of a new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy focussed on improving, rationalising and simplifying ICT in the agency, and leveraging partnerships with private providers to deliver and support innovative delivery of health services through corporate and clinical portfolios.

3.1.3 Hospital and Health Services

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.¹²

There were originally 17 HHSs in Queensland. On 1 July 2014, the Cape York and Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula HHSs were amalgamated to form the Torres and Cape HHS.¹³

The operating budget for each HHS in 2014-15, compared to 2013-14, is as follows:

9 State Budget 2014-15, *Concessions Statement*, p.6

10 SDS Queensland Health, p.6 and *Budget Measures - Budget paper No.4*, pp.47-49

11 SDS Queensland Health, p.6

12 State Budget 2013-14, *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.35

13 SDS Queensland Health, p.6

Table 2: Hospital and Health Service operating budgets 2013-14 and 2014-15

Hospital and Health Service	2013-14 Budget	2013-14 Est. Actual	2014-15 Budget	Percentage change between 2013-14 Budget and 2014-15 Budget
	(\$ million)	(\$ million)	(\$ million)	(%)
Cairns and Hinterland (p.62)	620.4	644.2	667.3	7.6
Central Queensland (p.72)	447.1	457.2	466.0	4.2
Central West (p.82)	51.1	57.0	57.5	12.4
Children's Health Queensland (p.92)	303.8	325.7	460.8	51.7
Darling Downs (p.104)	568.3	584.9	616.5	8.5
Gold Coast (p.114)	964.0	987.2	1064.3	10.4
Mackay (p.124)	295.9	322.6	320.8	8.4
Metro North (p.136)	2036.2	2117.5	2088.5	2.6
Metro South (p.148)	1751.3	1817.6	1890.5	7.9
North West (p.159)	135.5	139.6	140.5	3.7
South West (p.168)	108.9	116.8	118.9	9.2
Sunshine Coast (p.178)	639.9	672.3	695.5	8.7
Torres and Cape (p.186)	171.7	...
Townsville (p.206)	737.2	741.6	758.1	2.8
West Moreton (p.216)	418.6	432.9	457.1	9.2
Wide Bay (p.226)	449.2	465.5	458.3	2.0

Note: The combined 2013-14 operating budget for the Cape York and Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula Hospital and Health Services was \$169.5 million. The combined estimated actual operating budget for 2013-14 was \$170.7 million. The percentage change between the combined 2013-14 and 2014-15 Budgets was 1.3 per cent.

Source: *State Budget 2014-15, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health*, pages as indicated against the name of the particular HHS.

3.1.4 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Queensland Health (the department and HHSs) at the public hearing on 15 July 2014 included:

- the level of funding for Queensland Health
- the government's commitment to universal, free, public hospital access
- whether there are plans to sell Department of Health and HHS assets
- the costs of obesity in terms of hospital and ambulance redesign
- the number of doctors currently employed by Queensland Health
- pay increases for nurses and midwives
- possible impacts of the GP co-payment on the hospital system in Queensland
- viewing of the details of Dr Anthony Lynham's personnel file or payroll information and whether those details were provided to the media by the Department of Health
- the policy and procedure regarding requests for the pay or payroll information of employees of Metro North HHS and for Queensland Health staff in general and policies and procedures relating to the making of complaints about the improper release of personal information
- the number of nurses and doctors currently employed by Queensland Health in comparison with the number employed in 2012
- Queensland Health staff separations between 1 July 2011 and 25 March 2012
- the number of employees who had signed up to the payroll self-service system in order to repay overpaid amounts since November 2013

- the number of Queensland Health employees who elected to pay overpaid amounts at the end of their employment with Queensland Health
- the labour cost of the Department of Health, its percentage growth within the budget and strategies to address that growth, the efficiency of expenditure on labour and the impact of doctor contracts on that efficiency and on the total cost of labour within the budget, the return on capital provided by the Commonwealth and the efficiency of the provision of health care in Queensland
- cost of advertising, particularly advertising related to health targets and for addressing healthcare safety issues
- the impact on senior medical officers and visiting medical officers of being placed on individual employment contracts
- the impact of the modernisation of awards for Queensland Health employees on nurses' take-home pay
- changes in indemnity insurance coverage for Queensland Health's medical workforce
- the overall increase in staffing for Queensland Health for 2014-15 and hiring practices, including any rehiring of previous staff made redundant
- the impact of the transfer of staffing power from Queensland Health to local HHS boards
- the number of employees of Queensland Health requesting assistance from the Employee Assistance Service
- whether the clinical nurses responsible for the follow up of women with abnormal pap smears in the Office of the Chief Health Officer were among the 300 positions cut from the Office
- details of all consultants and contractors engaged by the Department of Health and HHSs
- details of any Department of Health and HHS functions that are being considered in contestability processes that may lead to outsourcing or privatisation
- free rapid HIV testing in Queensland and advocacy for access to antiretrovirals
- the results of the Deadly Ears program across Queensland communities
- the pathways for treatment provided by programs administered by Children's Health Queensland HHS for children with hearing difficulties
- impact of contracts entered into by the previous government on patient access to the Gold Coast University Hospital
- responsibility for the site of the Brisbane Dental Hospital in Turbot Street and any plans for its disposal
- progress of the Cairns Hospital redevelopment project
- the formation of a single consolidated Queensland children's hospital (Lady Cilento Children's Hospital) and staff transfers
- whether there are contractual obligations within the Memorandum of Understanding for the new children's hospital which place an obligation on Queensland Health to consider the outsourcing of services
- occasions of local Ambulance Service networks activating the QAS escalation process, in particular the number of occasions that level 3 escalation was initiated between June 2013 and July 2014 at Redlands, Prince Charles, Caboolture and Princess Alexandra Hospitals and on 23 June 2014 at Prince Charles Hospital
- the number of ambulances travelling to the nearest appropriate hospital that were redirected to another hospital under 'load sharing arrangements'
- whether a contestability process for the QAS communications system has started or is about to start
- the number of 'trauma trucks' currently available in Brisbane
- the number of shifts unrostered in roster projections of the QAS Local Area Service Networks of the Gold Coast, Metro South, Metro North and the Sunshine Coast over June, July, August 2014
- remuneration of paramedics employed by the QAS
- child and maternal health services in the Cairns and Hinterland HHS

