

FRIDAY, 9 JUNE 1995

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. Fouras, Ashgrove) read prayers and took the chair at 10 a.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Hazardous Waste Treatment Plant, Pinkenba

From **Mr Santoro** (630 signatories) requesting that the House (a) by motion, indicates its concern over the siting of a hazardous waste treatment plant at Pinkenba; and (b) immediately negotiates with the Brisbane City Council to ensure that any environmental impact statement is bounded by the Government's own Moreton Bay Strategic Plan.

A similar petition was received from **Mr Vaughan** (276 signatories)

Petition received.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

- (a) Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing (Mr Gibbs)—
Lang Park Trust—Annual Report for 1994
- (b) Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts (Mr Wells)—
Judges (Salaries and Allowances) Act 1967—Salaries and Allowances Tribunal—Report dated 31 May 1995
- (c) Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development (Mr Pitt)—
Report on his visit to Indonesia from 1 to 4 May 1995.

STANDING RULES AND ORDERS

Swearing in of Members

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH
(Chatsworth—Leader of the House)
(10.03 a.m.): I move—

- "(1) That Rule of Practice Nos. 1 and 2 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly be amended by omitting—

'Members Await Commissioners

1. Members await Commissioners appointed for the Opening of Parliament and the Commission is read.

Commissioners for Swearing Members

2. After the Commission for Opening Parliament has been read, the Commissioners appointed by the Governor for swearing Members produce their Commission, which is read by the Clerk.'

and inserting—

'Person or Persons authorised to administer Oath or Affirmation

1. After the Commission for Opening Parliament has been read, the Clerk shall read the commission authorising him or some other person or persons to administer the oath or affirmation required to be taken or made by Members.'

- (2) That the amendment of the Rule of Practice be presented to Her Excellency the Governor by Mr Speaker for Her Excellency's approval."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Killing of Protected Birds, North West Island

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Education) (10.04 a.m.), by leave: I wish to draw the attention of the House to the results of my department's inquiry into the behaviour of certain students on North West Island between 28 April and 5 May 1995. The students who killed protected birds brought public condemnation upon themselves, and unfortunately their actions tarnished the reputation of their school and their classmates. The actions of these students—a small minority of a group of 50—were uncovered by their teachers and reported immediately to the proper authorities. The school suspended the students and, with other authorities headed by the Department of Environment and Heritage, held an initial inquiry and imposed punishment in the form of community service orders. The

18 students suspended from the school have all been interviewed and asked to explain their actions.

As can be expected in cases such as this, there were varying degrees of involvement, and this is reflected in the outcomes of the departmental inquiry. Preliminary investigations exonerated two students who have already returned to school. The other 16 will be required to complete the 150 hours of community service work organised by the Department of Environment and Heritage after which 10 of those 16 students will then be allowed to return to the school in the second semester. The other six students will be excluded permanently from all Queensland State schools but will be able to pursue their education by enrolling either in a school of distance education or a TAFE college.

I have repeatedly stated that there is no room in our schools for those whose behaviour is outside that which is acceptable to the broader community, and in this case such wanton vandalism and destruction of life cannot and will not be tolerated.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rural Queensland on Show Expo; Kids on Farms

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.06 a.m.), by leave: Earlier this year, I led a delegation of Brisbane-based decision makers through rural and regional Queensland. My purpose was to build links between rural, regional and city-based Queenslanders. One of the recommendations from this trip was a Rural Queensland on Show Expo, which was held in conjunction with the opening of the convention centre. The rural expo proved to be a great success. Not only did it provide great exposure for these emerging industries, but it also gave a glimpse of rural Queensland to more than 300,000 visitors. One of the factors that came to light was parents and grandparents taking their children and grandchildren along to give them a taste of rural Queensland.

A new initiative I would like to announce today will go a long way towards facilitating this concept. Kids on Farms is a new program which will commence in 1996. This initiative is designed to introduce metropolitan-based primary school children to life in typical rural Queensland communities. Children will travel to a rural destination and be billeted with host families. There, the children will have an

opportunity to attend school and participate in the day-to-day activities of farming life. The aim of the initiative is to build links between country and city children.

Kids on Farms aims to: introduce metropolitan-based primary school students to rural and regional Queensland communities and lifestyles; broaden their education experience to include school attendance in rural communities and curriculum activities associated with agriculture and sustainable land management practices; develop an appreciation in city children of the role of farming, rural and regional communities and the contemporary issues they face, including drought; and provide an appreciation of the rural environment and gain an understanding of environmental issues and the delicate balance between conservation and development. This will give city children a first-hand appreciation of schooling in rural communities, whether it be travelling on the school bus through farming land or, for some children, the chance to see sheep being shorn. Taking part in a class lesson by radio on School of the Air will be a once in a lifetime opportunity for these children.

When the children return to Brisbane, they will have a whole new perspective of life outside the city and an understanding of life for country kids. The next time these children go shopping with their parents, they will know where the food originated and the work that was involved in its production. Children have been visiting overseas countries on student exchanges for years. I believe it is time we gave them the opportunity to see some of their own country and appreciate the hard work and commitment of rural Queenslanders. The Kids on Farms initiative will continue to build on this Government's record of delivering meaningful results to all Queensland.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Youth Unemployment

Mr BORBIDGE (10.11 a.m.): I refer the Premier to comments by the Prime Minister in Brisbane recently that Australia did not have youth unemployment rates at the level of those in countries such as France, where it is 30 per cent. I also refer to the latest unemployment figures for May, which show that youth unemployment in Queensland was 32.2 per cent—the highest it has been since March last year, when it was 34.8 per cent, and I ask: why is youth unemployment in Queensland under his Government so shockingly high?

Mr W. K. GOSS: In terms of youth unemployment and unemployment generally, this State is performing very well in comparison with other States. A comparison of the figures shows that, in relation to both unemployment generally and youth unemployment, it is important that commentators or people interested in the particular area of youth unemployment identify the precise group of young people which is the subject of those figures and the fact that there is a very significant section of the youth population not included in that figure for the purposes of the calculation.

I note the comment made by the Deputy Leader of the Coalition in relation to the notice of motion that she just moved and in particular her reference to small business and the comparative "crushing effect", I think she said, of State Government taxes and charges on small business. I would refer the person generously referred to as the shadow Treasurer in this place to a comparison of State taxes and charges.

Mr Cooper: Talk to the business people.

Mr W. K. GOSS: We do talk to the business people, and the member should hear what they say about the Opposition! They are still trying to work out whether the shadow Treasurer knows the difference between corporatisation and privatisation, or whether she has made a choice yet.

In relation to State Government taxes and charges, I would refer her to the chart in the *Australian Financial Review* published the day after this year's State Budget was brought down—a State Budget which was referred to by a number of national commentators as the best in the country. Queensland was described as the State that had the healthiest economic and budgetary position of any Australian State.

Mr Borbidge: Corporatisation revenue is up 1,000 per cent.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I suggest that the member stops interjecting for a moment and has a look at that chart. Opposition members will see that in States such as Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales—or wherever members want to nominate—they have a financial institutions duty and we have none.

Mr Connor: Why is the confidence of business so low?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Look at the state of economic growth in this country. The member for Nerang just leant across to the member for

Gregory and asked whether that was right! He makes it up as he goes along.

When the members opposite were in Government, the unemployment rate in Queensland was consistently 1 per cent above the national average. Under this Government, the unemployment rate has consistently been at the bottom of the bottom end of the national rate. We have no fuel tax in Queensland, unlike the other States, no financial institutions duty, the lowest payroll tax, the lowest land tax, the lowest stamp duty and the lowest workers' compensation charges. We have the best climate for small business and business generally of any Australian State. When we moved recently to cut the duty on shares, the Victorians—including the Leader of the Opposition—squealed, and business around the country applauded. And so they should, because we are setting the best climate for business.

Mr Grice interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The member will stay down in the back corner. He is never going to get out of the back corner, because the mob opposite will never let him out.

Mr Grice: Five minutes after your Budget, unemployment is up 1 per cent.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The member should stick to driving into walls at high speed.

In the economic growth document *From Strength to Strength*, which has been hailed as a success by the business community, there is billions of dollars for infrastructure to boost jobs and growth.

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: They hate this. Look at them! Yak, yak, yak! Down in Eagle Street they do not want to know the Opposition; they are happy with us.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Gympie under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I conclude on this note: not only was there \$9 billion worth of infrastructure; there was also \$40m worth of tax relief for business. That strategy will continue to keep our economy the strongest of any Australian State and our job-creation record will also continue to be the best of any State. I know that the Leader of the Opposition does not like it when Queensland does well; he gets glee out of one month's figures. But that is not going to stop us from keeping Queensland the No. 1 State.

Health

Mr BORBIDGE: I direct a further question to the Premier. I refer to the split in Labor ranks over its management of the additional \$1 billion in health spending. I refer also to the current edition of the *Socialist Worker*.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will not allow interjections while a question is being asked.

Mr BORBIDGE: I note that Labor Party members are distancing themselves from the working people of this State. Honourable members should listen to this glowing character reference of the Government's management abilities—

Mr J. H. Sullivan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Caboolture under 123A.

Mr BORBIDGE: I quote from the *Socialist Worker*—

"The increased funds in the budget are no more than an attempt to gloss over the crisis.

Labor has refused to use the money to reopen the QEII hospital, which would alleviate the PA's problems overnight.

Instead, the millions that have been added to the health budget have been sucked up by bureaucrats."

In the PA, management has expanded while the number of beds has been reduced.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Western Downs. Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to answer the member for Western Downs?

Mr BORBIDGE: I thought it was a good interjection.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member to continue with his question.

Mr BORBIDGE: I ask the Premier: is this not further evidence—

Government members interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Do Government members think it is funny? People are dying. Constituents are on waiting lists for years because of the mismanagement of this man.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will ask his question or resume his seat.

Mr BORBIDGE: If members on this side interject when someone is asking a question, we get warned.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am trying to protect you, Mr Borbidge, to the best of my ability.

Mr BORBIDGE: I appreciate that, Mr Speaker. I know what you are trying to deal with.

Is this not further evidence—which continues to pile up day by day—of the Premier's mismanagement of the additional \$1 billion in health spending and does it not show that he has failed to deliver funds to the sharp end of service delivery in this State?

Mr W. K. GOSS: I always wondered who subscribed to Trotskyist newspapers. The Leader of the Opposition might subscribe to Trotskyist newspapers, but I assure the House that I do not. The Leader of the Opposition might read Trotskyist newspapers, but I do not. The Leader of the Opposition might attach credibility to Trotskyist newspapers, but I do not. I think that Trotskyist organisation has got the same credibility as the Leader of the Opposition!

Environment

Mr LIVINGSTONE: I direct a question to the Premier. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition indicated that the Opposition had changed its stance when it came to environmental issues. Has the Premier seen any evidence to support this assertion?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Yes. I was interested to see on television last night the Leader of the Opposition holding hands with Mr Hutton out the front, but I accept unequivocally his assurance that they have no political alliance, they are just good friends. What did I hear on television? "G'day Rob." "G'day Drew. Welcome to the club." Before he jumps up, I accept that there is nothing going on. I understand the Leader of the Opposition did suggest on a number of outlets that the—

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the members for Gregory, Crows Nest, and Western Downs under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Leader of the Opposition has suggested that the coalition has changed on this issue—or might change, or could change. Let me refer to three examples in terms of the current credentials. We know about the environmental vandalism and destruction of the past, and we will not let this State go back to that. But let us look at their current record. One example is a press

release issued by Mr Borbidge in March of this year that calls for the construction of the Tully/Millstream hydroelectric scheme and the consequential logging and flooding of 20 square kilometres of World Heritage along Coolna Creek and Mithaka Creek. That is their new green credentials. The second example is from the Maryborough *Chronicle* newspaper where the National/Liberal candidate says—and I will quote just the first paragraph of the article—

" 'Fraser Island should be taken off the World Heritage list to avoid Federal Government meddling in its management,' National Party candidate Mr Nioa said yesterday."

What that will lead to under a National/Liberal Party Government is the clearing of mangroves and the logging of Fraser Island. That is what they stand for currently. Let me give a third example from the *Bulletin* newspaper—

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order. The Premier is deliberately misleading the House because we do not—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Burnett to resume his seat. There is no point of order. I am not going to take spurious points of order any more.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I note the squirming interjection of the member for Burnett, so let us turn to him. He is the shadow Environment Minister. Let me read from the *Bulletin* magazine. It states—

"Slack says he sees no reason why logging could not resume in some of the listed rainforests where it was banned by the Hawke Government."

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order. That is deliberately again misleading in—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Burnett will resume his seat. I warn him formally under Standing Order 124.

Mr FITZGERALD: Surely he is allowed to put a point of order before you rule him out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I am simply reading from this—

Mr SLACK: I find his comments untrue and offensive—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable cannot simply get up on his feet and start talking. He shall resume his seat.

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Tell me what is your point of order.

Mr SLACK: My point of order is that I find his comments untrue and offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn. Our policy in respect to World Heritage—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat. Mr Premier, the member for Burnett finds those statements untrue. He asks that they be withdrawn. I ask you to withdraw them.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I do not know what he found offensive, but I withdraw it. I shall read the following paragraph from the *Bulletin* magazine—

"Slack said he also sees no reason why logging could not resume in some of the listed rainforests where it was banned by the Hawke Labor Government in 1988 in the face of fierce opposition from the then National Party Government in Brisbane."

If he is genuine, if there is a shred of honesty in that interjection, then I challenge the shadow Minister for Environment to table in this place today the letter to the editor of the *Bulletin* correcting that statement.

Mr Slack: Yes, I will.

Mr W. K. GOSS: You will? When? Today?

Mr Slack: Today.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Did you correct the *Bulletin* magazine?

Mr Slack: I said under conditions of World Heritage listing.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No, he didn't. He is a fraud. He has been caught out.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. I seek leave to move that so much of Standing and Sessional Orders be suspended forthwith so that we can debate this matter now.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. That is out of order.

Mr W. K. GOSS: There seems to be some confusion. I will read it again—

"Slack also says he sees no reason why logging could not resume in some of the listed rainforests."

That is their policy, they have been caught out and they are squirming because there is an election coming.

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order. I find that personally offensive because I stated very clearly to the House that it is not our

policy to resume logging in the World Heritage listed area of north Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has made his point.

Mr W. K. GOSS: In conclusion, we also find it offensive that people would want to log in listed rainforests.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise this morning. Can I suggest we get some decorum in the House.

Mr D. Thornton; PA Hospital

Mrs SHELDON: In directing a question to the Premier, I table a letter from a Mr Don Thornton to the Premier detailing a three-page horror story of his time in the Princess Alexandra Hospital where he went with a heart complaint and in the end suffered a heart attack due to the stress of his stay. Given that the dedicated health workers are doing all they can to help their patients, yet people like Mr Thornton are left with no blanket on their beds, other patients urinating on the floor of the ward and cockroaches in the bed heads, I ask: would he be willing to spend time on a waiting list for eventual access to a bed in one of our public hospitals where patients and health workers suffer under Third World conditions like those described by Mr Thornton in his letter to him?

Mr W.K. GOSS: I want to make two points before I respond to the issue of individual cases. I do not know that particular case, but I will respond on the issue of individual cases. I make these two preliminary points. Under this Government—

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to stop interjecting.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Under this Government the boost of funding of our public hospitals means that every week there will be 3,000 more patients treated in the hospitals of this State now than under the National/Liberal Party Government. The second point that I want to make is that I believe that the overwhelming majority of those patients receive first-class care from our doctors, nurses and other hospital staff. The Deputy Leader of the Coalition may well be able to produce a letter from somebody who has had an unhappy or unsatisfactory hospital stay. When there are, under this Government, over 550,000 people every year going through the public hospital system there will always be some people who have had a less than

satisfactory experience. But we can produce half a million cases—

Mr Cooper: Table them.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Honourable members opposite want some. They asked for it. They asked for it, Mr Speaker. The first says—

"Dear Sir, I am writing to express my extreme gratitude to the PA Hospital and to all the wonderful"—

Mr Elliott: This is the one you read the other day.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No, this is another one. Just listen to it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! My patience is wearing very thin with interjections.

Mr W. K. GOSS: It says—

"I am writing to express my extreme gratitude to the PA Hospital and all the wonderful staff who have looked after me. I came here seven weeks ago prepared to die and with not a hope in the world of ever walking out again. Your staff have been there whenever I have needed them, not only have they been there, but they have been prepared to spend time with me. It was as if they took a special interest in me. I want to stay well and out of hospital but I am comforted to know a bed and special care is always there for me. I truly have to say that the care I received here is the best I have had anywhere and I will be forever grateful."

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Warrego under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: When I started to read that letter, some members of the Opposition said, "Oh, you've got one." If they are challenging me to read another one, I will. The next letter that I will read is to the Director of Nursing at the Princess Alexandra Hospital. The letter, which is dated 6 March, states—

"This letter to hand is to state a very well-earned thank you to your staff. Recently my partner . . ."

I will not mention the person's name. Honourable members can look at the letter if they want to. It continues—

". . . was admitted through your emergency ward, CC1 respiratory ward. The thorough care"—

Mr Borbidge: Is that letter signed?

Mr W. K. GOSS: All of these letters are signed. I am prepared to make them available

for inspection, but I will respect the privacy of the individual by not naming that person. That is something that the honourable member opposite does not do.

Mrs SHELDON: I rise to a point of order. On both occasions when I have tabled letters, we have rung the people and got their permission to do so, and they have been willing to do so.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I am not going to trade in an individual's private details. The members opposite challenged me as to whether I had more letters. Here is another one—

"Dr Adam Butler and Dr Forestor and all nursing staff was of a very high standard. I, along with the family, would like to thank all involved for an excellent medical caring team of doctors and nursing staff. Our appreciation is greatly recognised to your staff for the house and the time to support myself and my family during that very difficult period."

Mr Littleproud: Look at the record.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The members opposite are not satisfied so I will read them another one, which was directed to Mr Elder—

"Dear Jim,

I thought you would like to hear my good news story. Last month my father became"—

An Opposition member: You made them up.

Mr W. K. GOSS: They do not like it, do they? They do not like to hear cases of people who have been well cared for.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Members opposite can come and inspect every one of those letters if they suggest that they are not genuine.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Crows nest is on his last warning. I have been extremely tolerant. I warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I will continue reading from the letter—

"Last month my father became critically ill with a perforated ulcer. He is"—
so many—

"years of age and has a very high level spinal injury from a farm accident some eight years ago. The injury means he cannot walk or use his arms.

On Monday night he was rushed to the PA Hospital as a medical emergency. Within two and a half hours he was operated on. The operation was considered high risk in terms of his age and disability and he had to be ventilated to operate. As I understand it, he transferred to the PA because he needed access to its intensive care facilities. After 10 days in hospital and only one day in intensive care, Dad went home and continued his recovery."

This is the part I emphasise—

"What I wanted to tell you about was the fact that the public hospital system was able to respond to meet my father's needs in his dire condition. Also, the reality was that no private hospital was equipped to meet the care that he needed. Finally, and most importantly, the staff in the emergency area, intensive care unit and the surgical ward were universally superb—in our experience, professional, caring and flexible."

I have letters about the QE II and Logan Hospitals.

Government members: More, more!

Mr W. K. GOSS: In conclusion, if the Opposition want more, they should just say so. They do not want any more.

Health Spending

Mr BUDD: I refer the Minister for Health to the fact that before this Government was elected in 1989, the State's spending on health was 28 per cent lower than the national average. Now that our spending is at 89 per cent of the national average, members of the Opposition often refer to 1989 and say, "We had the best and most efficient health system in the country." I ask: can the Minister reconcile this claim with our poor national rating at the time?

