



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT **COMMITTEES**

Annual Report 2024-25

Primary Industries and Resources Committee



Report No. 12

58th Parliament, November 2025

Primary Industries and Resources Committee

Chair	Stephen Bennett MP, Member for Burnett
Deputy Chair	James Martin MP, Member for Stretton
Members	Nigel Dalton MP, Member for Mackay
	Robbie Katter MP, Member for Traeger
	Glen Kelly MP, Member for Mirani
	Tom Smith MP, Member for Bundaberg



*Back Row: Mr Tom Smith MP, Mr Glen Kelly MP
Front Row: Mr Robbie Katter MP, Mr Stephen Bennett MP (Chair), Mr James Martin MP (Deputy Chair)
inset: Mr Nigel Dalton MP*

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

Acknowledgements

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Chair's Foreword

This report details the activities of the Primary Industries and Resources Committee from 28 November 2024 to 30 June 2025.

In accordance with section 108 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, this report includes a summary of issues considered by the committee, a brief description of Ministerial responses to committee recommendations, a statement of revenue and spending for the year, and a list of committee meetings and names of members attending or absent from each meeting.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the work of the committee during this reporting period.

I also thank my fellow committee members for their ongoing dedication and collaborative approach and the committee's secretariat and parliamentary staff for their professional support throughout the year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Bennett MP

Chair

Report in Brief

The Primary Industries and Resources Committee (committee) was established by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2024 as a portfolio committee with responsibility for:

- Primary Industries
- Natural Resources and Mines
- Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.

This report covers the period from 28 November 2024 to 30 June 2025 in the 2024-25 financial period. In that time, the committee:



The committee's examination of referred bills included proposals to:

- repeal and replace the *Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1945* to introduce new governance, procedural and operational frameworks and remove redundant provisions²
- establish the position of a dedicated Mining and Resources Coroner and mandate that coronial investigations and inquests must be conducted into all accidental mining-related deaths.³

Committee scrutiny of these was still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.⁴

In addition to scrutinising legislation, the committee commenced a self-referred inquiry relating to sugarcane bioenergy opportunities in Queensland and considered one Auditor-General report.⁵

¹ The Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill 2025 (Coroners Bill) was referred to the committee on 12 June 2025. Submissions closed on 4 July 2025 - after the 30 June 2025 reporting date for this Annual Report.

² Queensland Institute of Medical Research Bill 2025 (QIMR Bill).

³ Coroners Bill.

⁴ The committee's report into the QIMR Bill was tabled on 11 July 2025 and the committee's report into the Coroners Bill was tabled on 15 August 2025.

⁵ The committee self-referred Auditor-General's Report 14: 2023-24 – Queensland's Regions 2023 on 13 March 2025.

On 24 June 2025, the Appropriation Bill 2025 was introduced into Parliament and it was referred to portfolio committees on 27 June 2025, whereupon the committee commenced preparation for its examination of portfolio budget estimates 2025-26.

The committee's total expenditure for the reporting period was \$313,669.

1. Functions of the Committee

The Primary Industries and Resources Committee is a portfolio committee responsible for:

- Primary Industries
- Natural Resources and Mines
- Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.

The committee has a broad range of responsibilities within its portfolio area, as detailed in Figure 1 below. These responsibilities are set out in the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.⁶ The committee is also responsible for overseeing the performance of the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner, as detailed in Schedule 6 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