- performance against targets for elective surgery and emergency access and reduced waiting times of the Cairns and Hinterland HHS and the impact of the strategy on the number of long-wait patients for elective surgery
- improvements and upgrades planned for the Gladstone Hospital
- partnerships fostered by the Central Queensland HHS aimed at increasing the intake of midwifery students in 2014-15
- the performance of Central West HHS with regard to immunisation rates of children
- restructuring of the medical workforce and recruitment and retention strategies undertaken by Central West and South West HHSs to reduce reliance on external medical locums
- the adequacy of the birthing pool in the new birthing centre at Mackay Hospital
- reasons for the decline in overall outpatient performance in Metro North HHS
- the outpatient waiting list of Metro South HHS and the reporting of Princess Alexandra Hospital performance data
- the breast screening program in Metro South HHS and how the number of women screened compares with Metro North HHS
- improvements to renal dialysis in the Darling Downs HHS
- the percentage of specialist outpatients treated within recommended times in the Gold Coast HHS
- use of allied health professional workforce to improve patient access and address waiting times in key waiting areas
- the Mackay HHS's new home based renal dialysis services
- the results achieved by Metro North HHS's introduction of a Central Patient Intake model in 2013-14 and expected in 2014-15
- Metro South HHS's oral health services
- the impact on North West HHS of the establishment of the Rural Telehealth Service
- details of the endoscopy procedural unit at Nambour
- what functions may be being considered in contestability processes in Metro North HHS and whether they include outsourcing of pathology services to Sullivan Nicolaides
- whether Central Queensland HHS has outsourced management of, and medical imaging at, the Yeppoon Hospital (Capricorn Coast Hospital) to Vanguard Health Service
- the reinvestment of the Townsville HHS's operating surplus
- the rates of Indigenous childhood vaccinations in the Torres and Cape HHS
- the achievement of oral health targets by the West Moreton HHS and dental services in 2014-15
- possible improvements in waiting time for an endoscopy over 2014-15 by the Wide Bay HHS, and
- the Queensland Health Child and Adolescent Oral Health Service, the use of Medicare funding and its impact on private dentists in low income communities, and waiting list management
- whether HHSs, particularly Metro South HHS, are restructuring public dental services to increase own source income from Medicare and information about any planned restructuring of dental services by individual HHSs
- dental student placements and student support
- strategies to address the level of absences without permission from mental health facilities in Queensland of involuntary mental health patients
- Ministerial support for a coronial inquest into the circumstances of the death of a former patient at the Barrett Centre
- the number of cases of mother to child transmission of syphilis reported in the last two years
- the percentage of patients transferred off stretcher within 30 minutes
- targets for ambulatory care patients (categories 1, 2, 3).

3.2 Health Ombudsman

3.2.1 Funding overview

During 2013 the system for managing complaints about health services in Queensland was reformed. The reforms included the creation of the statutory position of Health Ombudsman as the single agency to receive health service complaints under the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*. All health complaints are now made to the Health Ombudsman, rather than being split between the former Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC) and the national health practitioner registration boards.

The role of the Health Ombudsman is to protect the health and safety of the public, promote professional, safe and competent practice by health practitioners, promote high standards of service delivery by health service organisations, and maintain confidence in Queensland's health system by managing health complaints in a timely, fair, impartial and independent manner.¹⁴

The new Health Ombudsman was appointed on 28 January 2014, the HQCC ceased to operate on 30 June 2014 and the Health Ombudsman commenced operations on 1 July 2014.¹⁵ The Health Ombudsman is supported by the Office of the Health Ombudsman, which was established as a legal entity on 17 February 2014.¹⁶

The 2013-14 operating budget for the HQCC was \$10.2 million. The estimated actual operating budget for 2013-14 was also \$10.2 million.¹⁷ Surplus funds of the HQCC were to be transferred to the Office of the Health Ombudsman commencing 1 July 2014.¹⁸