Mr ELDER: I think that the Opposition have confused "best" and "most efficient" with "cheapest". They often quote EPAC. They are always quoting the EPAC report, praising Queensland's health system in 1989 as the most efficient in Australia.

Mr Connor: What about Bob Hawke? What did he say about the health system?

Mr ELDER: The EPAC report, Bob Hawke—I will call it a mythical report, and for good reason. Members opposite like quoting it as they travel around Queensland. They like quoting it on talk-back radio. Every time that the member for Toowoomba South gets into a

difficult spot, he goes for EPAC. He says that EPAC says that we had the most efficient system. It was the cheapest, not the most efficient.

The report, "Efficiency of State's Spending", was not written by EPAC. The honourable member knew that. It was written by the Institute of Public Affairs. The old Right Wing think-tank was behind that particular document. In fact, EPAC—and the members opposite know it but they never quote it, stated—

"This office is releasing these papers with the proviso that the views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to EPAC."

Mr Beattie: Fraud.

Mr ELDER: It is fraudulent and dishonest, but they are quite prepared to continue the lie. The report continued—

"It should be noted that many members of the Economic Planning Advisory Council do not share elements of judgments involved in the paper prepared by the Institute of Public Affairs."

So much for this false claim that praised the Queensland health system in 1989. Why would they? Why would EPAC want to praise it? At that time, all the services were concentrated in the south-east corner. There were no services in the bush. They were forgetting services in the bush. At election time they used to roll out a 40-bed hospital and leave it to wilt and wither on the vine. One can see evidence of that as one travels around the regions. The services that we take for granted were not provided in 1989. The new technology-driven services, such as CT scanners and MRIs were never part of the health system in 1980. So why would EPAC want to endorse the system?

Opposition members speak about efficiencies. Of course there were efficiencies; they were based on a low ratio of doctors to patients. It had nothing to do with patient care; however, it had everything to do with efficiencies because there were few doctors in the system in those good old days of 1989 that they speak about. It is just a mirage and, as with all mirages, the closer one gets to it the more it recedes.

Honourable members can consider what people were saying about the health system in 1989. It was not all that flash. In fact, consider what Dr Mileham Hayes had to say. Honourable member will remember Dr Mileham Hayes, Dr Jazz, that well-known

National Party candidate. He was certainly no stooge of the Labor Party. In 1989, what was his criticism? He said that there was something very wrong with the health system and the department and no-one in Government wanted to do anything about it. He knew, as everyone knew, that members opposite had run the system down over 32 years; yet they trump up an EPAC report and state that it is an endorsement. EPAC ran away at 100 miles an hour. Members of the Opposition should face the facts. At that stage, they had a moribund health system. The moribund management system had been around since the 1930s, but they were not prepared to change it. Now, they want to go back to it. The only policy they have is to go back to that system.

I have seen policy initiatives from the Opposition in relation to nurses. Yesterday, a number of initiatives were announced by the shadow Minister. He said that he would introduce a graduate nursing program based on clinical mentoring—

Mr Purcell: Done that!

Mr ELDER: He said that that would allow initial comprehensive training by senior nurses prior to the extensive six-months training period.

Government members: Done that!

Mr ELDER: He said that the budget would allow levels 1 and 2 nurses to train in processes to facilitate training of younger nurses.

Government members: Done that!

Mr ELDER: He also proposed the introduction of a nurse locum service for rural nurses to provide relief in remote areas.

Government members: Done that!

Mr ELDER: He also said that they would receive higher procedural training so that nurses can acquire the skills necessary for certain clinical practice in remote areas.

Government members: Done that!

Mr ELDER: And there is more. He said that they would introduce specialist nursing in hospitals for intensive care and renal care.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, are you allowed to rule on tedious repetition?

Mr ELDER: It is a tedious policy from the Opposition. Another of the Opposition's initiatives is a special package for rural and remote nurses to ensure security and improved standards of accommodation.

Government members: Done that!

Mr ELDER: This Government has done that. In conclusion, let me say that I thank the Opposition for its total support for and endorsement of Government policy.

Bird Breeders' Licences

Mr SLACK: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage to her acknowledgment that the current fee for specialist recreational bird licences is \$150 and that the full cost recovery fee will be \$820, and I ask: how could the Minister deny that she, her director-general and Mr Rolfe of her department knew nothing of any proposal to raise this fee to over \$820 when her own departmental officer had advised her at a ministerial Wildlife Trade and Keeping Advisory Committee meeting on 6 April that Treasury was demanding full cost recovery and that \$825 or \$826 was to be the fee and when other officers of the Minister's department have since acknowledged publicly the proposed fee rise?

Ms ROBSON: There has been a lot of speculation in the community about statements that are purported to have been made by officers of the Department of Environment and Heritage concerning the deliberations over fee structures. The only thing that the member has got right is that in calculating the level of fees that we are considering for these permits, we are applying the guidelines set down under the Public Finance Standards on a cost-recovery basis. The current deliberations are about how that will be achieved.

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order. I find the remark that that is only thing that I have got right offensive, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Ms ROBSON: The member is getting very touchy. I am giving members the facts of the matter, not the speculation that Opposition members have picked up and run with. They have been misquoting people all over the place. I am giving members an outline of how we are calculating the fees.

The reality is that currently we are considering those fees under the Nature Conservation Act. Some of them have been approved and others, such as full cost recovery by 1997-98, have not. That is what it is all geared for. Opposition members are also saying that people who keep a budgie in a cage will have to obtain a permit to do so. I am receiving this information from the

newspapers circulated in the regions that Opposition members represent and from copies of media statements that Opposition members are releasing. I want to make it quite clear that those statements are not true.

If the Opposition spokesman read the Nature Conservation Act, he would find that it states quite clearly which birds people will or will not be charged fees to keep. Schedule 11 sets out the range of birds that may be kept and used by aviculturists and the cost that applies to licences for those birds, which is \$30 a year. The Schedule states also that that range does not include Major Mitchell cockatoos. Schedule 12 sets out the range of birds that are classified as restricted wildlife. Because of their wildlife status, those birds are likely to be threatened by widespread trade and keeping, and we therefore require a licence fee, which costs about \$150 a year. All of those fees are set out. Why does the member not read the Act and the Schedules attached to it? Why does he not get it right?

World Heritage Sites

Mr PURCELL: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage to claims by the Conservation Council that the Government has only partially implemented its commitment to cooperate with the Commonwealth to identify, evaluate and nominate sites of World Heritage value within Queensland, and I ask: can the Minister outline the Government's record in protecting World Heritage values?

Ms ROBSON: I would be delighted to do that, because I am very proud of Queensland's record. Of course, as the Premier pointed out earlier, Queensland certainly would not have that record had the former National Party Government stayed in power.

Queensland has a wonderful record. In fact, Queensland has five out of the 11 sites in Australia registered under the World Heritage Convention. They are located throughout Queensland, and I think that we can be pretty proud of that. Those sites are the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics, Fraser Island and Riversleigh. Currently, another site in the Scenic Rim has been nominated and is being considered.

As I said, half of those World Heritage Convention registered sites are located in Queensland. Over the last five and a half years, Queensland has made very clear its intention to preserve and promote those World Heritage areas and, obviously, it is very proud of them. As the Premier said, the National

Party tried to block World Heritage listing, and it went to a great deal of trouble to do that. It took the Federal Government to the High Court and it wasted taxpayers' money on trips to Brazil. At a time when the Daintree was proposed for World Heritage listing, the National Party Government pushed a road through it. One of the most shameful acts that that Government committed was to allow that road to go through. The National Party Government also sold off blocks in that area for freeholding. This Government now has to buy them back. We have to spend millions of dollars of taxpayers' money to undo the rotten things that the National Party Government did to that World Heritage area when it was in control of this State. It is a disgrace!

The management plan for Fraser Island is well under way and it is well funded.

Mr Hamill: Why would they want to log Fraser Island?

Ms ROBSON: Indeed, why would the members opposite want to log Fraser Island? Why would they want to log the Wet Tropics area—an area whose significance is recognised worldwide?

Mr Elder: The candidate up there still does, doesn't he?

Ms ROBSON: Absolutely. All of the Opposition members would like to do it and, given half the chance, they would be back in there trying to reverse the World Heritage listings. But I have news for them; they will have the population of Australia and the world on their backs if they try to reverse any of the World Heritage listings.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Ms ROBSON: He probably wants to log the Great Barrier Reef as well.

A 25-year strategic plan is in place for the preservation and care of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Wet Tropics budget for the 1995-96 year is a testament to the commitment of this Government to the management of that area. That budget for this year, from the State and the Commonwealth, is \$13m.

Police Numbers

Mr COOPER: I ask the Minister for Police: will he explain why, after spending a total of \$984.47m on the Police Service between 1 July 1993 and 30 June 1995, the Police Service—according to figures that he has provided—actually lost 57 officers and the total sworn strength dropped from 6,377 to 6,320? Those are the Minister's own figures.

Even on the basis of his own self-serving claim that 89.5 per cent of all police are operational, will the Minister admit that in those two years the number of so-called operational police actually fell by 50 from 5,707 to 5,657? Again, that is according to his own figures.

Mr BRADY: One of the problems that the Opposition has is the enormous inability of a conservative group of people to come to terms with the fact that, in 32 successive years in Government, it left the Police Service in a dreadful condition so that when Labor came to Government it had to prosecute senior police and send them to prison. The Labor Government had to reform the service and, for the first time, pay police proper wages. It had to recruit young people to the Police Service and train them. Opposition members have a real problem in that after 32 years—

Mr Elliott interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I warn the member for Cunningham under Standing Order 123A.

Mr BRADY: After 32 successive years in Government, in terms of policing Opposition members were seen to be absolute failures. They know and the people of Queensland know that when we talk about the fact that there are now over 1,500 more operational police than there were in 1989—they are not my figures; they are figures supplied to me by the Queensland Police Service—that massive increases occurred in police numbers, particularly between 1989 and 1992.

For a short period, police were retiring in such low numbers that we actually had more police in the service than the Government had budgeted for. Although that was a vote of confidence in the Queensland Police Service, it did have the effect of not allowing us to spend money on technology and resources for which we had budgeted. Over six years, we have increased police numbers operationally by 1,500 officers. There will be another 500 between 1995 and 1998 to bring us up to 2,000 more operational police. That will be an average increase of 220 operational police for every year over nine years. We will adopt the Police Service's recommendation to expand police numbers for another seven years. So for 16 years in a row, if Labor Governments continue in this State, we will have an average increase of 220 operational police every year for 16 years, unlike the disgraceful situation that applied under the former Government.

Criminal Justice Commission

Mr BEATTIE: I ask the Attorney-General: is he aware that the member for

Indooroopilly has accused him of misquoting him regarding the CJC? Is the Attorney-General aware that the member said that the Attorney-General quoted "not from something I have said"? Is the Attorney-General aware that the member has called on him to apologise? Will the Attorney-General apologise and, if not, will he advise the House of other attacks by the Opposition on the CJC?

Mr WELLS: The other day, I told the House that the honourable member said these words—

". . . after all the Fitzgerald inquiry recommended the abolition of the Special Branch. Now there is very little difference I contest between having a Special Branch and a CJC."

To that statement, on a point of order, the honourable member for Indooroopilly said, "I never uttered such words at all." Subsequently, the honourable member has said that I was quoting "not from something I have said". However, he did say it. He said it on the *7.30 Report* on 4 August 1983.

Mr Connor: '83—that's 12 years ago.

Mr WELLS: He said that in 1993; it is just that his ideas were fixated in 1983. The honourable member was talking about the Fitzgerald inquiry, and he said—

". . . after all it (Fitzgerald Inquiry) recommended the abolition of the Special Branch. Now there's very little difference, I contest, when we get into this, between having the Special Branch and the CJC starting to investigate people like this. Of course we know what's happening in the United States with Hoover and the FBI there, having investigated people."

As Arts Minister, I have an interest in old footage. Occasionally, I put on a showing of some old footage. If honourable members would like to see the member for Indooroopilly saying those words that I just read out to the House—the words about which he says, "I never uttered such words at all"—they should tune in to Channel 4 at 11.20 a.m. today, and I will arrange, as Arts Minister, a special screening of a celluloid. In the comfort of their own rooms, honourable members can see the honourable member saying the very words about which he said, "I never uttered such words at all." However, the honourable member need not worry; he is not the only one whose attitude to the CJC is different from the recent pronouncements of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr BEANLAND: I rise to a point of order. This man was campaigning in north Queensland yesterday and was not here in question time. I take personal offence at those statements. My support for the CJC has always been the same.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr WELLS: I urge the honourable member for Indooroopilly to watch Channel 4 at 11.20 a.m. There will be no advertisements, and admission will be free.

The honourable member is not alone in attacking the CJC. I am now referring to an article in the *Gold Coast Weekend Bulletin* of 27 and 28 May headed "CJC watchdog MP quits to 'speak freely'", which states—

"The Criminal Justice Commission should be wound up and replaced by an upper house of Parliament, says the former deputy chairman of the corruption-fighter's watchdog.

. . .

He said there should be a sunset clause and suggested the \$22 million annual funding might be better spent re-establishing a house of review."

That member of the Opposition wants to get rid of the CJC. As much as the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Attorney-General might protest that they do not, there is at least one member of the Opposition who is prepared to stand up and say, "Yes, we want to get rid of it", and that is Mr Neil Turner, the honourable member for Nicklin. That honourable member, who is perfectly frank and reasonable by nature and is consequently prepared to own up to the fact that this is his policy, constitutes an exception to the rule which the Leader of the Opposition has enunciated, that is, that the National Party supports the CJC.

Mr Turner: I don't resile from anything I said.

Mr WELLS: I note that the honourable member does not resile from what he said.

There is an escape clause in what the Leader of the Opposition has said. A future coalition Government would have a review by eminent persons. That is the sunset clause to which Mr Turner referred. A coalition Government would get rid of the CJC. If the sorry day comes when members opposite get into Government, they would not want the best check on Executive corruption that could possibly be entertained.

Police Service

Mr LINGARD: I ask the Minister for Police: is he aware that latest available figures show that the national police to population ratio is one officer to 445 people, compared with the current estimated ratio in Queensland of one officer to 520 people, and that to achieve the national average Queensland would now need an extra 1,000 to 1,100 officers?

Mr BRADY: One of the things that I have learned since I came into this place on 16 February 1989 is never, ever take the basic figures quoted by members of the National or Liberal Parties.

Mr Cooper: Your figures—they're straight out of the Estimates.

Mr BRADY: Occasionally, honourable members opposite might get them right, but I always know that I will have to check the basic figures before I accept anything.

One of the things that we do as a Government is this: we set out to make the Police Service not only the most corruption-free but also the most efficient Police Service in the country. We have concentrated on and achieved great success in lifting not only police numbers but also civilian numbers in the Police Service. We have lifted operational police numbers from a disgraceful level of only 78 per cent under the National Party to 89.5 per cent or 90 per cent. That really is what the Government is about.

Mr Cooper: You attacked the CJC; you criticised them mercilessly.

Mr BRADY: Yes, I have criticised the CJC in relation to this matter, and I will do so again. What it has said in relation to this matter is wrong.

I am also on record as saying, only a matter of days ago, that I believe that the CJC should get a very good mark for its monitoring of the Police Service and its cooperation in relation to organised crime. When CJC officers devise a definition of "direct service delivery" which says that not one commissioned officer in the Queensland Police Service is engaged in direct service delivery, they make fools out of themselves. That is a silly definition. To say that the head of the Drug Squad or the Property Crime Squad is not engaged in operational policing is absolutely silly, and I make no apology for saying so. To say that every single commissioned officer in the Queensland Police Service is not operational is silly and wrong, and they will have to do better with their definitions. We have lifted operational police numbers. The Government

is about getting extra police and making sure that those extra police are working as police, and that is what it will continue to do.

QGAP Offices, St George and Cunnamulla

Mr BENNETT: I refer the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Rural Communities to statements by the member for Warrego that the Government was expecting great accolades for the opening of QGAP offices in St George and Cunnamulla, and the further claims by the member that these offices merely replace services which were closed down in March. I ask: can the Minister advise whether this is correct?

Mr MACKENROTH: The member for Warrego released a statement claiming that we had closed down some services in March and that the establishment of QGAP offices merely replaced those services. I asked the Office of Rural Communities whether that claim was true. I was advised that it was not correct. I asked the office to ensure that the information it was providing to me was absolutely correct. The office phoned the clerk of the court at St George. The clerk of the court advised that he has no idea what Mr Howard Hobbs is talking about. The clerk of the court said that he took up that position in St George six months ago and is providing exactly the same services today as he did when he arrived. I asked the office to check also with Cunnamulla. The clerk of the court's office in Cunnamulla advised that there had been no reduction in services from the courthouse at Cunnamulla.

Mr HOBBS: I rise to a point of order. The Minister released a statement at that time that those services were being closed down. The Minister knows that.

Mr MACKENROTH: I have read the member's statement very closely. It claimed that we had closed those services down in March and that we were simply replacing them. That is untrue. The statement went on to say that the Government expects great accolades for doing these sorts of things. It is not a case of expecting great accolades. Rather, we are trying to provide services to people in rural Queensland. When we undertake such measures in the electorate of the member for Warrego, all he wants to do is knock us.

The member claimed that the Government expects great accolades for undertaking this measure. As reluctant as I am

to use members of the Opposition to support my arguments, I want to quote from two letters that I have received. One was from Di McCauley, the member for Callide, who had this to say on 20 June last year—

"Your recent budget announcement that QGAP offices would be increased in number in Queensland from 13 to 26 has raised the possibility that some of these very useful offices will be put in towns within the Callide Electorate . . . I feel QGAP offices would be very advantageous for the population as a whole . . ."

Those were the comments of the member for Warrego's colleague, yet he wants to knock that initiative. In a letter to my department, the Opposition Whip, Mr Springborg, had this to say—

". . . I am totally in support of the Government Agent programme."

Despite those comments of his colleagues, Mr Howard Hobbs wants to knock the provision of QGAP offices in his electorate.

Mr HOBBS: I rise to a point of order. I find those words offensive, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member finds those last words offensive.

Mr MACKENROTH: If the member finds them offensive, I will withdraw them. But let me say this: the clerk of the court at St George and the clerk of the court at Cunnamulla find it offensive that the member has claimed that they have not been working for the past two months.

Police Numbers

Mr BEANLAND: I refer the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services to the 1992-93 Police Service statistical review—a part of the Police Service annual report—which reported police/population ratios for the last time and which showed that the Queensland ratio as at 30 June 1993 was one officer to 476 people. I ask the Minister: is he aware that, to have maintained that ratio in the past two years, Queensland would have required 6,905 police now—an increase of 585 over the actual total of 6,320?

Mr BRADY: As I have made very clear on many occasions in this place and around the State, policing today is about working smarter as well as working bigger. In terms of working bigger—the raw numbers of police in this State have grown significantly under our Government, at twice the rate of population

growth. When we came to Government, Queensland had by far the smallest Police Service, the worst-paid Police Service and the worst-trained Police Service in the country. As well, Queensland was the only State to have a corrupt Police Commissioner. That was the legacy of 32 years of National/Liberal Party Governments.