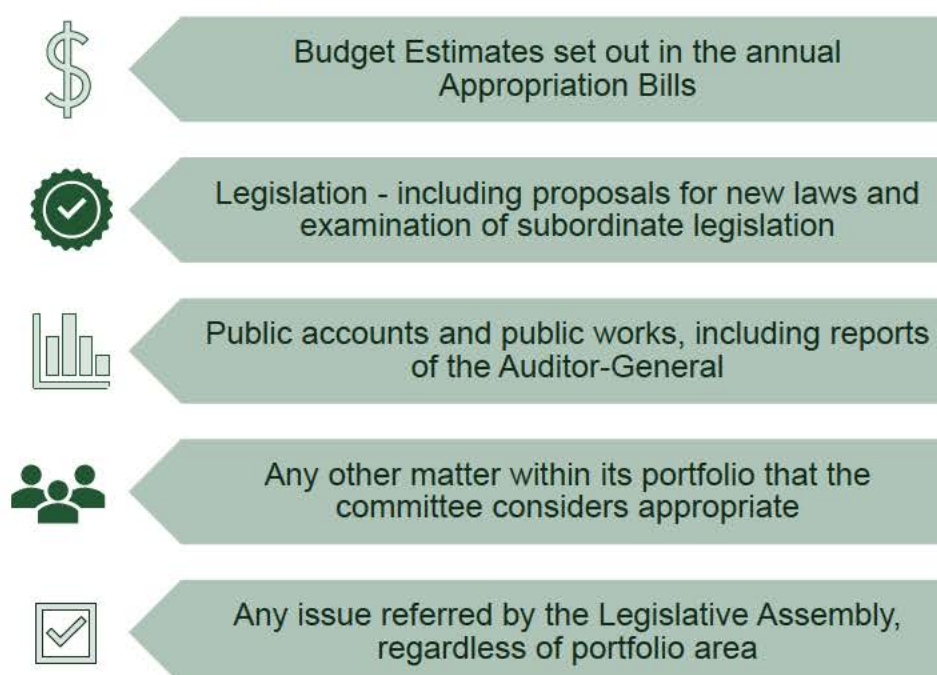


Figure 1. Committees have oversight responsibilities for a range of matters within dedicated portfolio areas

2. Overview of Committee Activities

As detailed in Table 1 overleaf, which summarises the activities of the committee during the reporting period, the committee heard from 64 witnesses across 8 public briefings and 2 public hearings. The evidence provided by these witnesses was invaluable, and helped the committee to complete its other tasks.

The committee's reports tabled during the reporting period are available on the committee's website. Members' attendance at committee meetings, hearings and briefings is set out in **Appendix A** of this report.

⁶ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* s 92-94 (PQA).

Table 1. Committee activities undertaken in the reporting period

Activity	Number
Deliberative meetings	13
Public briefings	8
Private briefings	0
Public hearings – Brisbane	2
Public hearings – Regional Queensland	0
Private hearings	0
Witnesses questioned at private and public briefings and hearings	64
Inquiry submissions received	4
Briefings/meetings with Schedule 6 oversight bodies ⁷	1
Bill inquiries ⁸	2
Pieces of subordinate legislation examined ⁹	14
Forms authorised by legislation considered ¹⁰	7
Public works inquiries	0
Public account inquiries	0
Annual reports of portfolio entities examined	0
Auditor-General reports examined ¹¹	1
Inquiries referred by the Legislative Assembly	0
Inquiries into other matters (self-referred) ¹²	1
Reports tabled	4

3. Examination of Budget Estimates

On 24 June 2025, the Appropriation Bill 2025 was tabled in Parliament. The committee then commenced preparations for the examination of the 2025-26 budget estimates for its portfolio areas, which totalled approximately \$1.067 billion. The estimates process was still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

⁷ Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner.

⁸ Examination still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

⁹ Examination of 4 pieces of subordinate legislation is still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

¹⁰ Examination of 6 of these forms is still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

¹¹ Examination still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

¹² Examination still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

4. Bill Inquiries

When it examines legislation, the committee is responsible for considering:

- the policy to which it gives effect
- whether it complies with the basic standards of law, known as fundamental legislative principles
- whether it is compatible with the human rights of people in Queensland; and
- where relevant, whether subordinate legislation is lawful.

During the reporting period, the committee commenced inquiries for the following 2 bills:

- Queensland Institute of Medical Research Bill 2025
- Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill 2025.

The inquiry process for these bills was still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

4.1. Queensland Institute of Medical Research Bill 2025

The purpose of this Bill is to repeal and replace the *Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1945* (Act). The explanatory notes accompanying the Bill state that the Act no longer meets the legislative expectations or governance standards appropriate for the institution and repealing and replacing it will introduce new governance, procedural and operational frameworks and remove redundant provisions. The Bill will support the institution's ability to attract funding, deliver impactful research and remain competitive in the medical research sector.

4.2. Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill 2025

The key objectives of the Bill are to:

- establish the position of a dedicated Mining and Resources Coroner, to be appointed by Governor in Council
- provide that the Mining and Resources Coroner must undertake mandatory coronial investigations and inquests into all accidental mining-related deaths, which will include deaths that occur on mines, coal mines and quarries, as well as particular sites where petroleum and gas works are carried out
- make minor, technical amendments to enable preliminary examinations in relation to all reports to a coroner and enable multiple Deputy State Coroner appointments.