The operating budget for the Office of the Health Ombudsman is estimated to be \$10.245 million in 2014-15.¹⁹

3.2.2 Key activities in 2014-15

Key activities for the Health Ombudsman in 2014-15 will be the establishment of operations and the use of innovative strategies to ensure that performance requirements, particularly those related to timeliness, are met or exceeded.²⁰

3.2.3 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the Health Ombudsman at the public hearing on 15 July 2014 included:

- the level of complaints processed and other activities undertaken by the Office of the Health Ombudsman since its commencement on 1 July 2014, and
- the transfer of staff from the HQCC to the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

3.3 Queensland Institute of Medical Research

3.3.1 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.²¹

14 SDS Queensland Health, p.3
 15 SDS Queensland Health, p.249
 16 SDS Queensland Health, p.249
 17 SDS Queensland Health, p.ii
 18 SDS Queensland Health, p.259
 19 SDS Queensland Health, p.251
 20 SDS Queensland Health, p.249
 21 SDS Queensland Health, p.231

The Institute receives funding from government and non-government sources. In 2014-15, the Institute will receive \$18.9 million from the Queensland Government, representing 19 per cent of total revenue, the same level of Queensland Government contribution as in 2013-14.²²

Total expenses for the Institute are estimated to be \$101.2 million in 2014-15, a decrease of \$5.6 million from the 2013-14 allocated Budget due to successful cost saving initiatives and lower than expected competitive research grant funding being available for research activities.²³

3.3.2 Key activities in 2014-15

Key activities in 2014-15 for the QIMR include:²⁴

- commencing new trials using immunotherapy in early stages of metastatic Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma, clinical trials on an immunotherapy treatment for multiple sclerosis, a trial of a rheumatoid arthritis medication to treat asthma and work on developing a vaccine for cytomegalovirus, which could help prevent potential birth defects in babies
- continuing the testing of anti-malarial drugs on humans infected with malaria parasites; leadership of D-Health, a five-year study investigating the role of Vitamin D in preventing disease; developing brain imaging technology for use in creating a diagnostic test for depression and work on Q-Skin, the largest skin cancer research study ever conducted in Australia.
- being the only research facility in Australia to house the Asian Tiger Mosquito, to allow new research into chikungunya
- exploring the ability of snake, cone snail, hookworm and jellyfish venom to control the body's immune system, and potentially play a role in cancer treatments, and
- developing a powerful predictor for aggressive breast cancers for more accurate prognosis and ensuring the most effective treatment.

3.3.3 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the QIMR at the public hearing on 15 July 2014 included:

- the number of new research teams attracted to the QIMR and examples of their areas of work and
- the QIMR's study of Vitamin D's role in health.

3.4 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 provides 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.²⁵

The operating budget for the QMHC for 2014-15 is estimated to be \$8.5 million.²⁶

3.4.1 Key activities in 2014-15

Key activities for QMHC in 2014-15 include:²⁷

- finalising the Strategic Plan and monitoring the implementation of agreed actions
- leading implementation of specified actions identified in the Strategic Plan
- presenting the Ordinary Report, addressing social housing issues for clients with a mental illness and/or substance misuse, to the Minister for tabling in Parliament

22 SDS Queensland Health, p.231

23 SDS Queensland Health, pp.235 and 238

24 SDS Queensland Health, p.233

25 State Budget 2013-14, *Service Delivery Statements Queensland Health*, p.255

26 SDS Queensland Health, p.241

27 SDS Queensland Health, p.242

- responding to recommendations of the evaluation of a key program which addresses the early detection and intervention of mental disorders in children and young people
- supporting the work of the Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council, including development of strategies to enhance the engagement of consumers, families and carers and to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- reviewing the suicide prevention and other key action areas in accordance with agreed priorities and actions outlined in the Strategic Plan, and
- establishing mechanisms to support interagency and inter-sectoral collaboration to address mental health and substance misuse.

3.4.2 Issues raised at the public hearing

The committee asked for details of the QMHC's suicide prevention program at the public hearing on 15 July 2014.

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.

4.1 Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

4.1.1 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.²⁸

The appropriation for the department in 2014-15 is as follows:

Table 3: Appropriation 2014-15 Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

Appropriation	2014-15 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
• departmental services	2 574 827
• equity adjustment	(5 694)
<i>Administered Items</i>	236 838
Vote	2 805 971

Source: Appropriation Bill 2014, Schedule 2, p.7

Total expenses (controlled) for the department are estimated to be \$2.52 billion in 2014-2015, an increase of \$97.7 million from the 2013-14 Budget (adjusted to reflect the removal of payroll tax liability).²⁹ The increase is additional funding for the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Child and Family Reforms, population growth, indexation of outsourced service delivery arrangements and grants and subsidies and enterprise bargaining increases.³⁰ Total expenses include \$863 million for Child Safety Services, \$190 million for Community Services and \$1.47 billion for Disability Services.³¹

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for 2014-15 includes capital purchases of \$35.2 million and \$15.7 million for capital grants.³²

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 \$236.2 million in 2014-15.³³