This Government has decided to hire extra police and extra civilians. The true picture is that the numbers have increased proportionately. We are far better off in terms of the police/population ratio now than we were in 1989. In addition, we are better off in terms of the number of operational police, which is really what it is about. Over the past six years, the number of operational police in Queensland has improved at a rate unmatched by that of any other State, and it will continue to do so. Mr Cooper never mentions the civilians we have hired to release police officers to do operational work, because the Opposition cannot comprehend efficiency or proper administration. During their 32-year term, National and coalition Governments made a complete mess of things and left us with a corrupt and inefficient administration. This Government has changed all that, and the people of Queensland know it.

I make no apology for the fact that we will continue to hire civilians as well as police to release more and more police for operational duties. The operational police/population ratio is what the fight is really about.

National Park Estate

Mr BRISKEY: I direct a question to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. The Government gave a commitment to double the national park estate in Queensland by 4 per cent to preserve the State's biodiversity, with adequate representation of each of the 13 biogeographic regions. The Queensland Conservation Council claims that this has not been achieved. I ask: can the Minister explain the Government's achievements on acquisition of national parks?

Ms ROBSON: That is a very important question, and I thank the honourable member for asking it. We have almost totally achieved the objective that we set to double the national park estate. That objective will be reached in the very near future. To date, we have spent a total of \$41m to achieve that target. We have acquired 3.1 million hectares of national park estate since December 1989. Our national park estate has been significantly increased to 3.8 per cent of the State. The achievement of the target total of 4 per cent is

well and truly in the pipeline. Properties have been identified, negotiations are under way and we are very confident that the target will be reached in the very near future.

Queensland's national park estate is now almost 6.1 million hectares. That is a great achievement for this Government, but of greater significance is the fact that 67 per cent of Queensland's different vegetation types are now represented in the national park estate. That is what it is all about. It is not merely about acquiring large pieces of property and adding them to the national park estate; it is about achieving the biodiversity for which we have aimed. I am very proud of the record that my department and this Government have achieved in terms of reaching that representation. I suggest that that level of representation of the different vegetation types is the highest of any State in this nation. People constantly tell me that it is the envy of the other States.

Some of the highlights of our national park estate are the Diamantina Lakes, the Riversleigh fossil fields, Highland Plains, the Undarra lava tubes, Welford and Bladensburg. Those elements of our national park estate are significant in terms of their unique biodiversity. The arguments that we run into about the relevance of our national park estate need to be considered in the light of the matters that I have just outlined. There is no point in purchasing tracts of land which duplicate features of those already acquired and which do not represent any real achievements for securing vegetation types which are threatened, which may be rare or which may be endangered. That is exactly what a national park estate should be about. It should be available—and it is available through the funding that we are providing for maintenance and upgrading of national park areas—for use by the people of Queensland and Australia and overseas visitors.

We are very proud of our record in national park estate upgrading, maintenance and acquisition. The doubling of the national park estate in such a short period has been a magnificent achievement for this Government.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time for questions has now expired.

JURY BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.11 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act about juries."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Wells, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.12 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I begin by drawing the attention of the House to the fact that this Bill is complementary to the Criminal Code, which is already before the House. The Criminal Code, as it is presently drafted, contains a number of provisions relating to juries. Those provisions have been redrafted and placed in the new Jury Act. The consequence of this will be that the new Jury Act will have to come into force on the same date as the new Criminal Code comes into force. So I draw honourable members' attention to the fact that whenever we debate these Bills, they will have to, nevertheless, be proclaimed on the same day. That is simply a procedural matter. I would like to now return to the substance of the Jury Bill.

This Bill is the result of the deliberations of a number of bodies over the last few years, namely, the Nolan committee report in January 1992, the Litigation Reform Commission report in August 1993, and the reports of the Criminal Justice Commission. The Criminal Justice Commission investigated the empanelling of the juries in the Herscu trial and the Bjelke-Petersen trial. Members would know that Mr W. J. Carter, QC, delivered a 500-page report on the Bjelke-Petersen trial in which he made many recommendations to ensure that jury selection in Queensland would be free from corruption. This Bill is based on his recommendations.

Firstly, and most importantly, the Bill provides that neither the prosecution nor the defence will be able in future to engage in large-scale jury vetting, as was done in the Herscu and Bjelke-Petersen cases. The Bill provides that, after the Sheriff of the Supreme Court arranges for jurors to be called into jury service—which is done by random selection made by a computer from names on the electoral roll—the list of jurors due to be called for a particular trial can only be given to the lawyers representing the parties in the trial at

4 p.m. on the business day before the start of the trial. That is contained in clause 28 of the Bill. That clause provides that, as soon as the jury is empanelled on the day a trial begins, the list must be given back to the sheriff and the sheriff must destroy the list. This will prevent a practice which has existed—whereby jury lists are circulated amongst defence counsel and solicitors and crown prosecutors showing the make-up of juries in particular trials and the verdicts delivered by those juries—from continuing. The practice enabled counsel for the parties to try to select jurors favourable to their case.

The Bill also outlaws polling of persons summoned for jury service, endeavouring to find out their views on issues that may arise in a trial. The penalty for conducting pre-trial polling will be a maximum of two years' imprisonment. The Bill represents an endeavour to establish a fair and just system of jury selection in accordance with Mr Carter's recommendations. It has created a new right of jury challenge, whereby in a trial that involves some notoriety, the parties' representatives may approach the trial judge before the trial begins to get the judge to draw up a list of questions to be put to all members of a jury panel before the jury selection process actually begins. This will allow parties' representatives to choose those persons who are strictly impartial.

The Bill also provides in clause 48 that, after a jury has been empanelled, the judge may discharge it if the judge believes that the use of challenges by the prosecution and/or the defence has led to the formation of a jury that appears to be not impartial, for example, if parties' representatives have used challenges to exclude people from the same ethnic background as the accused.

The Bill also provides for a number of other matters that I shall now mention. Clause 59 of the Bill provides that verdicts in criminal cases will remain unanimous. The Government believes that unanimous verdicts are more likely to be publicly accepted than majority verdicts. Public confidence in the jury system could be eroded where an accused person was convicted by a majority of jurors only as it might be said that the verdict could not have been one beyond all reasonable doubt since the minority of jurors obviously entertained a reasonable doubt. It is interesting to note that, in Queensland, the figures for disagreements compared to total trials over the years 1986 to 1991 were 1.83 per cent in the Supreme Court and 2.77 per cent in the District Court. Hung juries are seen to be no great problem in this State.

Clause 42 of the Bill deals with the number of peremptory challenges each party is entitled to on the second run-through of the jury panel. In Queensland, each party is entitled to challenge any number of potential jurors on the first run-through of the jury panel as their names are called and they approach the bailiff to be sworn in as jurors. On the second run-through of the panel, the Bill provides that each party will have eight challenges only. This means that, in our system, juries are empanelled quite quickly compared to the protracted and time-wasting procedures which occur, for example, in the United States of America.

This Bill addresses deep public disquiet that came about in Queensland as a result of attempts by certain people before the Bjelke-Petersen trial to pervert the composition of the jury in that case. The full extent of the corrupt activities engaged in by those people is extensively catalogued in Mr Carter's 500-page report. That report discloses a sorry saga of attempted jury tampering which this Bill will bring to a close. Never again will we hear of the Friends of Joh, Luke Shaw, Barry O'Brien, Bob Butler and their ilk parading blatantly in the media displaying gross partiality and arrogance. This Bill protects one of the foundations of a truly democratic system of Government: the jury. I expect all members to support these necessary changes. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Beanland, adjourned.

STATUS OF CHILDREN AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.18 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Status of Children Act 1978."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Wells, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.19 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

There are two purposes to this Bill. The first purpose is to provide a more rational set of presumptions of parentage than currently exist in the Status of Children Act 1978. The second purpose is to achieve national uniformity as agreed to by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General in October 1992. The problem of establishing parentage has been a long and vexed one. The problem invariably focuses on establishing paternity—which male is the biological father of a particular child.

Presumptions are rules of evidence for the courts. They facilitate proof by allowing certain facts to be inferred when other secondary facts are established. All the presumptions, except for presumptions based on the findings of a court that are made while the parent is alive, are not conclusive; they can be rebutted by other more direct evidence. Increasingly, genetic or blood testing is used, and can conclusively disprove parentage. With the advent of this blood and genetic testing, much of the uncertainty in proving paternity has been removed. However, there remain cases where such testing is unavailable, for example, if the putative father or child is dead or where one of the parties will not consent to the testing. In those cases, the presumptions remain important.

Parentage presumptions need to be uniform to avoid forum shopping and to minimise the possibility of different courts making different findings of parentage. In addition, the Family Court is becoming the predominant court in this area, so it is especially desirable that the presumptions in States and Territories match those used by the Family Court. Tasmania has recently passed a Bill enacting the uniform presumptions. The Commonwealth intends to amend the Family Law Act 1975 shortly to make it uniform. In all other jurisdictions the matter is under consideration.

Whilst most family matters are now the province of the Family Court, Queensland courts may have to consider issues of parentage in a variety of circumstances, including: intestacy distributions and family maintenance applications where there is doubt as to who are the biological children of the deceased; maintenance applications; and applications for a declaration of parentage. Presumptions of parentage currently arise from: marriage; registrations of birth findings of courts; and acknowledgments from the parent. These presumptions are being modified slightly.

In addition there is a new presumption arising from de facto cohabitation. The de facto rule presumes that a man who cohabited with the mother of the child between 44 and 20 weeks prior to the birth is the father of the child. It is desirable to have such a presumption as many children are born of de facto relationships. The growth in the number of couples living together in de facto relationships has been one of the significant recent changes in the structure of Australian family life. Should they continue at the growth rate indicated by comparison of the last two Census years—0.8 per cent per annum—the current percentage of Queensland couples living as de facto partners will by now have reached 12 per cent—approximately 74,700 couples, almost 150,000 of the State's adult population. The presumption based on de facto cohabitation is also in keeping with the spirit of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991. While the presumption based on de facto cohabitation is new for Queensland, it currently exists in the Commonwealth, Tasmania, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

Once the uniform presumptions are enacted nationwide, all other States will also have this presumption. There is a modification to the presumption arising from registration of the birth. The Bill provides that the man and woman named as parents in the birth register of any Australian State or prescribed overseas jurisdiction will be presumed to be the parents of that child. This is an extension of the current presumption in section 8(1) of the Status of Children Act 1978 in two ways. Firstly, the presumption in section 8(1) only applies where the name of the father is entered in the register. The new presumption of paternity will apply when either the name of the father or the mother is registered as a parent of the child. This means that when the name of the mother is registered, she is presumed to be the child's parent.

Secondly, the current presumption only applies to births registered in Queensland. However, the new presumption will extend to birth registers in any Australian State or prescribed overseas jurisdictions. The definition of "prescribed overseas jurisdiction" will be tied to the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 definition. The Commonwealth has currently prescribed 49 jurisdictions—New Zealand, Austria, Papua New Guinea and Switzerland, plus 45 states of the United States of America. This change recognises the increasing mobility of Australian society and the multicultural nature of the Australian population.

The changes to the presumptions as to paternity will allow the courts to more readily determine who are the parents of a child. This Bill is an important initiative in achieving uniformity across all States and Territories in the recognition of the rights of children that derive from their parentage. For these reasons, the Government moves this Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Beanland, adjourned.

CHOICE OF LAW (LIMITATION PERIODS) BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.26 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act about limitation periods for choice of law purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Wells, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts) (11.27 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The objective of this Bill is to ensure that limitation laws are treated as matters of substantive law for the purposes of choice of law and therefore governed by the law of the cause and not that of the forum. Accordingly, when the law of another State or a Territory is applied by a Queensland court as the law governing the proceedings, the limitation laws of that place will also be applied. The result will be to curtail forum shopping. Choice of law rules are the legal rules which determine what law should be applied when a factual situation is linked to more than one legal system.

Honourable members will appreciate that each State and Territory has its own system of laws to deal with many contingencies in everyday life. Those systems of law might compete with each other in different ways. For instance, a contract may be made in Queensland but is to be performed in New South Wales; a motor accident may happen in South Australia but a car and/or a driver come from a different State; a tax may be imposed

by Queensland but the taxpayer may be situated in another State.

On 19 December 1992 the Full Bench of the High Court of Australia delivered judgment in *W. T. McKain v. R. W. Miller and Co (South Australia) Pty Ltd.* One of the questions raised by those proceedings was the appropriate characterisation, within an Australian or Australasian context, of limitation provisions for choice of law purposes. If limitation statutes are characterised as procedural then the court in which the case is prosecuted will not apply the limitation provisions of another place but will impose its own limitation provisions regardless of whether its own law governs the substantive issues between the parties. This obviously encourages forum shopping, for example by plaintiffs whose actions are out of time in one jurisdiction in favour of forums offering more generous limitation periods, as was the case in *McKain v. Miller*.

In *McKain v. Miller* the High Court, by a 4:3 majority joint judgment, held that limitation statutes should be characterised as procedural. The effect of the decision was that no single law would apply to a particular set of circumstances. The principles on which it was based were strongly criticised by the Australian Law Reform Commission in its discussion paper No. 44 of July 1990 titled "Choice of law rules". That paper stated, at page 53, that the rule that limitation periods be treated as procedural for choice of law purposes has proved to be a source of dispute and uncertainty among judges and commentators. The commission rejected the rule and canvassed alternatives.

The Australian Law Reform Commission released its final report on choice of law (No. 58) in March 1992 and in chapter 10 of that report elaborated upon some of the disadvantages of the current law. First, on a policy level, the commission considered the major objection to the classification of limitation periods as procedural to be that the purpose of the law of the place establishing the cause of action may be thwarted. So, for example, the rule could operate to bar a claim that could still be actionable in the place in which it arose. Conversely, the commission noted, it can frustrate the purpose of the jurisdiction establishing the cause of action by keeping alive claims that its Legislature would wish to be treated as stale.

If limitation periods are regarded as procedural, they are necessarily brought within the law of the jurisdiction in which the action is pursued. If that forum allows a litigant a longer time in which to bring an action there will be

significant advantage in bringing the action in that forum with the effect that the object and purpose of the law of the jurisdiction in which the cause of action arises is defeated. Not surprisingly, the commission recommended that limitation periods should be treated as matters of substance.

At the July 1992 meeting of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, Ministers asked the Special Committee of Solicitors-General to report on what action should be taken to resolve the difficulties created by the High Court's decision in *McKain v. Miller*. In that report, the special committee unanimously recommended adoption of the Australian Law Reform Commission's recommendations. Standing committee Ministers adopted that recommendation, and model legislation was prepared. The Bill currently before the House conforms to those model provisions.

Amendment of the Limitation of Actions Act 1974 provides that Queensland laws relating to Queensland limitation periods form part of the substantive law of this State, thus complementing the measures in the Choice of Law (Limitation Periods) Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Beanland, adjourned.

FRUIT MARKETING ORGANISATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 24 May (see p. 11873).

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (11.33 a.m.): In rising to speak very briefly to the Fruit Marketing Organisation Amendment Bill 1995, let me say that the Opposition supports the passage of this Bill. The Fruit Marketing Organisation Act of 1923 is currently under review and, of course, that review is not yet completed. So it would seem sensible to extend the terms of office of members of the former Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing, which is now known as the Queensland Fruit and Vegetable Growers, to allow for that review to be completed. Under the provisions of this Bill, the terms of office will be extended till 29 February 1996, with a further extension to 31 August 1996 if required. It takes quite a lot of money to run an election for a new board—money which the industry does not need to expend in the short term and cannot afford at this point.

The Bill also makes provision for the dissolution of the Pineapple Sectional Group

Committee, which has been considering its status for some time. It desires to become a subcommittee of the Other Fruits Sectional Group. Since the Cannery Board was converted to Golden Circle Pty Ltd under corporations law in 1991, the Pineapple Sectional Group Committee has been bearing more than its share of costs in the running of the Queensland Fruit and Vegetable Growers. It is a bit unfair that that group should have to spend more than its fair share, particularly since Golden Circle Pty Ltd is now taking a much wider role in industry matters. The Opposition supports the Bill.

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (11.35 a.m.), in reply: On behalf of the Minister for Primary Industries, I thank the Opposition for its support.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.
Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, by leave, read a third time.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AMENDMENT (RAIL) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 24 May (see p. 11880).

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory) (11.37 a.m.): As honourable members opposite would no doubt be aware, the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill is part of the Transport Planning and Coordination Bill that was brought into this House in 1994. While the Opposition does support the structure of this piece of legislation, I want to make reference to a couple of issues of which I believe the Government, Queensland Rail and the Department of Transport should take notice, and I urge a bit of caution on their part in relation to these issues.

As of 1 July this year, Queensland Rail will be corporatised. We recognise that that is a formality, as it was mentioned during the Estimates Committee hearings, when Opposition members were limited in the number of questions they could ask. A lot of people tend to think that Queensland Rail is no longer part of the Government-owned operations of this State. It has been a Government-owned corporation, and that

issue is addressed by this piece of legislation. I believe that we have to be accountable and open about the management of Queensland Rail. Whether it be under the board of Queensland Rail or under the direction of the Minister for Transport, the public of this State are entitled to know all about the accounts of the department. For the benefit of the people of Queensland as a whole, there should be full and open access to what is going on within Queensland Rail.

As I have said before and will continue to say, Queensland Rail is sacred to the people of Queensland; it is something of which the people of Queensland have been fiercely proud for over 128 years. We must bear in mind that Queensland Rail was initiated as an essential service to the production and welfare benefits of this State. When Queensland Rail was first instigated all those years ago, it was for one prime reason, namely, to carry the goods that were produced in the coastal and inland regions of this State for the economic wellbeing and progression of the State. I urge caution with the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Hilmer report, including the corporatisation of Queensland Rail and Government-owned corporations. Yesterday, Opposition members received a briefing from departmental officers, which I appreciated. I thank the Minister for that.

I trust that this is not the platform for a national takeover of Queensland Rail. I have said to the former Minister, the Honourable David Hamill, and the current Minister, Mr Ken Hayward, that Queensland Rail is sacred to the people of Queensland. The Opposition will fight for the full retention of its operations forever and a day. When some of the Hilmer recommendations have been implemented through this legislation, and in view of the COAG conference which was attended by the Premier, other State Premiers and the Prime Minister and at which the Premier gave consent for this, I believe that we will have to be very cautious about some parts of this legislation.

As to mineral lines and the mineral section of Queensland Rail—I see from this legislation that a moratorium has been placed on mineral lines for five years. In every business operation, there are always the cream jobs and the sour-milk jobs. Whatever one does in life, one has to take the good with the bad. While I am on that subject, I point out that we do not want to see the good, profitable sections of Queensland Rail sold off at a later date to private enterprise. That is exactly what could happen under this legislation because of the third-party access

provision. I have reservations about third-party access, and I will be extremely interested to see how it is implemented and how the process will be carried out. First of all, that structure must be established with a great deal of understanding of the ramifications of this legislation for the productivity of Queensland Rail, both in the interim and in the long term, and for the future of the people of Queensland. It is important that QR be retained in its present form—a form of which we can be proud.

I can assure honourable members that I am proud of the achievements of Queensland Rail. Over a period, there has been much criticism of Queensland Rail. Former Governments have been criticised and ostracised for some of their endeavours and the changes that they made. Since 1989 under the Goss Labor Government, considerable changes have been made, especially in the work force, maintenance and the concept of two-up drivers. They are all contentious issues in relation to safety within QR. Over the past 12 months, derailments have cost Queensland Rail \$25m. The windback in maintenance was a contributing factor in those derailments and a whole series of problems that have beset QR. To put it bluntly, the guts of the issue has not been recognised. The people at the coalface, the people who make QR work, have not been given fair recognition for their endeavours. Maintenance crews have been cut back.