5. Other Inquiries

5.1. Self-referred Inquiry

On 11 June 2025, the committee resolved to self-refer an inquiry into sugarcane bioenergy opportunities in Queensland with the following terms of reference:

1. The role and benefits of sugar cogeneration in Queensland's electricity generation mix, including existing capacity and potential for expansion.

2. Market, regulatory, and infrastructure barriers to increased bioenergy production from sugar.
3. Opportunities to align sugar biofuel production with national security and defence liquid fuel needs.
4. Policy and funding mechanisms to de-risk investment in cogeneration and biofuels by manufacturers and growers, including examples of successful policy implementation from overseas and other industries.
5. The R&D agenda to underpin a world leading sugar-led bioenergy industry.
6. Strategic land use and regional development considerations affecting cane growing and sugar manufacturing capacity.
7. Benefits for growers in diversification opportunities.
8. Consideration of food versus fuel.

The inquiry process was still in progress at the completion of this reporting period.

5.2. Public Accounts Inquiries

The committee is responsible for assessing the public accounts of entities within its portfolio areas with regard to the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of financial management.

This responsibility includes examination of government financial documents including annual reports, and reports of the Auditor-General relevant to the committee's portfolio.¹³

No public accounts inquiries were referred to the committee during the reporting period. Departmental reports were not yet tabled as of 30 June 2025.

5.2.1. Auditor General Reports

The committee's role includes consideration of reports of the Auditor-General that fall within its portfolio.

The Auditor-General leads the Queensland Audit Office (QAO), which is the independent auditor of the public sector. It reports to parliament on the results of its audit work, providing insights and advice, and recommendations for improvement.

During the reporting period, the committee self-referred the following report from the Auditor-General:

- Report 14: 2023-24 - *Queensland's Regions 2023*.

On 11 June 2025 a public briefing was held with officials from the QAO and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.

Examination of the Auditor-General report is ongoing.

¹³ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 94(1).

5.2.2. Public Works Inquiries

The committee may consider public works undertaken by an entity that is a constructing authority¹⁴ for the works, or consider any major works,¹⁵ with its portfolio areas.

During the reporting period, the committee did not commence a public works inquiry.

5.3. Portfolio Briefings

The committee can request briefings from Departments and agencies within its area of portfolio responsibility, and other relevant organisations. The briefings contribute to the committee's knowledge and subsequent scrutiny of the portfolio areas for which it is responsible.

During the reporting period, the committee received public briefings from:

- the Department of Primary Industries on relevant portfolio areas
- the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development on relevant portfolio areas
- the Department of Primary Industries and stakeholders in the red meat industry regarding the From Method to Market program
- relevant departments and sugarcane industry stakeholders regarding the use of sugarcane as a renewable energy source
- the Queensland Audit Office and Department of Primary Industries on the status of Auditor-General's Report 1: 2023-24, Managing Invasive Species and the development of the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2025-2030.

6. Scrutiny of Subordinate Legislation

Subordinate legislation is legislation made by a department or other entity under powers given to them by an act of parliament. All subordinate legislation must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly, which can disallow it by resolution.¹⁶ To help it decide whether or not to do so, the Legislative Assembly refers each item of subordinate legislation to the relevant portfolio committee for consideration.

When examining subordinate legislation, each committee considers a range of matters, including:

- whether it has sufficient regard for basic standards for legislation, known as 'fundamental legislative principles'
- whether it is consistent with the human rights of people in Queensland; and
- whether the explanatory notes provide an adequate explanation of why the subordinate legislation is needed and what it does.

¹⁴ See *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 96.

¹⁵ See *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 94.

¹⁶ *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, s 49, 50.

During the reporting period, the committee examined or commenced examination of 14 pieces of subordinate legislation, and reported on 10.

As shown in Table 2, in the vast majority of cases, the committee did not identify any matters of concern regarding fundamental legislative principles or human rights.

Where it did, in each case the committee was satisfied that the subordinate legislation had sufficient regard for fundamental legislative principles, and any limitations of human rights were reasonable and justified in the circumstances.