28 State Budget 2013-14, *Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services*, pp.7-8

29 State Budget 2014-15, *Service Delivery Statements Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services*, pp.17 and 26

30 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.17

31 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

32 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, p.24

33 State Budget 2014-15, *Concessions Statement*, p.4

4.1.2 Key funding initiatives in 2014-15

Key new funding initiatives for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services in 2014-2015 include:³⁴

- additional funding of \$24.7 million in 2014-15 as part of the additional \$406 million over five years to implement the Queensland Government's response to the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry Final Report (Commission of Inquiry). These funds will commence the delivery of new secondary family support services targeting vulnerable families, revitalise child protection practice, and refocus the oversight of the child protection system. In addition, \$6.5 million has been allocated for an additional 77 Child Safety officers to address workloads and assist in delivering the reforms³⁵
- increased funding for Disability Services, including \$6.6 million over two years to deliver housing solutions for people with a disability for whom other housing options do not present a sustainable solution³⁶
- additional funding of \$5.9 million over two years from 2013-14 as part of the 2014 Drought Assistance Package to provide information, support, case management and coordination of community resilience building strategies,³⁷ and
- increased funding of \$531,000 in 2013-14 to extend the Drink Safe Precincts Trial.³⁸

4.1.3 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services at the public hearing on 17 July 2014 included:

- detail on the use of the \$406 million over five years for the child protection system
- the provision of support to young people leaving care until they reach 21 years
- the provision of 77 extra child safety officers and the anticipated impact on reducing case loads
- sharing of information about National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) trial sites and whether the regions in Queensland to be the first rolled out in 2016 had been determined
- the capacity of the non-government sector to provide services for people with profound disabilities and high care needs
- actions to prepare people with disability and their families for the transition to the NDIS
- progress of the Elderly Parent Carer trial
- whether transfers of government staff providing disability services to non-government organisations would comply with Commonwealth laws
- explanation of differences between estimated and actual expenditure and other adjustments in the Community Services budget
- the anticipated outcomes of *Investing in Queenslanders: social and human services investment blueprint 2014-2019*
- reduction of red tape for community groups
- explanation of performance measures, including rate of substantiated harm per 1000 children, proportion of children on a care and protection order exiting care and the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with kin, and key performance trends
- details of the Budget estimates for the Electricity Rebate and Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Schemes
- measures to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system
- reforms to support for foster and kinship carers

34 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

35 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

36 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

37 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.3

38 State Budget 2014-15, *Budget Measures*, p.18

- whether there is adequate portfolio responsibility for children given the transfer of the community visitor function for children to the Office of the Public Guardian
- availability of data on the ages and regions of residence of carers of people with a disability, and
- how the department is providing services to people with a disability.

4.2 Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian

4.2.1 Funding overview

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (CCYPCG) was a statutory body established under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. The Commission provided independent oversight of the child protection and youth justice systems and administered the Blue Card system, regulating organisations providing services to children and young people.³⁹

A number of the CCYPCG's functions were within the scope of the Commission of Inquiry, which recommended that the CCYPCG not continue in its current form, with its functions to be undertaken by other agencies.⁴⁰ The CCYPCG ceased to exist on 30 June 2014.

The newly established Family and Child Commission now monitors and reports on the overall performance of the child protection system, complaints will be investigated by the relevant department with oversight by the Ombudsman, the role of the Child Guardian has been combined with the Adult Guardian to form the new role of Public Guardian, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will establish a specialist investigation team to investigate cases where children in care have died or sustained serious injuries, and employment screening (blue cards) has been transferred to the newly established Public Safety Business Agency.⁴¹

The 2013-14 operating budget for the CCYPCG was \$47.4 million. The estimated actual operating budget for 2013-14 was \$44.7 million.⁴² The operating surplus was mainly due to lower employee expenses resulting from a number of positions remaining unfilled.⁴³

4.2.2 Issues raised at the public hearing

The committee asked whether staff of the CCYPCG responsible for undertaking research and reporting on child deaths in Queensland had all transferred to the new entity.

39 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.30

40 CCYPCG, *Annual Report 2012-13*, p.2

41 CCYPCG, *Media Release: Transition of the Commission functions*, 4 February 2014, accessed 5 February 2014 from <http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/about/transition.html>

42 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.35

43 SDS Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, p.38

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. The department has a focus on increasing the economic participation and improving the community participation of its client groups.⁴⁴

The appropriation for the department in 2014-15 is as follows:

Table 4: Appropriation 2014-15 Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs

Appropriation	2014-15 (\$'000)
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
departmental services	58 012
equity adjustment	...
<i>Administered Items</i>	8 100
Vote	66 112

Source: Appropriation Bill 2014, Schedule 2, p.7.