The use of two-up drivers will result in safety problems, especially as many of those drivers are placed on stand-by eight hours before a shift. This is especially dangerous for the drivers on the coal lines where the engines are pulling up to 100 wagons. As honourable members are aware, those trains are fairly big trains. Those drivers might be on stand-by for eight hours and be notified five minutes before they are due to work a 12-hour shift. Consequently, some of those people could be away from home for up to 20 hours. No provision is made for sleep during that time. That detracts not only from safety but also contributes to the stress to which many of the men who work in those positions are subjected. Opposition members, particularly me, are very concerned about those issues and we want them to be addressed.

I have referred to the derailments. A lot of blame has been placed on buckling of lines and other issues relative to the line infrastructure. However, I have spoken to engineers from Queensland Rail, and there is no doubt in the world that 85 per cent of the problem relates to a lack of maintenance. The

people who work on those lines cannot be blamed, because they do not have the resources that they need. That is the whole problem. If people do not have the resources, it is pretty hard for them to carry out the work.

I have referred to the two-up driver concept and the problem of long shifts. In some of the western areas of the State, the drivers and driver assistants, or DAs, are having to relocate. That has been very disruptive not only to Queensland Rail and the running of QR in some of the regional areas but also to the drivers' families and the social fabric that we are trying to preserve in rural areas. We must ensure that QR staff are retained in rural areas. They are having to relocate at great cost. The Minister said that they will be looked after. I will be making sure that the Minister does look after those people, because they are the important people behind the functioning of QR.

For the benefit of honourable members, I will give the House an example. In Alpha in my electorate—and this is also applies to Cloncurry, Hughenden and other country centres—people have been employees of QR for many years. Those people now have to sell the homes for which they worked so hard over a period of 15 years or 20 years. As honourable members are aware, the value of homes in those areas is not as high as it is in Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns and Toowoomba. Just when those people thought that they owned their homes and would not have to worry about their retirement years, they found that they might have to relocate and outlay tremendous amounts of money to replace that asset. That could set them back 20 years. That is unfortunate, and I have referred the matter to the Minister. I hope that the Minister and Queensland Rail show compassion to those people when it comes time for them to relocate, if relocation is necessary.

I note that in this year's State Budget there is no reference to capital expenditure on lines such as Emerald-Longreach, Winton-Hughenden or Blackall-Jericho-Yaraka. No capital expenditure has been allocated for the line from Charleville to Quilpie or from Charleville to Cunnamulla. Those are the main arteries of the Queensland Rail network. A couple of years ago, we fought very hard to ensure that those lines would not be closed. No money is to be spent on them in 1995-96, and that is of great concern. Those lines are big-volume carriers of cattle from the west. They are volume carriers of wool from the west and they supply the west with essential items of freight. If the service is to be wound down

because the infrastructure has been downgraded owing to lack of finance, we will once again find that road transport will be taking over the role of Queensland Rail. I do not want that to happen, and I believe that the people of Queensland do not want that to happen.

I urge members of the Government to act responsibly and to ensure that the necessary money is allocated for the upgrading of rail infrastructure so that the Queensland railway network is productive, safe and the pride of the people who work within it. At the moment, the morale in Queensland Rail is at an all-time low. It might be said that I am trying to create hysteria—

Mr Santoro: No way. Nobody is saying that.

Mr JOHNSON: I thank my colleague the member for Clayfield, who understands the circumstances fully. This morning, I spent a couple of hours in the electorate of the member for Clayfield. He pointed out to me exactly what has happened under this Government in relation to the closure of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line. That line runs through a densely populated residential area. We should be trying to encourage people to use the rail network not only in rural areas but also in the heart of metropolitan Brisbane.

When I refer to the Brisbane network, I am still referring to volume carriers, but this time the volume of traffic is human beings. We want to encourage people to use the network. This morning, as I travelled around with Mr Santoro, I lost count of the number of cars we observed with just one person in them. We have to re-educate people and make sure that they use the QR network again.

Recently, the executive director of QR said that the marketing processes that have been put in place over the last couple of years to sell the rail network, the operations of Q-Link and other facets of QR have been working very well. I do not disagree with that. However, I say that, if we do not upgrade the infrastructure, we cannot have a business operation. That is exactly what is happening with QR. If operators of the road transport industry allowed their trucks to run on baldy tyres and busted shackles, they would be a liability to the others who use the Queensland road network. In the same way, the rail lines are a liability to the patrons of Queensland Rail who want to utilise that facility but who are not game because the infrastructure is in such a poor state. As my colleague the member for Archerfield understands full well, when I say "such a poor state", I refer to that great train,

the Spirit of the Outback, which runs to Longreach. It now takes eight hours to traverse the section of the line between Emerald and Longreach—a distance of 400 kilometres. Unfortunately, sometimes that train slows down to walking pace because of the speed restrictions on that line. A lot of those speed restrictions have not been lifted since April 1990, after the great floods in the west.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: I am sorry to say to the Honourable Minister for Administrative Services that that is not the point. The passengers get a good view all right; it is a great service and I congratulate the Government on the implementation of that service. At the same time, I do not congratulate anyone on the type of infrastructure that that service has to run on. One only has to ask the running men in Queensland Rail; they will say that they would not like to be passengers on the QR network because they see at first-hand the inferior type of track that the trains have to run on.

We have witnessed the Koumala coal derailment. In answer to a question by me in this House, the Minister said that that derailment cost Queensland Rail some \$12m in lost revenue earnings and damage to infrastructure. I find that very hard to believe because every day 10 coal trains carrying \$400,000 payloads use that line. Over a period of 10 days, that is \$40m lost in revenue straightaway. Also, that derailment was costing some of those ships that were docked at Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay in excess of \$20,000 a day. There was also a loss to the mining companies and other related industries and businesses in between. That is a very disturbing factor of train derailments. If that amount of \$25m that was lost through derailments by QR this year was put towards the railway network, I believe that we would have a line network that would have no speed restrictions on it whatsoever.

As I say, I have great reservations about this Bill. I do not want the cream areas of Queensland Rail inviting private enterprise operations to take control. That is the one area that I have a concern about.

Mr Comben: I thought you were a free marketer.

Mr JOHNSON: I did not hear that interjection. However, the one area of concern that I have is that one part of QR is making a very good profit, and that profit is helping us to keep the urban passenger system going in Brisbane. Nobody disputes that for one-half of one minute. We have to have that urban

system so that we can carry the people who want to travel to and from work, or who use it for recreational purposes, or for tourism. We have to take the good with the bad. I trust that the implementation of this piece of legislation will not mean that all the good will go and Queensland Rail will be left with the bad and the people of Queensland left with nothing.

As at the end of June this year, Queensland Rail had 15,500 employees. I am greatly concerned about that. I can say to the Minister that the Opposition cannot and will not tolerate the erosion of the maintenance and the workplaces of the running men and the workshop personnel of QR at the expense of a growth in the bureaucracy of Queensland Rail. I know that Queensland Rail has to have management, clerical officers and those types of people to make this organisation function. At the same time, Queensland Rail has to have the people at the grassroots. For example, a short while ago I visited the Mirani electorate, represented by Ted Malone.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: I am just pointing out a few of the facts. The point I make is that the maintenance people at Coppabella were greatly concerned that they could not get the proper machinery to do the major upgrades to the line because they would not be released from the coast for sufficiently long periods for that work to be carried out. That is of great concern to me, and I believe that it should be of great concern to everybody in this House because those lines in question create employment and create growth for all Queenslanders, not just the people who work in the QR network. They are about the ongoing production of the State and the ongoing growth of the State.

I have reservations about the competitive neutrality of this piece of legislation. As I said, the Opposition supports the concept of the legislation but, at the same time, I urge caution about the introduction of competitive neutrality and the safety accreditation system for the railways. I believe that that will be a significant factor in the changes to the structuring of the conditions for the running men, the maintenance of QR and the workshop facilities in the future. I have consulted with the unions about this matter on a regular basis, and I know that it is a matter of concern to them. One only has to talk to the men at the coalface and they will say exactly the same thing. Although the Minister is not present in the Chamber today, I know that his colleague the Minister for Administrative Services will relay those concerns to him. What

we are about here is making sure that Queensland Rail continues on a productive, progressive line, not on one that is going to be detrimental to the wellbeing of the people who work within that network and to the productivity of this State. I urge that caution.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (11.59 a.m.): I rise to participate in this debate on the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill. Although the reasons for the legislation are set out in the Explanatory Notes, for the purposes of the record, they are worth repeating. Firstly, a framework is established under the Bill to place railway industry regulatory functions, as far as is practicable, in the hands of the State as an essential prerequisite to the corporatisation of Queensland Rail. Secondly, third parties will be provided with the right to negotiate access to the railway system, consistent with the access principles in the Competition Principles Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State and the objectives of this Act. That is really the basis of the Hilmer report, which is the whole thrust of this Bill. Thirdly, there will be the introduction of a safety accreditation system, with the chief executive, Queensland Transport, responsible for the accreditation of railway managers and operators. That will not be administered by QR itself, because there needs to be the perception, and the reality, of a hands-off approach in terms of accreditation.

Fourthly, the amendments provide generic rail legislation specifying the rights, obligations and powers of any accredited railway manager or operator participating in the State's railway industry. Fifthly, the amendments provide legislation to cover matters which are of relevance to QR for either historical reasons or which create and maintain Queensland Rail as a statutory Government-owned corporation.

Finally, the Bill contains provisions relating to the future ownership and use of land currently held by Queensland Rail. As honourable members would imagine, in a number of instances that would involve complicated legal transfers. Members of the Minister's parliamentary committee, of which I am one, would be aware of that, because we discussed that issue at some length. Naturally, that provision is a key part of this legislation.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister for Transport referred in detail to the fact that the Commonwealth's draft legislation indicates that for a period of five years after the commencement of this legislation, Government coal-carrying services will be exempt from the provisions of that legislation. He stated—

"In essence, this limited exemption gives recognition to the nature of existing contracts for the transportation of coal by rail. Accordingly, the Bill currently before you includes an identical provision."

That is something that honourable members would know. The speech continued—

"The Commonwealth's draft legislation also provides that where a service is provided by significant infrastructure facilities and the State has an effective access regime of its own, then the Commonwealth's proposed national regime would not apply."

It is true that in five years' time QR will be competitive with private operators who may wish to compete with the very profitable coal lines. There is no doubt that the honourable member for Gregory was quite right about that. QR's successful operations in coal have no doubt allowed the cross-subsidy of less profitable services provided elsewhere, including the city network itself, which as we all know runs at a loss of between \$90m and \$100m per year. That is what the subsidy is. Quite a number of country services also run at a loss. If it were not for the profitable coal lines, I am sure that there would have been greater pressure in years gone by for a shrinking of the rail system.

With respect to community services obligations—we have identified the need to fund those areas which are not profitable. We all know that rail opened up this State and that rail provides important communication links which need to be supported, notwithstanding that they do not run at a profit. That is why community service obligations are so important. It will come as no surprise to the House that when pieces of legislation such as this come before the House, honourable members such as the member for Archerfield and I, who have a long association with rail and are very committed to its future, naturally go through a degree of anguish. We understand the importance of the legislation and, naturally, are supportive of it.

Although I do not perhaps go back as far as the honourable member for Archerfield, I go back some time with respect to dealings with QR. When I was the State Secretary of the Queensland Railway Station Officers Union between April 1978 and October 1981, a number of initiatives had just started in QR to bring about changes for its improved efficiency and operation. I remember the introduction of EDP, which was a system of accounting, and the introduction of CTC, which was a new train control system. Stationmasters whom I

represented experienced anxiety and suffered a deterioration in health because of the changes being introduced in QR.

Mr Johnson: Engine drivers still are.

Mr BEATTIE: I always feel sorry for drivers on the suburban network or elsewhere whenever someone commits suicide or there is a fatal accident on the railway lines. The trauma that those drivers go through is quite horrific, and I feel for them when those things happen. I have spoken to a number of drivers over the years and can relate to their difficulties.

In the late seventies and early eighties, QR—in those days the Railways Department—was not very adept at coping with change. A lot of employees experienced significant difficulties. I remember spending a lot of time with former railway union officials trying to sort through problems on behalf of members. I refer to people such as Les Turner, the president; Don McLeod, the vice president; and of course the Clough family, who were a bit of an institution in railway circles. I notice that one of the brothers is currently working in Townsville as either an assistant stationmaster or stationmaster. We grappled with the issue of change. I am happy to say that, towards the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties, QR adopted a much more professional approach. A lot of the credit for that has to go to Vince O'Rourke and his management team, who I think are first class. I am a very strong supporter of Vince O'Rourke because I think he is a first-class public official who has done a darned good job in changing that mind-set and enabling change to take place in a sensitive way so that employees are not put through the sort of anguish that they have experienced in the past.

In looking at pieces of legislation such as this, we have to remember that this Queensland Government has maintained its commitment to rebuilding regional infrastructure and services in the reform of Queensland Rail since 1989. I was always angered when I heard Don Lane, a former Transport Minister, tell the enormous fib that QR was running at a profit. That was simply not true. We got QR into a position of running at a profit. I am not saying that in a cheap sense; that fudging of the figures was dishonest. There had to be changes in QR to make it competitive. There are people who do not share the same passion as the honourable member for Archerfield and I do for the future of the QR. Those people were happy to let QR wander along in an unprofitable way.

When the Labor Government was elected in 1989, Queensland Rail, and particularly its regional services, faced a grim future as a publicly owned public transport operator. The operator was sustaining losses of over \$100m per year, in spite of the revenue being recouped through the coal and mineral freight business to which I referred before. Under 32 years of inertia, the rail network, except for the lines in the coalfields, became less and less competitive with road, resulting in the deterioration of QR's financial position. Queensland Rail became vulnerable to a conservative administration willing to introduce the cutbacks undertaken by Liberal and National Party Governments in other States. For example, in New South Wales, people cannot catch a train to some country areas, such as Condobolin. The train line stops at Orange, and people are put on a bus. That is what Greiner did.

The Queensland Rail reform process has been marked by organisational restructuring to enhance service delivery and by an aggressive commercial focus on the marketing of freight and passenger services. In the late seventies or early eighties, stationmasters repeatedly came to me because they were frustrated by not being able to sell and market QR in the way in which they wanted. They were hampered by the incumbent at that time. We have changed all of that. This aggressive commercial focus on marketing freight and passenger services is long overdue.

Only a few weeks ago, I travelled with some of my colleagues on the Queenslander for the first time from Brisbane to Townsville. It is a first-class service. As someone who, as I said, has a passion for rail, I not only enjoyed it but also was proud to be a member of a Parliament and a Government that saw that type of service introduced under Vince O'Rourke's administration when David Hamill was the Minister for Transport. Recently, I raised these issues with Vince O'Rourke in another place. I look forward to travelling on the historic heritage train, which is now being built in the Townsville workshops. I understand that the first of its carriages will be on the rails in about April next year. That will be a great boost for Queensland. The heritage train, which is being remodelled by Queensland workers in workshops in Townsville, will see a return to the finery of the Queensland Rail of yesteryear. It will also produce income. A similar train in South Africa is booked up two years in advance. Queensland's new train will be as successful.

These changes have been necessary. The reform process has also included

operational flexibility to review existing services, an identification of market demands and a reinvestment to enhance the capacity of Queensland Rail to capture business. I had the good fortune last year—and I have reported this to the House—to go to Vietnam with Vince O'Rourke and Graham Hartley from the Department of Transport. QR was selling technology to Vietnam. Not only has it been able to sell locomotives to Vietnam, it is now in the process of selling to the Vietnamese QR's expert knowledge of revamping railway services. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, if I had said that to the members of my union, they would have thought that I was in cuckoo land. The transition in QR has been extraordinary. The Department of Transport is trying to sell its EPIRB and lighthouse technology to the Vietnamese. That is a total change in mind-set in a very short time, which we need to acknowledge. I heard the honourable member for Gregory refer to what he alleged to be some of the present shortcomings. I recall that in the late 1970s railway workers were required to live in bondwood huts and under conditions not fit for a dog.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: The member will not stop me from reminding people of what happened under the National Party. When I was the State Secretary of the Queensland Railway Station Officers Union, I visited the fifth-class stationmaster at Bogantungan.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: I am telling the Bogantungan story because it is in the member's electorate. The stationmaster took me and the other union official with me over to meet his wife. His wife was eight months' pregnant. They lived in a house—and this was the house provided by the then Government—with no hot water. They had mowed the lawn around the house but could not mow the entire yard. The poor woman was terrified about being bitten by snakes. Would members believe that in 1978 those people lived in a house with no electricity?

Mr Ardill: Outside toilet down the back.

Mr BEATTIE: I should have mentioned that. The toilet was down the back with all the red-backs and other spiders.

Mrs Woodgate: Are you talking about Coppabella?

Mr BEATTIE: I have not come to Coppabella; that is the next story. That was the National Party legacy at Bogantungan. That is why for three years my union waged a

campaign to embarrass the National/Liberal Party Government into putting some money into railway housing. To its credit, after it was embarrassed to death by having the living conditions of those people—including the cockroaches—shown on television, the Government of the day finally put some money into railway housing. That occurred only after we took television cameras to Bogantungan and embarrassed the Government to death.

The honourable member for Kurwongbah asked about Coppabella. I can relate a story about that place. I remember visiting Coppabella and seeing the substandard accommodation in which railway employees lived. An entire community had been established there, but there were no recreational facilities, there was no hot water and no electricity and they were living like dogs. Do not tell me about Coppabella! We pulled on a blue at Coppabella. The Government of the day finally provided some decent conditions there, but it was embarrassed into doing so. At no time was the former Government willing to look after those railway employees. The member for Gregory should not try to tell me that the former Government looked after railway employees. I saw what it did to railway employees!

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: The former Government did not care about those people. It treated them like dogs. Under the Electoral Act, it was necessary that employees live in one place for three months, which meant that members of railway gangs could not even vote in the electorates in which they were living. The Honourable Minister for Justice changed that provision from three months to one month so that those people could vote. That was an extraordinary state of affairs.

We should contrast those sad stories with what occurred the other day. We travelled to Townsville on the Queensland to see Goninan North Queensland release the first of its 40 electric locomotives, which will operate in north Queensland and on western lines. As members are aware, the lines to central Queensland have now been electrified. The first of those 40 locomotives came off the line the other day, and the Premier took commission of it. That is the contrast between the National Party and this Government.

Although we may have reservations about the Hilmer report—and I have to admit that I do—the professionalism of Queensland Rail in recent years leaves me confident that it will be competitive with private enterprise for the

transport of coal. Queensland Rail has five years in which to do that. I know that the senior officers are very competent people. They have a proud record of achievement in the coal area, and I am confident that in five years' time we will be competitive with private enterprise. I share the concern expressed by the member for Gregory that we do not retain only the profitable parts and hive off the unprofitable parts. The only way in which that can be achieved is by addressing the community service obligations, working out exactly where the money needs to go and making sure that we deal with it. That is exactly what this Government has done.

The claim by the member that there has been no capital expenditure on the freight network is simply incorrect. I know that we are not allowed to refer to the Budget during this debate, and I will not do so. However, in general terms, \$226m has been allocated in capital expenditure to upgrade the freight network. This includes new alignment of curved track, new bridges, steel and concrete sleepers—

Mr Johnson: Yes, but where are they?

Mr BEATTIE: The member need only get on the train in Brisbane and go to Townsville to see where the sleepers have been provided. He must get on the train and go to sleep! Talk about a daydream believer! We have upgraded wagons and locomotives and there is improved track on the range at Toowoomba. The total capital works budget for QR for 1995-96 is \$730m.