Table 2. Portfolio Subordinate Legislation examined

Report No.	Subordinate legislation	Matters identified		Explanatory notes adequate
		Fundamental legislative principles	Human rights	
1	Exhibited Animals (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2024	0	1	✓
	Proclamation made under the Resources Safety and Health Legislation Amendment Act 2024	0	0	✓
	Resources Safety and Health Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024	1	1	✓
	Fisheries Amendment Declaration 2024	0	0	✓
	Proclamation made under the Agriculture and Fisheries and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024	0	0	✓
2	Rural and Regional Adjustment (E-mobility Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024	0	0	✓
	Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2024	0	0	✓
	Biosecurity (Updating of Code of Practice and Biosecurity Zone Map) Amendment Regulation 2024	0	4	✓
3	Fisheries (Effort Caps) Amendment Declaration	1	0	✓
4	Rural and Regional Adjustment (Variation of Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025	0	0	✓
n/a	Valuers Registration Amendment Regulation 2025	Examination in progress		
	Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2025			
	Explosives Amendment Regulation 2025			
	Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025			

7. Consideration of Authorised Forms

The committee's responsibilities include monitoring the operation of section 48 of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1954* in relation to legislation within its portfolio area. That section sets out a number of requirements for forms, including how forms must be notified and made available to the public.

The committee examined the following notified form authorised under the *Farm Business Debt Mediation Act 2017* and concluded that it complies with section 48 of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1954*:

- Notice S14 Inviting a Request for Mediation.

The committee also commenced examination of the following 6 notified forms authorised under the *Farm Business Debt Mediation Act 2017*:

- Notice S15 Request for Mediation Incorporating Nomination of Mediators and Request for Documents
- Notice S16 Agreement or Refusal to Mediate
- Notice S53 Declining Mediation
- Form 1 Heads of Agreement
- Form 2 Summary of Mediation
- Mediation Information Package.

Examination of these forms is ongoing.

The committee also commenced examination of the Cadastral Survey Requirements made under the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003*.

8. Statutory Oversight

The committee has oversight responsibility for the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner (QFFC).

The Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner commenced operations on 23 August 2024 in accordance with the *Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Act 2024*. The Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner was established to be a point of contact for matters affecting farmers, provide advice to farmers in supporting their relationships with supermarkets, and advise the government on arrangements across supermarkets and their suppliers.

The committee's functions are to:

- monitor and review the performance of the entity's functions
- report to the Legislative Assembly on any matter concerning the entity, the entity's functions or the performance of the entity's functions that the committee considers should be drawn to the Legislative Assembly's attention
- examine the annual report of the entity tabled in the Legislative Assembly and, if appropriate, to comment on any aspect of the report
- report to the Legislative Assembly any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the entity that the committee considers desirable for the more effective operation of the entity or the Act which establishes the entity.

8.1. Oversight of the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner

During the reporting period, the committee held a public briefing with the QFFC on 19 February 2025.