Total expenses for the department are estimated to be \$156.2 million in 2014-15, an increase of \$47.8 million from the 2013-14 Budget (adjusted to reflect the removal of payroll tax liability).⁴⁵ The increase is mainly due to timing of the Remote Indigenous Land and Infrastructure Program of work under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing where there was an impact from the extended wet season in 2014, and additional funding for the program in 2014-15.⁴⁶

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs for 2014-15 includes capital purchases of \$1.9 million and \$51.2 million for capital grants.⁴⁷

5.1.1 Key funding initiatives in 2014-15

Key funding initiatives and activities for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs in 2014-2015 include:

- assisting aspiring home owners in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to move towards home ownership, creating greater wealth and economic opportunity by facilitating Expressions of Interest with communities, conducting analysis of applications and working with Indigenous Business Australia and the Department of Housing and Public Works to progress loan applications⁴⁸

44 State Budget 2014-15, *Service Delivery Statements Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs*, p.2

45 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.13

46 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.12

47 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, p.19

48 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.3

- transferring ownership of state land and National Parks to Aboriginal people through the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program, providing opportunities to carry out land management tourism and other enterprises⁴⁹
- providing \$8 million over the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years to extend the Cape York Welfare Reform trial for an additional 12 months until 31 December 2015, to improve school attendance and economic participation in selected Indigenous communities through welfare reform activities and the efforts of the Family Responsibilities Commission⁵⁰
- providing \$800 000 over two years for the Cape York Institute,⁵¹ and
- providing \$1 million for Cultural Diversity Queensland grants that support economic participation and social cohesion for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.⁵²

5.1.2 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs at the public hearing on 17 July 2014 included:

- the government's focus on improving economic participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- detail of the Indigenous Economic Participation Action Plan
- expectations of the extension of the Cape York Welfare Reforms to the end of 2015
- reason for the difference between the estimated actual and budgeted capital expenditure shortfall in 2013-14 and changes in the reporting of certain grant expenditure
- progress of the review of Alcohol Management Plans in the Indigenous communities where they operate
- the new performance measures for home ownership and the links to the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing
- the importance of government owned stores to the communities in which they are situated
- the role played by the department in the provision of housing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- the disproportionate rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and strategies to address this
- the government's Cultural Diversity Action Plan and the impact of the Valuing Diversity Grants Program on the settlement experience for new overseas arrivals
- the programs and/or services the department is running in partnership with the Department of Education, Training and Employment to build in-demand skills
- an explanation of the estimated increase in other revenue in the portfolio's forward estimates, and
- the department's goals in partnering with government agencies and companies to broker job opportunities for Aboriginal people and improve community participation and the status of the government's response to the Logan: City of Choice Two-Year Action plan.

49 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.3

50 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.3

51 State Budget 2014-15, *Budget Measures - Budget Paper No.4*, p.14

52 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.3

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.⁵³

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs administers payments to the Commission under the CYWR program.⁵⁴

Total expenses for the Commission are estimated to be \$4.0 million in 2014-15, an increase of \$88,000 from the 2012-13 Budget.⁵⁵ The increase is due to additional resourcing for an executive support officer and anticipated wage increases for public servants.⁵⁶

5.2.1 Key activities in 2014-15

Key activities in 2014-15 for the Family Responsibilities Commission are:⁵⁷

- continuing to foster the independence of the Local Commissioners in the conferencing process by directing that a conference be constituted of three Local Commissioners whenever appropriate and providing feedback on the conferencing process as required
- assisting in improving school attendance through an integrated case management model developed to establish and foster service provider cooperation and collaboration
- assisting in the reunification of families through the integrated case management model
- continuing to initiate further red tape reduction via streamlining administrative and conferencing processes, and
- reviewing conferencing processes to enhance client engagement.

5.2.2 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to the Family Responsibilities Commission at the public hearing on 17 July 2014 included:

- whether most residents in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge have photo identification and the Commission's role in assisting people obtain identification
- the achievements of the Commission in the four communities
- adequacy of staffing levels given the Commission's objective, and
- reasons for the increase in client referrals and for the estimated proportion of clients with conditional income management orders who will have them revoked or reduced.

53 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.24

54 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.11

55 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.28

56 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.31

57 SDS Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, p.25

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 (known as Racing Queensland), which is the control body for the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing.

6.1 Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing

6.1.1 Funding overview

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing manages protected areas, including national parks, and has 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.⁵⁸ The appropriation for the department for 2014-15 is as follows:

Table 5: Appropriation 2014-15 Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing

Appropriation	2014-15 (\$'000)
<i>Controlled Items</i>	
• departmental services	354 316
• equity adjustment	(40 211)
<i>Administered Items</i>	26 811
Vote	340 916

Source: Appropriation Bill 2014, Schedule 2, p.9

Total expenses for the department are estimated to be \$420.0 million in 2014-2015, an increase of \$54.8 million from the 2013-14 Budget (adjusted to reflect the removal of payroll tax liability).⁵⁹ The expenditure increase is predominantly due to the deferral of expenditure in relation to the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme and various Recreation and Sport programs from 2013-14 to 2014-15.⁶⁰

Budgeted capital expenditure for the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing for 2014-15 includes capital purchases of \$29.5 million and \$106.5 million for capital grants.⁶¹

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 \$1.3 million in 2014-15.⁶²

6.1.2 Key funding initiatives in 2014-15

Some of the key funding initiatives and activities for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing in 2014-2015 include:

58 State Budget 2013-14, *Service Delivery Statements Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing*, pp.2 & 8

59 State Budget 2014-15, *Service Delivery Statements Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing*, pp.16 and 23

60 SDS Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, p.23

61 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, p.77

62 State Budget 2014-15, *Concessions Statement*, p.5

- providing \$3.5 million over four years for a joint program with the Australian Government (\$7.0 million over four years in total) to support an integrated control program targeting feral pigs, reducing the impacts on marine turtle hatchlings on the east coast of Queensland adjoining the Great Barrier Reef and the west coast of Cape York Peninsula⁶³
- providing \$22.7 million towards national parks infrastructure including \$4.1 million to develop visitor centre upgrades at David Fleay Wildlife Park, Carnarvon Gorge, D'Aguilar National Park and Mon Repos Visitor Centre⁶⁴
- providing \$21.5 million to help Queenslanders get active through the Get in the Game programs⁶⁵
- continuing to improve racing infrastructure in Queensland by providing \$71.8 million in capital grants under the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme,⁶⁶ and
- conducting a comprehensive review of the *Racing Act 2002* to ensure the Act reflects developments within the racing industry since 2002.⁶⁷

6.1.3 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing at the public hearing on 17 July 2014 included:

- the promotion of ecotourism opportunities in national parks
- the resources provided through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service capital budget in 2014-15
- improvements to access and the promotion of tourism in Springbrook National Park and any obstacles to this
- the joint program with the Australian Government to target the eradication of feral pigs to reduce their impact on marine turtle hatchlings
- the expansion of volunteering and tourism opportunities through the Friends of Parks program
- the new *Reef Ranger* 24-metre catamaran
- the reduction of the wagering tax and the impact of the loss of that revenue on the Racing Industry Capital Development Fund Scheme
- the visitor centre upgrades at Carnarvon Gorge, D'Aguilar National Park and David Fleay Wildlife Park
- the investigation into the death of a registered race horse in a pool at the Toowoomba Turf Club, and
- a request for the detail of the allocation of funding for minor capital works projects in national parks.

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.⁶⁸ Budgeted capital purchases in 2014-15 for Stadiums Queensland are \$13.4 million.⁶⁹

6.2.1 Issues raised at the public hearing

The committee did not raise any issues in relation to Stadiums Queensland at the public hearing on 17 July 2014.

63 State Budget 2014-15, *Budget Measures*, p.31

64 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, pp.78-79

65 SDS Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, p.3

66 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, p.77

67 SDS Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, p.3

68 SDS Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, p.13

69 State Budget 2014-15, *Capital Statement*, p.78

6.3 Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board)

Racing Queensland is the control body for the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing and is responsible for cross-industry issues such as funding and infrastructure needs. Separate control boards for each code are responsible for assisting the All Codes Board in the management of their respective codes of racing.⁷⁰

6.3.1 Issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee in relation to Racing Queensland at the public hearing on 17 July 2014 included:

- the 30 year retail wagering licence agreement with Tatts Group made on 27 June 2014, including details of who negotiated the contract, when and who was aware of the agreement prior to its announcement
- the anticipated distribution of the income from the new licence agreement to be received by each code of racing
- the impact of the agreement on prize money for Queensland races, and
- the reasons for resignations from the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board.

70 SDS Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, p.8

Statement of Reservation

Mrs Jo-Ann Miller, Member for Bundamba

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

This statement of reservation is submitted by the Member for Bundamba and Deputy Chairperson of the Health and Community Services Committee, Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP, on behalf of the Queensland Labor Opposition.

**THE HON. LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH**

The estimates process is to aid the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Government's proposed expenditure. The role of this Committee in examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill is to give the people of Queensland confidence that government is properly undertaking its responsibilities.

The new Estimates process has failed to allow adequate scrutiny of budget measures and the policy directions of the government. Non-Government members were hindered by the concurrent scheduling of hearings from actively participating to the extent enjoyed in previous years. I call on the Premier to restore accountability to this important parliamentary process by ensuring a more suitable timetable for Committee deliberations at Estimates in future.

Government members of the Committee provided the Minister with opportunities to discuss the narrow range of indicators of health system performance he considers meaningful to the people of Queensland. Waiting time for clinical procedures may have some use in determining the technical efficiency of emergency and acute hospital and dental care. However, the Minister failed to place these issues in the broader context of efficient allocations to avoid hospital admissions and re-admissions.

Minister failed to acknowledge the essential role of additional Federal Labor funding through National Partnership Agreements over the past three years in addressing emergency department waiting times and elective surgery and dental waiting lists. No mention was made of the likely impact of the unilateral cancellation of these agreements by the Abbott government's first federal budget or of measures the Newman government is preparing to ameliorate the impact of these cuts to federal funding of public hospitals, primary health care and health promotion and prevention programs.

Fallacious assertions about hospital co-payments under a Labor government were a very poor response to the likely increase in emergency department demand if the Abbott government's attempts to destroy Medicare as a universal health care funding mechanism, if a GP Tax gets passed, by an increasingly hostile Senate.