Mr Johnson: Tell me where it's going to be spent.

Mr BEATTIE: The member should come down from his ivory tower and get on a train. One cannot go anywhere without seeing the work being undertaken by QR. Massive amounts of money are being poured in as part of the rebuilding program. Substantial funding was provided in last year's Budget, and I can talk about that. An absolute fortune was expended on rebuilding in that Budget. The member should not challenge me to outline the performance of this Government. It has spent a fortune.

The main line upgrade, due for completion in 1997, will create 2,000 jobs directly and a further 4,000 jobs indirectly as the expenditure flows through the economy. The member for Gregory should listen to this. If he wants to be rude and speak to one of his colleagues, that is fine; if he wants to be educated, he should listen. It involves the acquisition of 40, 114-tonne diesel-electric

locomotives, which I mentioned before. This \$110m contract was awarded to Goninans last year and was directly responsible for the establishment of the Goninan North Queensland plant in Townsville. It involves also the acquisition of 250 new container wagons of 20-tonne axle load capacity and 100 kilometre per hour capability, the elimination of the majority of timber bridges, upgrading of steel spans to accommodate a minimum of 20-tonne axle loads, and significant curve easing and grading and resleepering with 1 in 3 and 1 in 4 steel sleepers. The member for Gregory asked a question about sleepers; that is what is happening.

This upgrade will result in vast improvements on the North Coast Line. Travelling times for passenger services will be slashed from 32 to 25 hours. Travelling times for freight services will be slashed from 40 to 27 hours. That means money going back into QR. Freight trains will be able to carry 25 per cent greater tonnages given the strengthening of tracks and structures. Clearly, these operational improvements must significantly improve the competitiveness of rail services with their competitors—long-distance coach services and road-based freight operators. The member for Gregory claimed that no upgrading has occurred. That is just not true. He ought to open his eyes and have a look at what has been done.

QR's financial position has been secured in just five years, with the Goss Labor Government overseeing a turnaround from a \$133m loss in 1988-89 to a \$101m surplus in 1993-94 on a cash basis. Over five years, we turned a deficit into a surplus. We took the legacy of the National Party and turned it into a profit. We turned the mess into a profit. The member for Gregory should not criticise the current structure or performance of QR. We need this legislation to give QR a fair go, to enable it to compete and do what it has to do. I might have some reservations, but I support this legislation because it is in the interests of Queensland.

Time expired.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly) (12.19 p.m.): I rise to speak to this very important legislation. It is important because it touches upon a number of significant aspects of Queensland Rail services. I want to refer to a few of those briefly today. Firstly, I will refer to the level of services that Queensland Rail is providing. After all, that is what the rail system is there for—to provide services to the people of Queensland.

Unfortunately, I must agree with the shadow Minister, the member for Gregory, who pointed out that there has been a cutback in services over recent times. One of the unfortunate recent trademarks of QR is a lack of delivery of services. That certainly applies to the suburban rail service delivered to my constituents.

Mr Ardill interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: I can inform the member that my constituents have lost quite a number of train services.

Mr Ardill: Two.

Mr BEANLAND: We have lost far more than two. I thank the member for reminding me that I managed to have reinstated one of the services that was taken away. I will come to the specific services that have been cut in just a moment. The stations of Sherwood, Chelmer, Graceville and Taringa have suffered a cutback of peak hour services by some two-thirds. Barely a day goes by that I do not receive a telephone call from a constituent complaining about the cutback of these services. There used to be a very effective peak hour rail service at those stations. However, that has been done away with.

Government members interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: No amount of interjections or protestations from Government members can change that fact. To witness that cutback in services, members need only go to those stations and wait for the trains; they need only to listen to what the rail patrons—the few who are left—are saying. Many rail patrons have turned to alternative forms of transport, and that is one of the reasons for the significant reduction in the number of passengers using the rail service in recent times. Because the services are not being provided where they ought to be, people have turned to other forms of transport.

Many times, I have invited the Minister to my electorate so that he can see what is happening, and I have asked him to rectify the problem. Again, I invite him to my electorate so that he can rectify that problem. From time to time, the Minister's staff have visited my electorate. Fortunately, because they went with me to look at the problems, I was able to retrieve one of those rail services. However, a whole range of peak-hour services are still missing. The trains travelling through to Ipswich and Darra are now express trains, but they are not stopping at the stations I mentioned earlier; they are not providing the services that they did in the past. That means

that people have had to turn to alternative forms of transport. Government members should visit those stations and see how few passengers are catching trains. In some cases, it is fair to say that the rail patronage at those stations during peak periods has been reduced by more than 50 per cent.

Mr Ardill: That is a lie, and you know it.

Mr BEANLAND: One has only to go to those stations to see how few people are catching trains. One need only compare the number of people who used to use those services with the number who use them now.

When I go doorknocking in my electorate, I receive continual complaints about this matter. My constituents tell me that the cutback in those services is of great concern to them. I have been informed by them that, if they miss a train, they have to wait a considerable period for the next train to come along. Not only is there a long time between services, but many trains are also late. That is not necessarily the case during peak hours, but it is certainly the case during off-peak periods in the day and evening. I have been inundated with complaints about that, and I wish that I was not, because I could be spending my time on many other things.

Probably two months ago, I caught a train from one of those stations to see what it was like and to see what problems were experienced at that particular station. Lo and behold, I missed the train! A train was due at 9 o'clock, and I got to the station at around a quarter past 9. I just missed that 9 o'clock train; it was 15 minutes late. Thank goodness the next train arrived on time. But the train that was due to arrive at that station before that particular train was running 15 minutes late. Quite clearly, in many instances rail services are running late. The complaints that my constituents are making are relevant and true. No amount of protestation from members on the other side of the House will change that. There is a problem with the delivery of services, and I ask the Minister to address that problem.

Mr Mackenroth: I saw you on Channel 4.

Mr BEANLAND: I am sure that I looked very good on Channel 4 when I was talking about whistleblowers. I am happy to debate the issue of whistleblowers at any time.

I return to rail services. Stations in my electorate have seen a cutback of nearly two-thirds in the number of peak-hour services. This is a syndrome of this Labor Government, which is cutting back on the delivery of

services. People have turned to driving their motor vehicles into town. They are fed up, because now they are part of the increasing traffic flow along the major corridors of the western suburbs. The cutback in rail services is one of the reasons for that. The Government tells commuters to care for the environment and encourages them to use the public transport system. That is a good idea; I agree with that totally. However, unfortunately it does not provide those services to the public. If the services do not exist, how can people use them? Labor members know that those services do not exist. As I said, they should go out to those stations and witness the significant cutbacks. I am not surprised that there has been a reduction in rail patronage, because the trains are not stopping at the stations. There is no point in having trains go past Sherwood, Chelmer, Graceville and Taringa stations; they have to actually stop there to pick up patrons. Unfortunately, that is not happening.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: The shadow Minister is right. The Government will probably try to run a bus service to make up for the fact that it has cut back on rail services.

This Bill affects FOI applications, and what has occurred in the case of many Government instrumentalities will also occur with Queensland Rail; it will not be subject to FOI applications. I would have thought that there were enough exemption provisions within the FOI legislation without this body also being exempt from FOI applications, as I understand it will be. It is all very well to make a big song and dance about the fact that we now have FOI legislation, but if freedom of information applications cannot be lodged in relation to Government corporations, the opportunity to inquire about Queensland Rail matters will also be lost. Queensland Rail is used widely by the public, and there would obviously be a number of people wanting to make FOI applications on a range of matters concerning that body.

I also raise the matter of safety at railway stations. I was pleased that recently the Minister indicated that, after some efforts of mine, there will be some improvement in safety on at least a couple of railway stations in my electorate. I know that other members have a safety problem at railway stations in their electorates. It is unfortunate but true that people are being bashed up on stations and at other times are having to run the gauntlet. It seems that, of an afternoon, a number of bully types want to hang around railway stations to attack elderly folk getting off trains and

children coming home from school. Problems such as that are experienced not only in the night but also during the day. Therefore, it is pleasing that there will be some upgrading of security at stations, because it is long overdue. It will certainly be well received.

We need to ensure that people do feel safe when travelling on trains and other forms of public transport. It is clear that, over recent times, people have felt less than safe when travelling on the rail system. So I am pleased to hear that cameras will be fitted at stations. There has been a beef-up of security in recent times, but there is still a need for further security—whether police or private security services—not only at the stations but also on the trains. I trust that the installation of those cameras will lead to the apprehension of the vandals and graffiti artists who vandalise railway stations and adjoining areas. That form of vandalism takes place at a considerable cost; it has to be cleaned up afterwards. Perhaps the Minister might consider getting some of those people who create the graffiti to clean up the mess. Unfortunately, that rarely happens. The mess is there, it is distracting and disturbing, and it goes to create the uncertainty and fear that some people feel when they go to railway stations.

As I said at the outset, it is unfortunate that there has been a cutback in services in inner-suburban areas, and it is simply not good enough. Those trains should stop at those stations that I mentioned earlier. It is no use having trains travelling past them; they have to stop during peak hours to pick up patrons, but that is just not happening. I would like to see the return of those services so that we can encourage people to return to train travel. It is all very well for the Government to talk about the environment, but actions speak louder than words. I want to see the actions speaking for themselves. I want to see people out of their motor vehicles and back into trains, thereby reducing pollution in the city.

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank) (12.31 p.m.): I rise in support of the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill 1995. I wish to congratulate the Minister on a Bill as important as the one before the House. In particular I am impressed with its focus on the basis by which third parties will be provided with the right to negotiate access to the State's rail network.

Access to significant infrastructure is a major new element of national competition policy and, as foreshadowed in the From Strength to Strength document, the Queensland Government is providing more

open access to infrastructure facilities. Examples of this, of course, include the new Electricity Act which provides for non-discriminatory access to the electricity transmission grid, amendments to the Petroleum Act which have introduced a new regulatory framework to provide an access regime for oil and gas pipelines, and the access part of the Transport Infrastructure (Rail) Amendment Bill which also gives effect to those principles of the Competition Principles Agreement between the State and Commonwealth which relate to access to services provided by means of significant infrastructure facilities.

Upon its introduction, the access part of the Bill shall apply equally to all railway owners and people seeking access to rail transport infrastructure. Because the Commonwealth's draft competition policy reform legislation specifically excludes Government coal carrying services from its access regime for a period of five years, the rail Bill contains an identical provision in relation to the haulage of coal by Queensland Rail. This limited exemption was initiated by the Queensland Government and agreed to by the Commonwealth in recognition of existing contracts for the transportation of coal. Many existing coal carrying contracts will have expired by the year 2000, and logically the State's rail access regime should be extended to coal rail freight operations at that time. In the interim, Queensland Rail is striving to meet industry needs through its commitment to the achievement of world's best practice in coal haulage by the year 2000.

Appropriately, the provision of a head of power for the making of regulations about access acknowledges the importance of consultation with industry, rail unions, the Commonwealth and other affected parties. Not unexpectedly, the focus of consultation on rail legislation to date has been on the corporatisation of Queensland Rail. As corporatisation draws nearer, it is important that very good linkages established through the consultation process remain intact and the Government seeks additional input into the further development of principal legislation about access.

Through the making of regulations it is intended that Queensland will have a complete regime in place at about the time of the commencement of the Commonwealth provisions. This will allow the State to initiate action with the Commonwealth to ensure that the Queensland Rail access regime is deemed effective. In doing so not only will the proposed Federal regime not apply to rail in

Queensland, but also the making of regulations will provide a sound basis for further consultation prior to the enshrinement of a State regime into principal legislation.

As the Minister for Transport has indicated, it is preferable that Queensland should have its own rail access regime. This reinforces the direction taken by the Government in its introduction of a suite of transport legislation during the past two years. This suite of new transport legislation, together with the Government's Transport Policy Direction Statement and the Transport Coordination Plan, has been developed to improve the economic trade and regional development performance of Queensland and the quality of life of Queenslanders. It will ensure that transport effectiveness and efficiency is enhanced through the strategic planning and management of the State's transport resources. Clearly it is in the State's interests that access arrangements are consistent with the Government's transport strategies and implementation programs, with a State access regime further ensuring integration of the railway and other forms of transport infrastructure in Queensland.

This Bill provides me with the opportunity to highlight a particular issue that I have been pursuing since my election in 1992 with respect to rail transport infrastructure. I refer to my submission forwarded to the former Minister for Transport and the consultants engaged by the Minister to assess the need for the southern Brisbane by-pass road through my electorate. Unfortunately, I was one of the few spokespersons in my community to actually take the trouble to put alternatives to the Minister. One of those alternatives was the passenger rail link between Acacia Ridge and Greenbank. It was my view that the real alternative to the southern Brisbane by-pass road rested with investment in rail infrastructure. That would take some of the pressure off the existing road network, particularly in my electorate. I took the opportunity during that consultation process to put forward an alternative to the road, which of course was the rail line from Greenbank to Salisbury along the existing interstate rail corridor.

This suggestion has actually been the subject of some study during the 1991 South East Queensland Passenger Transport Study. In fact, it was during the course of that study that two reports were forwarded to the SEPTS study, the Beaudesert Passenger Rail Service Study in February 1991 and the SEPTS Beaudesert Corridor Study by Johnston Consulting Pty Ltd. The Beaudesert

Passenger Rail Service Study report found, among other things, that the population with the potential to be served via the New South Wales State Rail Authority corridor is greater than that via the Queensland Rail Beaudesert branch line. The 1996 and the projected 2001 populations were respectively 38,492 and 86,705 for the New South Wales SRA corridor, while the 1986 and 2001 populations for the QR Beaudesert branch line were 11,154 and 38,950 respectively.

The study found that the suburbs within Brisbane city which could be served by the State rail corridor are generally zoned residential, future urban and industrial. The industrial zone is located in Acacia Ridge and is an existing work travel destination, while the residential and future urban zones are existing and future dormitory areas for Brisbane. The Logan City suburbs serviced by the New South Wales SRA corridor are fast growing residential and rural residential suburbs, with an anticipated excellent potential for future and rapid growth. The Brisbane city suburbs, for example Acacia Ridge and Algester, within the study area are serviced by existing council bus services, but the suburbs further out, particularly those suburbs within Logan City, have only a private bus service which infrequently connects with the council buses and Citytrain via the Beenleigh line. Since this submission was written, we have seen substantial reforms in passenger bus transport for that area as a result of legislation introduced by the former Minister last year, if I remember rightly.

A high proportion of the population in the overall study area use private motor car transportation as a means to travel to work. The percentage of motor vehicle users increases with distance from the Brisbane CBD from 82.6 per cent to 92.9 per cent, based on the 1986 census statistics.

It was found that the preferred option, that is the Salisbury to Greenbank line, should directly effect only a few, if any, houses or buildings and, depending on the final alignment chosen into Jimboomba, very few commercial facilities. The preliminary estimated fixed infrastructure capital costs based on 1990 rates for the Salisbury to Greenbank link is \$51.12m, and the preliminary operating costs for the recommended option from Central to Greenbank is estimated at \$3.2m per annum based on 1990 rates. The report suggested that this rail corridor would be serviced by six railway stations at Acacia Ridge, Algester, Parkinson, Browns Plains, Boronia Heights and Greenbank.

My submission also highlighted the significant population increases that would be expected by the turn of the century in the study area. It is important to note that in 1986 the suburbs that would be serviced by such a passenger rail link had a population of some 27,636. The Beaudesert Passenger Rail Service Study predicted that the population would increase by the turn of the century to 50,755. It would appear from those figures that the population growth in the western suburbs of Logan City will continue to be more dramatic than that predicted in the Beaudesert rail study.

I also took the time to research how people in the by-pass study area currently get around the place. The 1986 ABS census information relating to the methods of travel to work highlighted the fact that about 90 to 93 per cent of the population use their motor vehicles to travel to work. That percentage is among the highest rates in south-east Queensland, indicating a real need for additional passenger transport services to that growing area south of my electorate.

The effect that the population growth would have on our existing road network was again a matter that I highlighted in my submission. Using figures from the Brisbane traffic study, the areas that were analysed as part of my submission showed that in 1986 there were some 8,910 households, but by 2006 that would increase to some 29,000 households. But the impact on the number of motor vehicles from that area showed that in 1986 there were some 15,254 motor vehicles attached to households in those areas, but by 2006 that would blow out to some 53,699.

What that demonstrates is that the area under study that I have referred to along that possible passenger rail line currently has, and will continue to have, higher than average rates of motor vehicle ownership per household than the average rate for both Brisbane City and surrounding shires. My view continues to be that even though the decision has been taken to build the southern Brisbane by-pass, that does not dilute the need for a passenger rail link to those outer southern suburbs of Brisbane and into Logan. Clearly, the population growth down there is exceeding all expectations. Even in my own electorate, suburbs such as Calamvale have more than doubled in population in the last three years that I have been the member for Sunnybank.

In last week's local newspaper residents were expressing their concerns about the growth in other areas of Calamvale, in the member for Archerfield's electorate, and that

demonstrates the significant growth. Currently, they do not have easy access to passenger rail services into the city. They have to travel to various stations along the Beenleigh line such as Runcorn, Altandi, Sunnybank and Banoon. That is increasing the pressure on park-and-ride facilities. Obviously the provision of a passenger rail link along that State Rail Authority line would take significant pressure off the rail stations that I have mentioned previously.

The other matter that is worth considering by Queensland Rail is that we are at the commencement of a real population boom down there. It would seem to me that, if we are in the process of opening up land for future residential development, that provides us with a good opportunity to impose some requirement for contributions by developers to provide for infrastructure facilities along that railway line, such as access to the rail line and provision for some form of contribution towards railway stations.

Another matter is the opening up of shopping centres along that route, ensuring that we have got some form of ease of access for shoppers who may wish to use the rail line to access these shopping centres. That provides an excellent opportunity now to put the planning in place for this passenger rail link. One of the things we have all learnt from the past is that, unless we appropriately plan for the future, then the decisions that we have to make or are forced to make by virtue of population pressures, become all that much harder.

I use the time that is available to me in this Bill to once again highlight what I believe is a need for this passenger rail line to Greenbank, eventually Jimboomba and then down to Beaudesert, as highlighted in the 1991 SEPTS study. I mention a couple of matters raised by the member for Indooroopilly in his speech. He talked about the cutback of services to inner city stations. I think the record should be made clear, particularly in relation to the new timetable that was introduced sometime ago and indeed recently revised.

The new timetable has revised services to maintain an adequate service level to the inner city stations, but importantly—when we are talking about electorates like Sunnybank along the Beenleigh line—it was done to greatly improve services to the outer areas of Brisbane running into Logan. This improvement comes by shorter journey times made possible by the express running of some trains through the inner city stations. It is all very well for the member for Indooroopilly to

have a bit of a whinge about the loss of two train services, as I understand what the member for Archerfield said by way of interjection. I am sure the member for Indooroopilly does not want to discriminate against constituents in my electorate who, by virtue of this new timetable, have improved services and faster journeys to work into the city.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: I am sure that that is precisely what he wants to do. He wants to discriminate, and his candidates in the outer areas like yours and mine ought to be made aware of that discrimination.

Mr ROBERTSON: One would think, with his frequent forays into Sunnybank, that he would have some understanding of train services, but clearly he has only done it by driving into Sunnybank, adding further to the congestion that exists along the roads. Next time, Mr Beanland should take the train, because for people like him it is free. He should remember that.