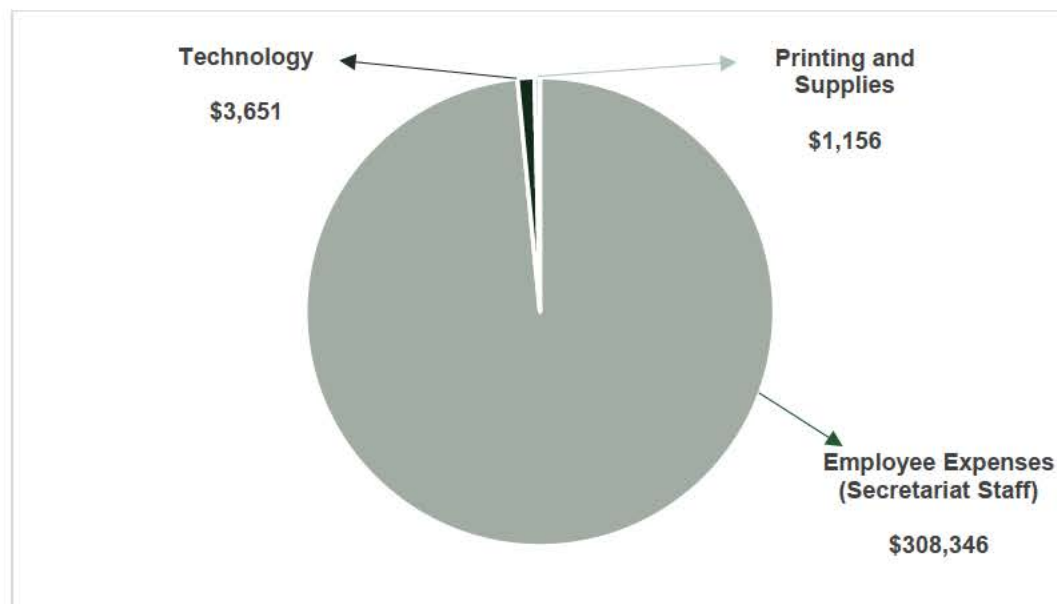
9. Committee Expenditure

Committees are funded from the appropriation made to the Legislative Assembly and rarely generate revenue. After funding is allocated for the committee office as a whole, expenditure by individual committees is determined by their specific requirements and volume of work. Travel expenditure is subject to an additional approval process.

In the reporting period, the committee's total expenditure was \$313,669. The committee did not receive any revenue.

Figure 2 shows the three main areas of expenditure. As that figure illustrates, employee expenses for the secretariat staff that support the committee comprised the vast majority (just over 98 per cent) of the committee's expenditure. The committee's secretariat is a three-person team, supplemented with additional resources from across the Committee Office as needed throughout the year.¹⁷

Figure 2. Committee Expenditure from 28 November 2024 to 30 June 2025



After employee expenses, technology was the most notable area of expenditure for the committee. Printing and supply expenses were the third largest area of expenditure.

Table 3 overleaf provides a more detailed breakdown of the committee's expenditure for the year.

¹⁷ Employee expenses and technology expenses continued to accrue during the dissolution period.

Table 3. Detailed Committee Expenditure

Item	\$
Employee expenses	308,346
Meeting expenses (broadcast support & catering)	516
Technology (software licences, telephones, teleconferencing & videoconferencing)	3,651
Legal advice	0
Printing and supplies	1,156
Advertising	0
Committee travel (including business travel)	0
Total expenditure	313,669

Appendix A – Attendance record

This appendix shows the attendance of committee members at private committee meetings (PrM), public briefings (PB), private briefings (PrB) and private hearings (PrH) and public hearings (PH) during the reporting period.

Standing Order 202(1) provides that in the case of a committee members' illness or inability to attend, another member may be appointed to attend that meeting or stand in for a particular inquiry. The details of these appointments are included in the footnotes.

Meeting Date	Activity	Stephen Bennett MP	James Martin MP	Nigel Dalton MP	Robbie Katter MP	Glen Kelly MP	Tom Smith MP
11-DEC-24	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28-JAN-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19-FEB-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
19-FEB-25	PH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19-FEB-25	PB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19-FEB-25	PH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13-MAR-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
02- APR-25	PrM	✓	✓	x ¹⁸	x	✓	✓
02- APR -25	PB	✓	✓	x ¹⁹	✓	✓	✓
30-APR-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30-APR-25	PB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30-APR-25	PB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21-MAY-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓
23-MAY-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓
28-MAY-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
05-JUN-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11-JUN-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x

¹⁸ The Member for Mackay was substituted by the Member for Oodgeroo.

¹⁹ The Member for Mackay was substituted by the Member for Rockhampton and the Member for Mundingburra.

Meeting Date	Activity	Stephen Bennett MP	James Martin MP	Nigel Dalton MP	Robbie Katter MP	Glen Kelly MP	Tom Smith MP
11-JUN-25	PH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x ²⁰
11-JUN-25	PB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x ²¹
11-JUN-25	PB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x ²²
19-JUN-25	PrM	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
30-JUN-25	PrM	✓	x ²³	✓	✓	✓	✓
30-JUN-25	PB	✓	x ²⁴	✓	✓	✓	✓

Legend: PrM private meeting
PrB private briefing
PrH private hearing

PB public briefing
PH public hearing

²⁰ The Member for Bundaberg was substituted by the Member for Logan.

²¹ The Member for Bundaberg was substituted by the Member for Logan.

²² The Member for Bundaberg was substituted by the Member for Logan.

²³ The Member for Stretton was substituted by the Member for Logan.

²⁴ The Member for Stretton was substituted by the Member for Logan.