Without federal funding incentives it is clear from the response of the Minister and of some Hospital and Health service CEOs that waiting lists for Specialist Outpatients clinic have not improved and performance in some specialities and some HHSs has significantly declined. So much for the additional 40,000 Specialist Outpatients appointments promised by the LNP in the 2012 election campaign.

Strategies to limit patient access to these waiting lists for the elective surgery waiting list do the government and HHSs no credit at all. The explanation of why the PA Hospital does not report Outpatient performance was inadequate. Clearly there is significant scope to invest in program to prevent or manage in the community, health conditions that require hospital outpatient services.

The Minister acknowledged the \$96 million cut to the Department of Health but he failed to acknowledge that sacking most of the public health practitioners and patient safety workforce with state-wide responsibilities were among what he called an "an unmanageable bureaucracy". Obesity stories offered a diversion from the reality of obesity related chronic illnesses and their impact of people's daily lives as well as on our health system. We need meaningful action on prevention and health promotion and less rhetoric.

On the serious matter of the disclosure of personal employment and payroll details of Dr Anthony Lynham, the Minister and the Director-General could not explain how such information came into the hands of the media. After the outstanding result of Dr Lynham in the Stafford by-election, an 18.6% swing to Labor, I am sure Dr Lynham will have more to say in Parliament on this matter.

The Minister was less than forthcoming in detailing asset sales with the health portfolio. While he acknowledged that "small pieces of land" such as that identified in LNP Convention resolution 77 may be for sale, he was less forthright about the 4.8 hectares of land between the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and the Royal Children's Hospital site. It was Mr Stamp, CEO for Metro North HHS, who made first public mention of the call for Expressions of Interest next month in the sale of the Brisbane Dental Hospital at Turbot St, a site in the middle of the Brisbane CBD.

The Minister's hyperbole on 'ambulance ramping' and 'hospital bypass' has come back to haunt him with graphic evidence that these problems continue to be regular occurrences for our ambulance service and emergency departments. The Minister's reluctance to acknowledge this reality was reinforced by the difficulties he faced in answering questions about outsourcing, rostering and workloads with the Queensland Ambulance Service.

I am very pleased that the Minister acknowledged the need to further investigate into the care of former patients of the Barrett Adolescent Centre. I would have preferred that the Minister acknowledge that treatment at the Barrett Centre successfully prevented suicides over its 30 years of operation. The families of patients and former staff of the Barrett Centre await the announcement of a Coronial Inquest.

THE HON. STEVEN DICKSON MP
MINISTER FOR NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION, SPORT AND RACING

The time allowed for scrutiny of the budget for the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing was insufficient. The time allocated for the analysis of the department's budget equates to \$5 million a minute, spread across three different areas, from a total budget allocation of \$447 million. This is inadequate, particularly when compared with the time allocated to the Environment and Heritage Protection Minister, who has a budget of just \$82 million and yet appeared before the committee for about twice as much time as the National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing Minister. This comparison provides a stark

contrast and consideration should be given to allocating more time to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing next year to scrutinise the 2015-16 budget.

In past comments about a new wagering deal for Queensland racing, the Minister indicated to *The Courier-Mail* that he would resign if he could not deliver a bumper deal for the racing industry. During the hearing, it was revealed that major sections of the industry are upset with some of the terms of the deal and the amount of money that might flow back to racing. Tattsbet certainly informed the Stock Exchange that they were happy with the deal and many of the finer points of the deal still remain unanswered.

In relation to the deal, it took questioning from the Opposition during the Estimates process to reveal that the Minister could not or would not inform the committee how much money was going back to industry in the form of prize money. The Minister could not even provide a breakdown of the percentage distribution the proceeds that will flow to each racing code. The Minister was unable to satisfactorily explain the impact that lowering the wagering tax rate will have on the racing industry and the government finances. The Minister also admitted that his comments at the Racing Queensland Awards night – that metropolitan prize money in Queensland would exceed prize money in NSW and Victoria – were designed to inspire the industry and would never be achieved in Queensland.

On face value, it can be assumed the Minister is out of his depth and is not performing at the standard expected of a Cabinet Minister. Further, he seems unwilling or unable to address important issues and the significant concerns being raised surrounding the future of racing in Queensland.

The Minister seemed not to be concerned about resignations from the Racing Queensland board, even though they were board members who were hand-picked following the changes made by the Minister to Queensland racing. The Minister brushed off the serious concerns raised in relation to the resignations, describing the board members who submitted their resignations as 'fair weather sailors'.

He stated:

"There is a thing called 'fair weather sailors' in our community. That relates to those people who go out on the sea in a boat and they get sick when the tide starts to turn up a little bit. We did have two people who resigned from the overarching body. They left for unknown reasons. They have left for personal reasons. Things get a bit tough in business. Things get a bit robust when you are negotiating and trying to get the possible outcomes. I am sure that maybe they felt like those sailors: it got a bit rough and they might have felt a bit sick in the tummy and decided to go on and do other things. Those people who were dedicated and determined to get an outcome, the best outcome for racing here in Queensland, did just that."