The other matter raised was the delays caused by the late running of trains. It is important to note that one of the problems that we currently face in our rail network system is that there is no reserve capacity. Therefore, when congestion and delays occur along the rail lines, they are inevitable. But it is dishonest to suggest that we are not doing anything about that. As the member for Indooroopilly well knows, the Government has addressed the neglect of the previous Government by significantly upgrading the rail service and initiating a couple of particularly important projects. The first is the expansion of the tunnel system under the city and the second is the purchase of additional rolling stock. Now, it is going to take some time to construct those tunnels, but I understand that they are nearing completion. With the additional rolling stock that has been purchased, when it comes on line—excuse the pun—I am sure that any concerns raised by the member for Indooroopilly will be solved by those two initiatives. It is important to note that it took this Government to recognise the problems and deficiencies in the passenger rail network in south-east Queensland and, importantly, we have done something about it. I support the Bill.

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore) (12.50 p.m.): I rise to speak on the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill. It is unfortunate that the Minister has been detained outside the House, because I have some questions that I would like to ask him. I would like to draw to his attention the need to

boost rail passenger services on the Sunshine Coast, particularly to the one rail stop in my electorate, namely, Yandina. Hand in hand with that, we need to be looking at marketing rail services in order to get across to people the message that rail is a great alternative. If the services are available, people should know about those services.

One issue that I know my colleague Mr Johnson will be raising later relates to page 42 of the Bill, clause 71ZZE, which refers to inquiries under the heading "Change of membership of board". I am concerned about this, because it refers to the board of inquiry not being affected by a change in its membership. My concern is that facts could be presented to a board of inquiry and, part way through that inquiry, the board members could be changed. I believe that that would be a worrying aspect for any inquiry, particularly as its inquiries relate to serious incidents. I seek the Minister's explanation on that point.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that this legislation would provide for a basis on which third parties would be provided with a right to negotiate access to the railway system consistent with those principles incorporated in the Competition Principles Agreement between the Commonwealth and the States. Obviously, those competition principles are a very important part of this legislation, but they are not enshrined in legislation—or are they? A footnote on page 15 of the Bill states—

"To aid readers, the relevant provisions of the Competition Principles Agreement are in the attachment to this Act. The attachment is not part of the Act."

My concern is that the courts could view that attachment as still providing a guide to how they make determinations. It seems incredible that there are regulations which are subject to this competition principle but they are not enshrined in legislation. Does the Government believe that the attachment, which is not part of the Bill, would have some weight in law in a court? That is of particular concern, because the Competition Principles Agreement is not yet in legislation. It is not in Queensland legislation. It is not yet through the Senate, although it may be going through the Senate today, but it is not in legislation. This raises questions, because it does have an impact upon the way that this legislation will be implemented. Whereas that section of the Bill is supposed to be an interim section which finishes after a year, that will still be a year in which we will be wondering what protection

exists for this Parliament and the people of Queensland, because there is no real clarity about the competition principles and their impact.

The very relevant question which stems from the fact that this Bill has been drafted with an appendage that refers to Commonwealth legislation that is yet to be enacted is: is that the way we are going to view the other Queensland Acts which are affected by the Competition Principles Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State? That very real question needs an answer from the Government. At least 39 Acts—and there could be over 100—are affected by the new Competition Principles Agreement, which has been hammered out by the Labor Party's mate Kevin Rudd. It is of concern when the legislation has not yet been enacted and all those Acts will be affected. This piece of legislation has a bit tacked on the end. That attachment has an impact. It refers to regulations. For members' interest, I will read from a section of that attachment. Section 6(2) states—

"The regime to be established by Commonwealth legislation is not intended to cover a service provided by means of a facility where the State or Territory Party . . ."

Basically, that attachment to the Bill definitely refers to Commonwealth legislation which has not been passed.

On page 15 of the Bill, under the heading "Regulations about access to rail transport infrastructure", clause 71F(1) states—

"For this part, a regulation may make provision about anything necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to the competition principles and objectives of this Act."

Once again, those competition principles are not enshrined in legislation.

We need to be putting this principle under greater scrutiny, because if this is the way that those 39 affected Acts will be dealt with in this House, there will not be the real scrutiny that would normally be provided by introducing a Bill on competition principles for Queensland. Talks are continuing at the Commonwealth level, but we still do not know what this Government's intention is in relation to that. Is it going to do the same thing and tack it on the back of other Bills, or is it going to come up front, put it in a piece of legislation and say to the Queensland people, "Here is the legislation. These are the impacts upon many areas, let alone transport"?

Mr Ardill: It hasn't even been passed.

Miss SIMPSON: The honourable member says that it has not been passed. No, the Commonwealth legislation has not been passed. That is a big concern, because it has been referred to in Queensland legislation.

Let the Government put it on the table. Let us see what it intends to do. According to the Senate Estimates committee last week, the Government is supposed to have undertaken surveys of the legislation that is affected. Of course, those surveys should show the impact upon transport. The Government keeps saying, "Oh no, we are not going to deregulate the taxi industry. Oh no, trust us; we are not going to do those things." What will happen if a Federal tribunal determines a matter of contravention of this agreement? Will the State Government say, "Oh no, it is in the public interest to enforce the regulation under their terms in places like Canberra"? We might find that, because those determinations are not being made under Queensland law but are subject to an agreement of the Commonwealth, the State and the Labor Party's mate Mr Rudd, people will be hung out on a limb. When they go to their State Parliament and say, "What are you going to do for us? What are you going to do to help us? They are looking to force these principles and laws down our necks, and it's going to hurt us in our business. What are you going to do about it?"—of course, this State Government is going to say, "You have to go and fight that out with a Federal body, because we have an agreement. That is not our responsibility."

Mr Johnson: You might ask Laurie Brereton about that at the same time you ask him about the cost of the sod-turning exercise at Yandina.

Miss SIMPSON: I take that point. Let us have it all on the table. Let us have it out in the open. Please do not make our regulations subject to future Commonwealth legislation, which we have not seen, and subject to any potential changes to that legislation. Let us have Queensland legislation. Let us govern our own legislation and not say, "Oh, if we don't do anything, the Commonwealth will step in." I thought that we were still supposed to have some State rights, but that would raise rather serious constitutional issues. Members opposite do not believe in Queensland; they do not believe in the State level of Government. Mr Welford and the member for Archerfield do not believe in the State level of Government, and that is the problem.

When people have a problem with some of this legislation, and the intricacies of the regulations start to hit the fan because we do not know what they are going to be, the mob opposite will say, "We don't believe in Queensland or Queenslanders or legislating in the Queensland Parliament. Even though we are elected by Queenslanders, we will flick it onto our Federal counterparts because we cannot do anything. There has been an agreement made, and we are stuck with it." That is my concern. Let us have transparency. If the Government is going to implement those principles, it should put them in Queensland legislation, in a Bill where people can see them, debate them, understand their impact and give the very necessary public feedback, which is part of the real consultation process about the real impact upon people.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr NUTTALL (Sandgate) (2.30 p.m.): This Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill continues the reform of Queensland Rail in this State. I want to take this opportunity to speak about the Queensland Rail facilities in my electorate and the tourism facilities that Queensland Rail provides throughout Queensland.

Firstly, I will focus on the Queensland Rail facilities in the electorate of Sandgate. One of the most important things that has happened in my electorate over the last couple of years has been the announcement by Queensland Rail of a new railway station, which will be on the Caboolture line. It will be located in Fitzgibbon, which is a fairly new area. The railway station will be built as part of a transit oriented development, which is a new innovation in Brisbane. The TOD will be done in conjunction with the Department of Housing, which will shortly be calling for expressions of interest to develop the site with a private developer. The site will have approximately 1,500 homes and will attract approximately 3,500 new residents to my electorate. That growth, together with the other growth that has occurred in my electorate over the last couple of years, has necessitated the need for a new railway station.

I wrote to residents in my electorate asking them to support me in my bid to get this new railway station. The residents rallied round, a number of petitions were signed and I am pleased to say that, after representations to both the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Housing, who saw it as a worthwhile project, that station will be constructed.

The North Point TAFE college, which is the second-largest TAFE college in Queensland with in excess of 2,000 students and a budget of over \$22m, is located in my electorate. Obviously, this new railway station will benefit a large proportion of the students who travel from far and wide to that TAFE college. I understand that the design of the station, which is yet to be formalised, focuses mainly on people not having to use motor vehicles to get to it. I also understand that, although provision is made for a car park, it will not be a large car park. However, whatever the design, my understanding is that the local community and I will be consulted. The provision of this new railway station will further utilise public transport and encourage people to use public transport, particularly in view of the rapid population growth in the south-east corner of the State.

In common with what happens with most other members, constituents have complained to me when their bicycles have been stolen, or their motor vehicles have been stolen or vandalised while parked at a railway station. I am pleased to say that, over the last couple of years, a couple of railway stations in my electorate, particularly the Deagon Railway Station and the Sandgate Railway Station, have been fortunate enough to be provided with bike lockers. Also, at those stations people can park their cars in the car park and the gates are locked for a certain period throughout the day. Obviously, that assists in reducing the number of cars being stolen from the car park. It also gives people the confidence to say, "I will drive my car to the station. I will leave it there and I will commute by rail." We all know that the electrification of the railway line has been in place for some time. On my understanding, most of the modern trains have been built by Queenslanders—at Walkers in Maryborough—for Queenslanders. Those rail cars provide an enormous amount of comfort. They have airconditioning, tinted windows, carpet and very comfortable seats.

The other major rail innovation in my electorate has been the upgrading of two railway stations. I believe that the Shorncliffe Railway Station still needs some work to be done to it. I am pleased that the Minister is present in the House because after the election I will be knocking on his door asking for some money to upgrade the Shorncliffe Railway Station.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr NUTTALL: There is no way in the world I will be travelling to Barcaldine to see the member.

Mr Johnson: I can assure you I will be very approachable.

Mr NUTTALL: I wish the member well in his endeavours. After the election, I will be pleased to see the current Transport Minister—I am sure that he will still be the Transport Minister—about that issue.

The upgrading of railway stations is important. If we are going to encourage people to travel on our train system, we need to make sure that facilities such as lighting, security and telephones exist at our railway stations so that people will feel comfortable about travelling on public transport.

The Sandgate area has a long history of rail travel. I am not 100 per cent sure on this, but I think that the Sandgate line was one of the first rail lines into Brisbane itself. It is ironic that, in those days, it took 30 minutes to travel by steam train from Sandgate to Brisbane; and today, the trip takes approximately 33 minutes by electric train. So over the last 100 years we have gone backwards by three minutes.

Mr Beattie: It's a more scenic ride.

Mr NUTTALL: I take that interjection from Mr Beattie. It is a more scenic ride but, obviously, these days the line carries many more thousands of commuters.

For those people who are old enough to remember, I say that Shorncliffe used to be the holiday resort of Brisbane. The historical society has a large number of photos of the beaches at Shorncliffe.

Mr Purcell: Beaches?

Mr NUTTALL: This is a true story.

Mr Robertson: My grandparents have told me about it.

Mr NUTTALL: That is right. Before we had the main roads to the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, the Shorncliffe area was a very popular beach destination and many hundreds of people used to frequent the area of Shorncliffe and Sandgate during their holidays.

Mr Ardill: Before they started dredging the river.

Mr NUTTALL: That is very true. Mr Ardill is correct. Obviously, during this century the beaches have been polluted, which is very sad. Shorncliffe is a very picturesque part of my area. It is on a peninsula, and so it is the end of the line. It still is a popular place for people to travel to on the weekends.

One of the first major bus/rail interchanges in Brisbane is located at the

Sandgate Railway Station. Last year, funding from the council and the State and Federal Governments allowed a major refurbishment of that railway station for the bus/rail interchange. As Mr Hollis, the member for Redcliffe, has indicated, every morning the Hornibrook Bus Line brings a large number of residents from his electorate over the Hornibrook Bridge into my electorate to commute to Brisbane by rail. My understanding is that in excess of 6,000 people a day use that bus/rail interchange. So one can imagine how busy that area is.

Another major benefit from the reform of Queensland Rail and the work that is being done to attract more passengers and commuters is the recently announced concessional travel on weekends for both adults and children. If my understanding is correct, the weekend fare is now half price.

Mr Ardill: Do you know that goes back to a previous Labor Government when Jack Duggan was the Minister? There used to be the weekend fare to all beaches.

Mr NUTTALL: I was unaware of that. I thank the honourable member for Archerfield for bringing that to my attention. That is a reflection of the commitment of the Labor Government in this State to encouraging people to use our public transport system.

One part of my electorate contains a large number of elderly residents and another part contains a large number of students. In particular, the concessional fare is warmly welcomed by young people who take the train into the city to go to the movies or to attend sporting events held in Brisbane. On the weekends, they are now able to take advantage of the half-price fares on Queensland Rail.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Practical assistance for families.

Mr NUTTALL: That is correct; it does help families in a large number of ways. Instead of parents having to drive their children into the city, they can now afford to send them on the train with their friends.

I refer also to the improved security on Queensland Rail. We do not have the same level of problems that southern States have in respect of crime and vandalism on trains. The security patrols on the trains enable people to feel safer when travelling at night. For example, some of the cars are closed and people are encouraged to use a few cars at either the front or the back of the train. That makes people feel safe and secure enough to be able to say, "I haven't got a problem with

travelling on our railway system." As I said, when people reach their destinations, the train stations are now better lit and there are security phones and so on. People would have to agree that Queensland Rail is a very modern service. During peak hours, the services are fairly frequent. In off-peak times, there are half-hourly services for commuters. People have a wide range of choices as to when they can travel.

The other issue that I want to touch on in particular is that of boom gates at level crossings. That is an issue about which I have received a number of representations from my constituents, in particular in relation to a level crossing at Shorncliffe in a major suburban area. I have made several representations to both the former Minister and the current Minister on this issue. I am pleased to say that the latest correspondence from the Minister's office indicates that departmental officers will again examine the traffic count at that level crossing. Importantly, as I pointed out in my correspondence, the level crossing is near one of my local primary schools. There has been a substantial increase in the number of enrolments at that school. A large number of children are now crossing the tracks at that level crossing. A maze has been installed for children to pass through when the lights are flashing. However, children being children—and, unfortunately, some adults are setting a bad example—they do not use that maze; they just go straight across. It is inevitable that there will be a fatality at that level crossing one day unless boom gates are installed. In the past 12 months or so, there has already been one accident between a motor vehicle and a train at that crossing.

I will continue with my representations to the Minister, because there are a number of concerned constituents in the Shorncliffe area. Today, I want to assure them that, as their local member, I will do everything that I possibly can to ensure that boom gates are eventually erected at that level crossing. I have received advice that boom gates are not high on the priority list of the department; but, as I indicated, the Minister has given me an undertaking to re-examine that. I encourage the Minister to have his departmental officers put in place a program of erecting boom gates at all level crossings that do not have them but warrant them. I know that there are some level crossings that do not warrant boom gates. I would encourage the Minister and his department to see whether something can be done about installing boom gates over a two or three-year program. At the moment, the funding position is such that it will take

substantially longer than that to have boom gates erected. As I said, I will be doing everything that I can for my constituents in Shorncliffe to make sure that boom gates are installed at that level crossing sooner rather than later.

I endorse the comments of the member for Brisbane Central with respect to Mr O'Rourke, the Chief Executive Officer of Queensland Rail. Before I was elected to this Chamber, I had the pleasure of knowing Mr O'Rourke through my dealings with him in my capacity as a union official. I have also come into contact with Mr O'Rourke in my role as a local member. He is a very competent administrator with a passionate belief in Queensland Rail. He is the right man to be at the helm at this time. It has not been easy to bring Queensland Rail into the twenty-first century. The process has inflicted a lot of pain and agony on members of the Queensland Rail work force. It has not been easy for them.

I am pleased to support the Bill. It is a major reform. I understand that it is the final piece of legislation in the process of the reform of Queensland Rail. The legislation will permit the corporatisation of Queensland Rail, which will see it moving into the twenty-first century as a railway system with modern ideas and technology.

Only recently, I had the opportunity and the pleasure of travelling on the Queenslander as far as Townsville with some of my colleagues. Without a doubt, it is a five-star service. The honourable member for Indooroopilly spoke of trains being 15 minutes late and so on. On that trip from Brisbane to Townsville, we pulled into the Townsville station right on time—right to the minute. Honourable members opposite should not be critical of Queensland Rail and the job that it is doing. It plays a major role.

I accept and appreciate the fact that in the south-east corner train services are subsidised by other operations of Queensland Rail. Obviously, it is a community service obligation and that subsidy is well worth while. Now that we are opening new railway tunnels through Brunswick and Roma Streets, hopefully the number of services will increase to cater for the ever-growing population in the south-east corner. I congratulate not only the Minister on this Bill but also the work force of Queensland Rail for the way in which they have grasped the nettle with respect to the vast and rapid changes happening within Queensland Rail. As I said, some of those changes have been painful. I congratulate Mr O'Rourke on his outstanding effort. I support the Bill.

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah) (2.50 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to rise to speak to the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill. It is pleasing to see the Minister back in the Chamber. I can only assume that he found that I was on the speaking list and rushed back as fast as he could so that he would not miss my contribution.

I want to start on a positive note.

Mr Hayward: Does that mean there are some negatives as well?

Mr LAMING: They are yet to come. There are always axes and orchids, and I will start with an orchid. Along with other members, I made representations for the refurbishment of railway station buildings on the near north coast. I must compliment the work that has been undertaken in that regard. The communities in that region are very pleased with that work, particularly the residents of Mooloolah, which is in my electorate. Some of the buildings on the older stations are well worth keeping in good condition. If they are not needed for railway use, perhaps they can be moved to another site and used by the community.

While visiting the Landsborough station, which is in the Caloundra electorate, I noticed that the station has an air-raid shelter at one end. It is not a very salubrious-looking building, but I presume that not many railway stations in Australia would still have an air-raid shelter attached to them. For that reason alone, perhaps it should be conserved for posterity. I undertook that tour with some members of the Sunshine Coast Commuters Association. They have expressed appreciation for the work that has been undertaken by Queensland Rail. However, the recent newsletter of that association contained a rider in the following terms—

"But please keep up your supply of Minties because, for all the beautification there are still no SERVICE improvements."

I said at the outset that my speech would contain some axes and some orchids! That group would like more services to be provided to the north coast, and I will return to that matter.

The commuters' association is seeking more rail services on the coast between Caboolture and Nambour, and it is concerned to learn of the sale of surplus rail passenger cars. The association believes that, rather than those cars being sold overseas, they should be used on that line. I understand that representatives of that group have had

meetings with some staff members of Queensland Rail. I am not sure which staff members were involved in those discussions.

Mr Hayward: I've read the newsletter as well.

Mr LAMING: I am sure that the Minister has. The people at that meeting were told that it is too expensive to provide those rail services. They were told that it would be better to increase bus services between those two locations. This represents a bit of a paradox to the members of the commuters' association and residents on the Sunshine Coast in general. As the Minister is well aware, there has been a long process of consultation with regard to changes to public transport in that region. It appears that those locations that fall outside the boundaries where improvements are hopefully soon to occur are not very high on the agenda. For people in places such as Mooloolah and Landsborough to be told by Queensland Rail to approach Queensland Transport for improved bus services certainly has a hollow ring.

I note that the member for Brisbane Central is in the Chamber. In his earlier contribution, he was critical of the Greiner Government for providing bus services where rail services should have been provided.

Mr Beattie: In country New South Wales.

Mr LAMING: I suspect that these areas would be regarded as country Queensland. The rail line infrastructure is in place, yet personnel from Queensland Rail suggest that bus services should be run to those locations.

Recently, I attended a briefing given by executives from Queensland Rail. In common with the shadow spokesman, I appreciated the officers making themselves available to conduct that briefing. Unfortunately, I could not stay for the entire briefing, but it was an interesting discussion. I raised the matter of the future possibility of allowing private enterprise take over some of the more lucrative portions of Queensland Rail operations, that is, the freight component. If the more productive and profitable sections of Queensland Rail are allowed to go to others outside the service, it leaves Queensland Rail with some of those services that are required to be subsidised. This concerns me. If Queensland Rail is left with the less profitable sections of its business, it will not be encouraged to increase those sections that provide services to people in the cities, the suburbs, the regions and country areas. This could commit future Governments, whether they be conservative or Labor—

Mr Robertson: Yes, it will.

Mr LAMING: I do not believe that it will, because we are talking about economics. Such a move would make it more difficult for a department to increase those services that have to be subsidised when it no longer has the more profitable sections of its business to allow for cross-subsidisation.

I mentioned that it has been suggested that buses be used on the north coast where rail services are not currently provided. Obviously, any bus service would utilise the existing road infrastructure. Some of the roads leading into places such as Mooloolah are not suitable for bus services, particularly large buses. The road leading into Mooloolah is a very winding road, and it would be dangerous were buses to utilise it. I believe that people would be safer travelling on Queensland Rail than they would be in buses on some of our roads. Another issue is: who would provide that service? It is unlikely that the service would be profitable. As I understand it, very few bus services in Australia—and perhaps the world—are profitable. In Queensland, many bus runs will continue to have to be subsidised. I do not see Queensland Transport rushing in to provide those services.

Another aspect is pollution. Fortunately, at this stage that is not a problem on the Sunshine Coast. However, as the population increases, it will become more of a problem, and buses would contribute to it whereas electric trains would not. The lines, the rail infrastructure and the land for the lines already exist, so the most expensive part of the equation is in position. All that is required is the extra rolling stock and the staff to operate it.

The Sunshine Coast has a rapidly increasing population in what is known as the railway towns. They were very well named many years ago because that is where most of the population on the Sunshine Coast used to live—in those towns from Beerburum to Yandina and further north. These days, many people are moving across to the coast. The Government should consider constructing a line through to the coastal area. I will return to that matter in a moment.

The Sunshine Coast Commuters Association would like an additional service to leave Roma Street on Saturdays at 6.53 p.m. and an additional service on Sunday from Nambour to meet the 4.16 p.m. service at Caboolture. The association would also like to see an extension on weekdays of the service terminating at Caboolture at 4.37 p.m. to operate to Nambour as a three-car set; that is,

splitting the train at Caboolture. Obviously, somebody in the commuters' association has done a bit of homework. I do not claim to be an expert on this subject, but I believe that the members of that association are all travellers on the train. They like travelling on the train; it is a good service. However, they would like to see it improved. The newsletter that I have here refers to the trial currently under way, and I received a letter through my electorate office about that. I hope that the trial is successful.

I turn to a matter which I have raised quite often with the Minister's predecessor, that is, the long-term planning for a service to the Sunshine Coast. The Government should look to the long term and set aside a notional route from the town of Landsborough, branching off via Corbould Park racecourse. There is a very good location at which the Bruce Highway could be crossed where there is some cutting through some high ground, which would make the line feasible from an engineering perspective. Most of the land in question is under the control of the Forest Service. The route could cross the Mooloolah River and continue on to somewhere near the Sunshine Coast university site, where it could meet up with other public transport infrastructure and even bike tracks. I am sure that the Minister would acknowledge that we should encourage the use of bike tracks. I am urging the local councils to extend the current bike tracks to the university site, which could see them meeting up with a proposed railway station and other public transport infrastructure.

When we are looking at such things for the future, we should consider rail corridors, because I understand that this is an expensive operation. I do not for one moment suggest that it is not extremely expensive to put rail infrastructure in place. However, it is an important part of the State to consider, because many people on the Sunshine Coast commute to Brisbane for work, for shopping and for all sorts of social activities. Facilities such as the new casino will attract people to Brisbane. On the other hand, there is always a lot of holiday traffic travelling north on weekends. It would be great to reduce that long-weekend traffic heading north on the Bruce Highway; it is chockers. It would be great if we could encourage those people to use north coast rail which could take them right through to, say, Mooloolaba. I am sure that there would be benefits to everybody from such a rail service: the road users, other travellers, Queensland Rail, visitors to the Sunshine Coast and the local residents.

Students can also be expected to use a north coast rail service. Not only would

students travel from the Sunshine Coast to attend tertiary institutions in Brisbane which provide courses that are unavailable on the coast but also students from the northern suburbs of Brisbane would travel north to the Sunshine Coast to take advantage of some of the very specialised courses that will be run at that tertiary facility. Because of the facility's proximity to the ocean, we are hoping and, indeed, are determined to get some very good sport-related, particularly watersport, courses at that facility.

Owners of land surrounding the proposed rail line also have to be considered. I have had discussions with some of the people who own land in the area which would be encompassed by a future rail corridor and, of course, they have some concerns. Responsible Governments should undertake long-term planning in matters such as this. They should consult with the people affected by any proposed work. They should consult with councils, other planners and surveying companies so that people know in advance that there will be either a road or rail service in their area. That allows people to make decisions as to whether they will move close to those facilities or, if they presently live in that vicinity, whether to move further away. If that had happened in the past, we might have been able to avoid some of the problems that have been experienced elsewhere.

There has been a lot of talk about the south coast corridor—and I will not bog down this debate by talking about that matter—but a lot of these problems could be avoided by long-term planning, even if that planning amounts only to some dotted lines on a refidex with a notation such as "proposed rail corridor." People place a lot of credence on that sort of thing. I can remember when the highways in the north were proposed. These sorts of problems were not experienced at that time. Even with long-term planning, sometimes the location of a corridor actually changes from one place to another, which leads to double jeopardy.

All of these concerns are valid. We should not stall on them; they should be looked at. I am not asking for this rail line in the next couple of years; I am asking this Government—and after the election I will be asking the new National Party Minister for Transport because I know that he is very interested in this—to at least make people aware of the notion of a northern corridor so that they can get some idea of what transport facilities will be around in the future. They will want to know what land is to be put aside for such infrastructure so that it cannot be

compromised and so that they will not have to be bought out and relocate somewhere else. Vision is what is needed. I believe that this sort of project is an example of the vision that is needed by Governments.

Mr SZCZERBANIK (Albert) (3.05 p.m.): I am pleased to make a contribution to this debate because, over the past 10 years, no other place in Queensland has received more rail infrastructure than my electorate. For the past six years since I have been a member of this Parliament, my electorate has seen the development of the rail corridor—at a cost of \$350m to this Government—down to Helensvale and then on to Robina. This Government has provided the rail infrastructure that is needed.

I want to refer to the history of the rail link to the Gold Coast. The National Party always talks about vision. However, when we examine the history of the old Gold Coast rail link, we find that the former National Party Government had no vision at all. All members are aware that it was a National Party Government that ripped up the rail link. It is my understanding—and all the oldies keep telling me this—that that rail link was paying its way, that is, people were using it, but it was ripped up because of some agreement that goods and services could not be shipped by rail because it was too competitive with road transport. One need only consider the fact that Woods Transport got the contract to develop the cartage to the Gold Coast to see the vision that the National Party Government had.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Rear vision.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: In his contribution, the member for Chermside discussed rail fares—a matter in which he is very interested. If he were to take his family on the train, the member for Chermside would not need a family pass; he would need a tribal pass!

The Gold Coast rail link is a 46-kilometre rail track linking Beenleigh to Robina. In that construction there will be five new stations: Ormeau, Coomera, Helensvale, Nerang and Robina. That provides services to my electorate and it allows for further growth. This Government has a vision for future transport needs. Back in 1990, Tom Burns and Terry Mackenroth took part in the SEQ 2001 project. We looked at the planning for that region. When the National Party was in Government, there was no blueprint to cater for the transport needs arising from the growth in my electorate.

Mr Santoro: The Gold Coast was developed when the National Party was in power. You know that.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: They wish!

This Government has noted the growth in that area and it is planning for that growth. We are planning for an integrated transport system so that no-one will live more than 800 metres from a bus route. Eventually, that policy will be expanded to include train stations. That way, people will not have to own two or three cars so that all members of a family can get to work in different places. We have provided Kiss & Ride—which allows a person to get dropped off at the station and then the car to be taken home—and Park & Ride facilities. This Government is looking at long-term planning for the area. The SEQ freight study and other planning studies have been put in place. Integrated transport planning studies are under way and other integrated regional transport plans are under consideration. This Government is putting the needs down on paper and it is doing something about meeting them.

One thing I am very interested in is future uses of the Gold Coast rail link. I have had discussions with the Minister about the introduction of some kind of rail fun fare. In conjunction with the Gold Coast City Council, community groups could ask QR to operate—I have yet to discuss this with the Minister—a weekend of steam trains from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. I have brought this up with Vince O'Rourke. He is in favour of it, and I know the Minister is, too. I have to go back to talk to Ray Stevens, but I know that people who are interested in railway history are interested particularly in steam trains. About a month ago, a steam train ran from Murwillumbah to Mullumbimby. Only 500 tickets were available and 7,000 people applied.

I also have to have discussions with some of the major contractors on the Gold Coast rail link about their providing some sponsorship. Perhaps profits from the sale of some kind of commemorative ticket could go to the charities on the Gold Coast, say, the Gold Coast Hospital children's ward or the Brisbane Hospital's children's ward so that people are not just taking a train ride, they are providing a community benefit. This might have the effect of bringing back the community feeling of the past now that Beenleigh represents the northern end of the new Gold Coast but, unlike the position in the past, the southern end will be linked to it. I think that would be a great project for spring time this year to bring the communities together on the rail link to have a fun day.

Passenger safety on our railways is of great interest to me, my electorate and people

on the north side and in Ipswich, Clayfield and Wynnum. This Government is addressing this issue and has acted quickly to respond to people's concerns. Members should be aware that recently a range of measures designed to enhance rail passenger security were introduced. These include: the installation of closed circuit video surveillance at selected railway stations; platform upgrades; lighting; alarm systems; motion detection systems; emergency phone links to stations; enhancing car park security through the installation of perimeter fencing and automated access controls; and increasing police and security patrol presence at stations. The Government is considering providing all those things.

Mr Santoro: Wouldn't you agree it is a pity that you need all those security measures because of the policies of the Goss Government?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: This Government is looking at security at stations. I do not think the Opposition has any policy which it can espouse, so I do not know what the member for Clayfield is talking about. The Opposition is a policy-free zone.

Queensland Rail has invested \$1m in 1994-95 to actively protect commuters on trains through the police Railway Squad, composed of 23 officers dedicated to the rail system. Additional police resources are available for specific tasks or locations. The Government is also looking at new roles for ticket inspectors, who will be specially trained and authorised to assist with the enforcement of passenger behaviour. I do not condone awful behaviour on trains; if people play up on trains, they should be kicked off, banned or prosecuted.

I asked the Minister to try to bring forward the completion of the rail link to Helensvale, because all the infrastructure is in place. I have been informed that that is not possible because of the third line electrification upgrade between Salisbury and Yeerongpilly in conjunction with the link to the port of Brisbane. My electorate is growing and going ahead quickly. In the future, \$20m will be allocated for new trains in my electorate. People in suburbs such as Clayfield should think about moving down to Helensvale, where they could get on a train and be at work in 56 minutes, instead of sitting in the traffic at Clayfield.

Mr Santoro: Is Helensvale in your seat?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: Yes, it is in my electorate. Helensvale is one of the great suburbs in my area.

Mr Santoro: If you are the representative, why would I want to go down there? Give me one good reason.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: I am talking about people coming to live in my electorate.

Mr Santoro: What an outrageous statement to make! They are happy in Clayfield.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: What a joke! People are happy with the rail link.

Some concerns have been expressed about the massive infrastructure work occurring in Helensvale and surrounding areas. When people moved to Helensvale they believed that the promises of the National Party would never be fulfilled in relation to a Gold Coast rail link. We are putting that infrastructure in place, and now people are realising that these things are happening.

I must put on record again the thanks that my community extends to the Federal Government for its Building Better Cities Program. It contributed \$56m to that program. About three years ago, Paul Keating and the Premier planted a tree in my electorate. They saw the infrastructure being put in place and were very happy with it. The people in my electorate can see the work I am doing and are very happy with that work. At the next State election they will vote me back in.

Mr SANTORO (Clayfield—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.16 p.m.): I wish to speak briefly in this debate about a most important rail infrastructure issue which is of interest to most residents of south-east Queensland and, more particularly, to many of my constituents in Clayfield. I am of course talking about the rail link to the Brisbane Airport, which I am sure all honourable members would be happy to acknowledge is long overdue and very necessary. I think it is fair to say that most honourable members would agree that it is a disgrace that we do not have a rail link to the airport and that we are one of the few capital cities in the world that does not have a rail link from the centre of the city, and from other points in the city, to the airport.

Honourable members would recall that the Minister for Transport commissioned a feasibility study into the construction of a fast rail link to Brisbane Airport. I wish to reiterate in the Parliament what I have said publicly, namely, that I fully support the conduct of that feasibility study. Two alternatives have been earmarked for the study: the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line and an extension of that line to the airport; and the construction of a line

along a transportation corridor which has been preserved along and beyond Schulz Canal.

Honourable members would recall that I recently surveyed the commuters of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba midi-bus service that replaced the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail service which was terminated in late 1993 by the Goss Labor Government. As I have spoken previously in this place about that particular survey, I will not repeat myself at length during this contribution. In that survey, I asked a question about which of the two alternative routes being looked at by the feasibility study the people preferred. The response was 64.5 per cent in favour of the Schulz Canal option and 35.5 per cent in favour of extending the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line.

In view of the recent Government announcement, I thought it best to conduct a more thorough survey of those parts of the electorate which would be most affected by either of the alternatives which the Minister has considered in the feasibility study. I distributed over 6,000 survey forms to residents living one to six streets away from the proposed rail links and asked them for their views. I also set up information booths throughout my electorate, giving people with a broad interest in the issue an opportunity to express their views.

Mr Nuttall: Sit him down and do us all a favour.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr SANTORO: Some unreasonable members sitting at the back are interjecting from other than their correct seats. I challenge Mr Beattie, in the most constructive way, to resume his seat. I know that he has a great love for the railway—being a former secretary for a union, despite some dastardly elements that are in it and which seek to disrupt some of the good policies and initiatives that he implemented. Members can see how quickly Mr Beattie is going back to his seat! I would like the member for Brisbane Central to support me when I call for the reinstatement of rail services within my electorate, because, as the honourable member for Salisbury would say, any good railway man should support such a call.

Having got the member for Brisbane Central back to his seat, I inform him and other members of the questions which I asked during that survey. I asked—

"1. Do you believe that Brisbane Airport is well serviced by transportation systems, public or otherwise?"

2. Do you favour the establishment of a fast rail link to the Brisbane Airport?

3. Which option do you prefer: the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line option; or the Schulz Canal option.

4. If the rail link to the Airport was to be established along the rail line that you have chosen, what would be your main concerns: increased noise pollution; increased air pollution; increased visual pollution; or a decrease in land and house values."

I also asked whether people had other concerns.

I am pleased to inform the House that I have to date received over 220 replies to the survey from residents of my electorate. I have compiled some preliminary results, and I do wish to stress that they are only preliminary results, which make for very interesting reading indeed. I do know from people who have spoken to the Minister that he is interested in this initiative because he acknowledges that it is constructive. It is one that I, more so than most other members in this place, particularly those on the other side, undertake, which is to ask my constituents what they think. I will tell the Minister and the House what my constituents have told me today. Eighty-five percent of residents replied that they did not believe that the Brisbane Airport is well serviced by transportation systems, public or otherwise.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr SANTORO: As the honourable member for Brisbane Central interjects, this particular result should come as no surprise to anybody, including the thickest of honourable members in this place. It should also come as no surprise that 89 per cent of residents favour the establishment of a fast rail link to Brisbane Airport. This response came from residents irrespective of where they live in relation to the alternatives which have been included in the feasibility study. In relation to the preferred options—

Mr Beattie: Table the survey form.

Mr SANTORO: I do not have to table the survey form.

Mr Beattie: Why not?

Mr SANTORO: If the honourable member for Brisbane Central had been listening, he would have known that I listed the questions on the survey form. That is the reason why I have not tabled it. In relation to the preferred options, and I think this should be of interest, particularly to the Minister, 59

per cent of respondents have indicated their support for the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line option, while 41 per cent of residents have indicated a preference for the Schulz Canal option. The response in relation to the options preference should be viewed with some caution, as it is obvious from a preliminary examination of the survey results that many of the people who live close to the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line favour the Schulz Canal option and many of the residents who live close to Schulz Canal favour the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line option.

These responses undoubtedly and obviously reflect the concerns of residents as to what impact a fast rail link to the airport or indeed any other rail link to the airport would have on their living and residential amenity. I am in the process of analysing the survey returns in far greater detail and I eventually look forward to informing the Minister—particularly the Minister, and hopefully a coalition Minister in a few weeks' time—of the precise preferences of my constituents and, in particular, the precise preferences of those constituents who will be most directly affected by the implementation of either option.

Mr Hayward: It was the precise preference for the majority.

Mr SANTORO: I will take that interjection from the Honourable the Minister. I am sure he will agree that we cannot do better than distribute 6,000 survey forms to the people most directly affected if either of the options into which he is conducting a feasibility study are implemented. We could survey the entire City of Brisbane and people would give an opinion, but as the local representative it is my responsibility to survey the people I represent, and I am sure that the Minister will look forward to receiving the results because the survey is a fair one, it was widely distributed, and those people who had an interest have in fact returned the forms and have given their opinion. I will actually analyse what type of responses are coming from what type of people, particularly in respect of where they live, so that the Minister can have a fairly intelligent analysis of what those preferences are all about.

The survey results point to the necessity for a full process of consultation with the local community before the Government of the day comes down in favour of any option, including the options which are being considered by the feasibility study. We cannot—and I stress "cannot"—have a repeat of the airport tollway experience, when the local community was

treated with utter contempt by the Government as it sought to foist onto the local community their dastardly and secretive plans for a money-making and environment-destroying tollway. We cannot have a repeat of that particular experience.

It almost goes without saying that the vast majority of residents listed concerns about noise pollution, air pollution, visual pollution, a decrease in land and house values and other specific concerns, of which I will make the Minister aware in due course, in relation to the implementation of either option for a fast rail link to the airport. It is these very specific concerns which need to be carefully addressed by the Government when major infrastructure plans such as a fast rail link to the airport are being devised and subsequently implemented.

Honourable members will judge from the preliminary results I have outlined in this place that my constituents are most reasonable people who are prepared to consider—

Mr Ardill: That doesn't say much for them, does it?

Mr SANTORO: I will take that interjection from the honourable member for Archerfield. One of the reasons why they can be judged to be reasonable is that they do vote for me. They do receive representation—and modesty prevents me from putting this point any more strongly—that is probably better than that provided by the honourable member for Archerfield to his constituents. The member for Archerfield cannot talk about any survey that he has done in his constituency and tell us what his constituents think of it. I see the honourable member for Archerfield sitting silent and not interjecting any more because, unlike the member for Clayfield, he does not care about what his constituents think. When I get up in this place I seek to speak from an informed perspective rather than the uninformed, frivolous and trivial perspective of honourable members opposite.