One test of the Minister's handling of the portfolio is surely the actions of those closest to him and they may have passed judgement in the Minister. We might never know the reasons for the resignations, but if the Minister was to assure the committee the resignations were for valid reasons they could be accepted. Instead, the Minister has tainted the reputations of the board members and, in doing so, the reputation of racing in Queensland.

The issue surrounding the death of a horse in Toowoomba raises significant concerns over the management of racing in Queensland, especially animal welfare. The question taken on notice and the answer provided during the hearing outlines that following relating to the death. The death occurred on 10 April 2014 and it took an anonymous complaint to the RSPCA to kick off the investigation on 14 April 2014 by Racing Queensland, which initially unfounded the incident. Racing Queensland did not notify the department until 30 April 2014. RQ then commenced its own investigation into the death, which has not been finalised. This incident highlights issues surrounding the responsibilities of both Racing Queensland and the department that are essential to ensure appropriate accountability and viability of the industry.

As discussed previously, the time for examination of the portfolio left little time for examination of the Minister's functions and responsibilities in relation to sport, national parks and recreation.

THE HON. GLEN ELMES MP

MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

It was pleasing to see that the time allocated to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs increased from 55 minutes during last year's estimates process to a total of two hours during this year's estimates process. However, despite the increased time allocation, the Minister continued to waffle on during his answers, highlighting his attempts to chew up time and minimise the level of scrutiny to which he was exposed.

From the outset, it was evident that the Minister was not across the details of his portfolio, handing over to his Chief Financial Officer to answer multiple questions regarding financial expenditure within the Minister's department.

It was disappointing to see LNP members of the committee, in particular the Member for Townsville, Mr John Hathaway MP, attempting to shut down discussion regarding the changes contained in the *Electoral Reform Amendment Bill 2013* and how they will affect members of Queensland's Indigenous communities. While the legislation was not introduced by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs, Minister Elmes is the Minister responsible for indigenous issues. It was disappointing to learn that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Elmes did not have any discussions about the changes to voter identification laws, which will have a dramatic negative impact on not only Indigenous Queenslanders, but also members of the multicultural community.

It was concerning to learn that the Family Responsibilities Commission does not have enough staff to backfill positions when individuals go on leave, resulting in the Commissioner having to be on call while he was on leave. Minister Elmes indicated that he will be introducing legislation into the Legislative Assembly of the Queensland Parliament regarding the Family Responsibilities Commission and at this time, he should turn his mind to providing adequate staffing resources to the Commission for the long term.

It was disappointing to note that Minister Elmes, despite being the Minister responsible for the recently launched *Economic Participation Action Plan* July 2014, was unable to explain in detail how his department was partnering with other departments, in particular the

Department of Education, Training and Employment, to provide services under this plan. While we welcome the Minister's statement that *"the economic action plan that we have just announced also does provide for, I think it is an additional \$1 million a year to go into vocational education and training opportunities"*, it appears that what Queenslanders really need is the reintroduction of the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program that was axed by the Newman LNP Government.

THE HON. TRACY DAVIS MP

MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES, CHILD SAFETY AND DISABILITY SERVICES

The time allocated for the examination of the budget documents relating to the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services was simply not enough.

This is a department that caters to some of the most vulnerable people in our community and the committee was not provided with sufficient time to question the Minister and her departmental staff about the allocation of significant government funds.

The Minister made it clear from the outset of the hearing that she was determined to waste the committee's time by explaining at length every decision made in her department over the past 12 months, regardless of whether it was relevant to questions posed by government and non-government members.

The Minister took every opportunity to recite details from her department's policy documents and website, effectively avoiding in-depth scrutiny of the 2014-15 budget papers.

Government members further enabled the Minister to waste the committee's time by asking questions that allowed the minister to espouse the virtues of the Newman government and stick to a prepared script that provided no insight into the department's finances.

On page 46 of the transcript, the Member for Woodridge asked:

'Minister, I refer to page 3 of the SDS and the delivery of \$50 million to support the implementation of the NDIS in Queensland. Considering that the Newman government refused to sign up for a trial site, have you approached your counterparts in other states to organise a sharing of information concerning their trial sites?'

Instead of answering this question, the Minister continued to inform the committee of how 'lucky' Queensland was that we did not have a trial site and what other states are learning from us. This raises concerns that when the NDIS is eventually rolled out in Queensland, we will have learned nothing from the experiences of other states.

On page 47 of the transcript, the Member for Woodridge asked:

'Apart from privatising Accommodation Support and Respite Services, what exactly is the \$50 million promised in this budget being used for?'

The member meant no offence by this question she was simply stating what was in the budget papers in the hope that the Minister would not waste time covering information that had already been disclosed.

Instead of taking the opportunity to give the committee a thorough explanation of the intended purposes of the \$50 million, the Minister embarked on a lengthy tirade about the

government's decisions regarding AS&RS, decisions that the MP had acknowledged in her question.

Essentially, the Estimates hearing examining the budget papers for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services was viewed by the Minister as an opportunity to spruik the Newman government, not to provide insight into the budgetary decisions made by the government.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'jo ann miller'.

Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP
Deputy Chairperson of the
Health and Community Services Committee
State Member for Bundamba