Mr T. B. Sullivan interjected.

Mr SANTORO: I normally do not take interjections from the honourable member for Chermside, but I live in hope that this one will be a good one.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Do you have any information as to whether the Schulz Canal option will affect the Kalinga Park area?

Mr SANTORO: I think that the question that the honourable member for Chermside asked is a good one.

Mr Beattie: It is a good one.

Mr SANTORO: And it is one of the reasons why I support the feasibility study which has been undertaken by the Minister. In the end, the answer to the question of the honourable member for Chermside will be in the engineering solutions which will apply to the rail options along Schulz Canal. That question cannot be answered until the engineers decide whether the line goes under the canal, over the canal, or is elevated over the car park. I think that the question is a good one. The precise answer to the question is: no, I am not aware. I say further to the honourable member that I do not believe that the answer exists. If it does, let the honourable member and the Minister release it now and pre-empt the feasibility study. I do not believe it exists, but if it does, I will be interested in hearing it from the Minister or from any other member, including the honourable member for Chermside.

Getting back to the point I had reached before I was briefly put off by the honourable member for Archerfield, I listed a whole series of concerns that related to air and visual pollution. I was about to say that it is these very specific concerns which need to be very carefully addressed by the Government when major infrastructure plans such as a fast rail link to the airport are being devised and subsequently implemented.

I want to again stress that my constituents are willing to have a look at all of the plans, including those plans that may affect them adversely. They do not mind considering all of the plans, but my constituents want to be involved. They want to be treated with respect and consideration and as people who have a useful contribution to make to the debate right from the word go and not just prior to or after an announcement of intention by the Government.

I express my appreciation for the time that the honourable member for Gregory, the shadow Minister for Transport, afforded me earlier today when, over a period of several hours, we toured the traffic and transportation hot spots in north Brisbane and, in particular, those within my electorate. We had a look at the various trouble spots including the possible widening of Rode Road, which is of great concern to my constituents. A great uncertainty exists about that widening. I know that the honourable member for Chermside has lobbied very strongly about that issue and I have had representations made to me and currently I am looking at that issue. We had a look at the Nundah bottleneck. I showed to the honourable member—

Mr ARDILL: I rise to a point of order. That has nothing whatsoever to do with the Bill. This is a Bill about railways. It has nothing to do with bottlenecks in the northern suburbs.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I accept the point of order. There has been some indulgence from the Chair.

Mr SANTORO: Mr Speaker, I will tell you precisely why we had a look at those spots. As the honourable member for Archerfield—if he was being intellectually honest—would admit, all those transport issues link directly to a rail link to the airport. The solving of the Nundah bottleneck, the widening of Rode Road, the airport tollway—they are what the whole transport debate in north Brisbane has been about.

Mr Ardill: No, it's not. It's about corporatisation of the railways.

Mr SANTORO: The honourable member for Archerfield is the Chairman of the Travelsafe Committee, a person who—judging from the number of reports and the number of recommendations within those reports which have been ignored by Government—receives little recognition from his Government yet parades himself as a person who has so much knowledge of transport and rail issues. For him to make that interjection and take that point of order is ludicrous.

Returning to the substantial point that I was making, the honourable member for Gregory, the shadow Minister for Transport, and I saw at first-hand the dismal results of this Government's failed infrastructure policies. I particularly refer to the recent closure of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba line. I have heard members opposite, including the honourable member for Sandgate, say that if people are to be encouraged to ride trains—I am paraphrasing him, but I do not believe that I am misrepresenting him—they must have appealing railway facilities. The honourable member for Sandgate would be hard pushed to explain to my constituents why they have no facilities at all along the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line. The honourable member for Albert started talking about the National Party Government ripping up the rail link to the Gold Coast. Why is the honourable member for Albert not sticking up for the reinstatement of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line? They are all hypocrites! They throw stones but, when they make those statements, they do not realise that they live in the most fragile glass house on earth.

This morning, we saw some pretty ugly sites as a result of the Government's failed

infrastructure policies. We saw examples of vandalism and defacing graffiti at railway stations, which are now closed and out of use, at Clayfield, Hendra and Ascot. We saw abandoned and deteriorated railway station grounds, which previously displayed the brilliant colour and appeal of well-kept gardens. In fact, I am sure that all honourable members would agree with me that the grounds of the Ascot Railway Station were once regarded as one of the most beautiful public gardens in Brisbane. Today they resemble an encroaching desert and are a very sad sight indeed.

This need not be the case and, indeed, will not be the case under a coalition State Government. I am pleased to inform the House, and honourable members had better listen to this—particularly the honourable members for Archerfield and Brisbane Central, because if they are people who are genuinely interested in transport and rail, it will gladden their hearts—I am making a commitment to this House that the Government of the honourable members for Archerfield and Brisbane Central is not prepared to make. I am pleased to inform the House, and most importantly the constituents within my electorate of Clayfield who fought so hard against the closure of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba railway line, that the coalition joint policy committee and the shadow Minister have approved the reopening of the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line immediately upon return to Government.

Nothing will me give me greater pleasure than, in the very near future, to make that announcement to my constituents of Clayfield. I challenge all honourable members opposite—particularly the honourable members for Archerfield and Brisbane Central—to come to my electorate and argue against that and to indicate for the public—

Mr Beattie: I'll come to your electorate.

Mr SANTORO: He can come to my electorate and support me as I campaign for the reopening of that line.

Mr Johnson: He won't come.

Mr SANTORO: The honourable members will not come, because they are part of the Government that closed the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line and they stand condemned for that.

Time expired.

Mr ARDILL (Archerfield) (3.36 p.m.): We have just heard a prime example of why the cry goes up to take railways away from the political scene. We have just seen a prime

example of a politician trying to push the impossible in railway matters.

Mr Santoro: What's impossible?

Mr ARDILL: It is absolutely impossible to push the sort of nonsense that this member tries to peddle. That is an example of why they want to take railways out of the political arena. I am sorry to see that happen because Queensland Rail exists as a result of the political scene. One hundred and thirty years ago on 30 July this year, the Queensland railway system began to operate between Ipswich and Grandchester. I am sorry that it will not reach that 130th birthday in association with this Parliament of Queensland to any material degree, because corporatisation will commence one month before that. So it will have a history of Queensland Government railways of 129 years 11 months, and I am very sorry to see it.

It started off as the pony railway, the little 1,067 millimetre line, which was something new in the civilised world. It started off with a very small section of track which has grown into over 10,000 kilometres of rail right throughout Queensland. Queensland's railways have never been a commercial activity and never will be a commercial activity. Why we expect to see a railway return a profit is completely beyond any sort of rational consideration.

Mr FitzGerald: The roads don't show a profit either, do they?

Mr ARDILL: Roads do not show a profit. Schools do not show a profit. Hospitals do not show a profit. None of those activities show a profit and railways in a State like Queensland cannot show a profit if they are going to provide a service.

Mr FitzGerald: It is a service.

Mr ARDILL: That is what railways are, a service.

Mr Johnson: An essential service.

Mr ARDILL: An absolutely essential service. If we look at what has happened in other States of Australia, we see the demise of the railway as a service. The railways in places such as South Australia and Tasmania are merely carriers of interstate goods, carriers of freight that cannot be economically carried on the roads. I do not want to see that happen to Queensland Rail with its 130-year history of serving the people of Queensland and providing the main infrastructure for transport throughout this State.

This State is too vast to ever expect any other means of transport to carry the

backbone of the transport system. That is what Queensland Rail has done throughout 130 years. It has done that because of funding from Governments, which has been the case right up until the present. The Queensland Rail system has hardly ever returned a profit on the overall activity of the line. There have been various claims made right throughout the years that a profit has been made but, when the interest payments are taken into account, it has not made a profit. It certainly made a profit in some sections, and has done right from its earliest days. At the present moment, I have no doubt that some of the long-run trains that run from Brisbane to Cairns are making a profit to the taxpayers of Queensland.

Mr FitzGerald: That's freight trains only.

Mr ARDILL: That is the freight trains. However, that is only a small minority of the trains that actually run in Queensland. The rest of the trains are running to serve the people; and no matter what is done, they do not and never will run at a profit. We have seen a massive downgrading of rail infrastructure, and it has taken this Government to provide a half a billion dollar scheme to upgrade our main trunk service to Cairns. Since the days of steam trains, when it used to take 32 hours to get to Townsville on a passenger train, that time has gradually been reduced, and it now takes the Sunlander 24 hours to travel that distance. In fact, one entire night's travel has been cut from that journey.

Under the direction of the present chief executive, Mr Vince O'Rourke, we have seen a vast improvement in passenger services. Mr O'Rourke has done a magnificent job in upgrading the services of Queensland Rail. He is not the first commissioner of Queensland Rail who has done a magnificent job. Down through the years, most of the commissioners had the foresight to decide what should be done, and they had the necessary direction and energy to do something about that. However, some great schemes did not eventuate. For instance, as the member for Redcliffe knows, the railway line to Redcliffe was proposed in this House on 13 November 1895—nearly 100 years ago. It still has not happened. There have been a lot of wildcat schemes, such as that promoted by the member for Clayfield, who wanted to provide public transport using three-car or six-car vehicles when one bus is sufficient to provide that service. One cannot operate on that basis.

Mr SANTORO: I find the comments by the honourable member offensive, because

they are untrue. I have never promoted that, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr SANTORO: I did not rise on a point of order. What I said was that I find the comments offensive because they are untrue, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Mr SANTORO: I did not rise on a point of order. I said that I find the member's comments offensive.

Mr SPEAKER: If the member does not have a point of order, he should allow the member for Archerfield to make his speech. The member should not be so sensitive.

Mr ARDILL: It is absolutely ridiculous to expect Queensland Rail to provide services such as that to which I referred earlier. Nobody supports Queensland Rail more than I do in providing services where no other form of transport can provide them. That is the case on main trunk lines and certainly in isolated areas of Queensland. The member for Clayfield failed to say how long it would take for a train to reach the airport stopping at every wayside station between Brisbane Central and Doomben and then on to the airport. That is the sort of thing that destroys any professional service. This morning, the member for Indooroopilly was bleating about trains running express to outer suburbs and failing to stop at the wayside stations in his electorate. That is the sort of thing that brings politicians into disrepute. Without politicians, most of the services that are provided by Queensland Rail just would not have happened.

As I said, the commissioners who have run the railway service have certainly had foresight and have put forward some wonderful schemes—some of which were adopted and some of which fell by the wayside. At times, we also witnessed less than professional management of railway services, which resulted in a downgrading of services. However, we have also witnessed unwise political decisions that destroyed the viability of many lines—lines that, in some cases, should never have been built because they were too close to adjacent lines. We also witnessed some absolutely ridiculous decisions, such as the closure of the Gold Coast line when the Gold Coast was becoming—and obviously so—one of the major population areas of Australia.

Mr Purcell: They also pulled up the Cleveland line.

Mr ARDILL: The Cleveland line is another example. Nobody complained about withdrawing services to Dayboro and places like that. We cannot run services where nobody is using them; but to pull up a line just as the Redlands area and the Gold Coast were developing, using all sorts of professional mismanagement to achieve the desired aim to indicate that it was not being used, is beyond comprehension.

Mr Hollis: Lunacy.

Mr ARDILL: Of course, it was lunacy. Then to sell off some of the land was even worse.

An Opposition member mentioned the need to introduce coordinated bus services. During the Labor Government of Forgan Smith, we saw the introduction of quite a few coordinated services, with strong impetus from the commissioner of the day, one Mr Davidson, who did a wonderful job in upgrading the Queensland trains, such as the Sunshine Express and the fast express to Southport, which was the fastest train in Queensland in its day. He upgraded that service and provided coordinated buses. That has to be done if a railway service is to survive. Recently, I asked a question of the Minister, which he answered adequately, about providing coordinated services to the Gold Coast from the Helensvale terminal. That also has to be done, and I support any suggestion that it is needed.

When the National Party and Liberal Ministers, who ruled the railways and made such a hash of it, were in power, coordinated bus services fell by the wayside and were destroyed. The coordinated services to the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast resorts were all destroyed during the time of the previous Government. This Minister is now on the right track by starting to reinstate those services, and that has to be done. The correct procedure is to feed people into railway stations from the outlying areas so that trains carry the bulk of passengers on the major route.

Even though it has taken 100 years for the Redcliffe line to come to fruition, it has to be a goer; I am sure that we will see it. Quite a number of areas around Brisbane are in need of railway services, including Inala and out to Springfield. Through its community service obligations, the Government will have to provide the funding for that. If this Bill does nothing else that is positive, and if it fails to deliver anything else of advantage to the

people of Queensland, it will at least provide an identification of community service obligations. It will show that the public has to expect to pay for an adequate railway service.

The Opposition spokesperson on Transport said that all of the funding that this Government is providing is going into the north coast line. Certainly, the bulk of it is; and nobody could deny that massive work is taking place on that line. Everywhere from Cooran right through to Innisfail, massive work is going on. Recently, some of that work has been undertaken in Cairns. Anyone who travels along that line can see that work; they can see why half a billion dollars is being put into rail infrastructure. That had to be done, because before that line was coupled up in 1924—again by a Labor Government—to connect all isolated railways and tramways on the coast, it was just that: a series of railways and tramways running from ports to outlying areas. It took from 1865 to 1924 to couple up that line. However, the line was still not adequate for a fast and modern rail system, and that is what is being done today.

We are now building on that inadequate system that has existed from 1924 until now, and we are providing the infrastructure for one of the most modern rail systems in the world. That will prove that the original decision to build a metre-gauge railway, or a 1,067 millimetre railway, was the correct decision. That has enabled railways to be built over almost impassable mountains. It has enabled us to very cheaply develop the far-flung areas of Queensland. Queensland is now being opened up to some of the largest train services in the world. I refer to the coal services and mineral lines, which return a handsome profit through the collection of royalties; but under this Bill, that profit will no longer go to the railways. Each section of the line will be required to pay its own way, and there will be no cross-subsidisation. That is one problem with corporatisation and the recommendations of the Hilmer report.

The Brisbane commuter system will be subsidised to the tune of well over \$100m per annum. The \$400m a year spent on propping up the freight system of Queensland is a community service obligation, which we must continue to meet. Some economies will be gained by corporatisation, but we can never expect the railway to be a milch cow. It is a service to the public, which must be provided.

Passenger services that have been provided since Mr O'Rourke took over the railway system—and some of his very efficient officers have had a large hand in this,

too—have been superb. The benefit of providing passenger rail services in a State as large as Queensland is that sleeping berths can be provided in overnight trains on the main trunk-line service. We have to not only maintain what we have but also extend those services. We will need to upgrade the frequency of services, for instance, between Townsville and Mount Isa. There should be at least three train services per week.

What has been done in recent years has shown that, if a decent service is provided, the patronage follows. I cite the Rockhampton service and the overnight trains. If services are provided, the public will use them. If we fail to provide an adequate service—for example, if the service is running only once or twice per week—we cannot expect people to take the service seriously. In addition, a reasonable frequency has to be supplied. The same thing occurred with the suburban service. The half-hour headway now means that people take the railway seriously. They know that they can catch a train at a given time according to a timetable. We have an excellent peak-hour service in Brisbane. In spite of the bleating of some of the Liberal members about the fact that two of their trains no longer stop at every wayside station, I point out that there is still a service into the city every 20 minutes in peak hour.

Train services are not the same as an urban transit service provided by buses, which carry only a few passengers. Trains provide a service used by up to 500 people at a time. Train services cannot be expected to be provided at the same sort of headway as a bus service. However, trains are much more economic, they are not subject to the same delays in traffic and, additionally, they are able to shift a large number of people at the right time and in a level of comfort that cannot be provided by any other means of transport. I look forward to the continuation of the benefits provided to the State of Queensland by Queensland Rail. At present, it is in the very best of hands and I hope it stays that way for a long time.

Hon. K. W. HAYWARD (Kallangur—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (3.56 p.m.), in reply: I thank all of the speakers who have contributed to the debate on the Transport Infrastructure Amendment (Rail) Bill 1995. We are seeing a very significant Bill being passed by the Parliament today. It is a Bill that has been designed not only to facilitate a coordinated approach to the development of all transport

infrastructure within the State but also to address three main planks.

Firstly, it will accommodate the corporatisation of Queensland Rail on 1 July 1995. Secondly, it will provide a basis for a framework to give third parties the right to negotiate access to the railway network, thereby giving effect to the recommendations of the Hilmer report. Later, I will take the opportunity to speak in more detail about that with respect to the contributions of honourable members to the debate. Thirdly, the Bill is about introducing a safety accreditation system for railways.

As I said, the issue of corporatisation of Queensland Rail brings with it great significance. As part of the Government's micro-economic reform agenda, which was firstly released through Queensland—Leading State and recently reaffirmed in From Strength to Strength, there is a commitment to improve the commercial performance and efficiency of Queensland's major business enterprises through the corporatisation process. One of Government's highest priorities among these enterprises is Queensland Rail. The benefits from the corporatisation of Queensland Rail will be clearly seen in the future. In an overall sense, we will have a more effective and efficient rail service. Corporatisation will produce lower freight rates, which I think is important, and a more competitive and efficient service. Under the community service obligation regime, the Government will pay for the level and quality of service that that regime requires Government owned corporations to provide.

Mr Johnson: When you say "lower freight rates", I will make reference to the livestock industry where you are entering into contracts with livestock operators. Is this a part of the QR charter? Where your primary industries section is entering into contracts with private operators for the cartage of livestock, is this a part of the QR charter?

Mr HAYWARD: It is important to understand that what we are determined to do through the corporatisation process is ensure that Queensland Rail continues to grow and expand with respect to its freight network. That will mean working with other groups—livestock operators and so on. I am talking in general terms. As the honourable member for Archerfield said in his contribution, rail handles bulk freight much better than it does smaller quantities. However, we need to ensure that we can use the rail service in a competitive and efficient way so that the people who use it—that is, producers or whoever—know that

their product will be delivered in a timely manner and in good shape.

Another of the benefits of corporatisation is that Government owned corporations will pay tax to the State Government and dividends on the profit generated. The move towards corporatisation is part of the process of greater competition within the Australian economy. That fits in well with the Hilmer initiatives. I will speak about those initiatives later. National competition reform and policy issues need to be addressed and dealt with. This Bill will ensure that we are able to deal with those important principles and we are able to maintain the regime and the control within Queensland. If we do nothing, it will be left to the Federal Government to control the implementation of the Hilmer strategies in this State.

Mr Johnson: Is this not, though, the platform for the start of that process? Is this legislation the commencement of a platform for that process?

Mr HAYWARD: This legislation ensures that those competition reform principles remain under the control of the Queensland Government rather than abrogating responsibility and putting them in the hands of the Commonwealth through the Trade Practices Act. Apart from corporatisation, that is one of the fundamental principles of this legislation.

In simple terms, a corporatised Queensland Rail will benefit from reforms because it will develop a structure which will encourage innovation and productivity. In the past, we have seen examples of managers and workers in QR being restrained by outdated operational arrangements. I expect that, through corporatisation, Queensland Rail will be able to move forward and achieve its full potential. Accountability will always exist. Accountability for management is a key element of corporatisation, and it will ensure that taxpayers' dollars are used most effectively. The statement of corporate intent—which goes to the two shareholders, the Treasurer and me—will ensure that Queensland Rail will undertake and meet its committed targets. The sort of target to which I am referring is the adoption of world's best practice in relation to export coal by the year 2000. The whole economy of Queensland will reap the benefits of the corporatisation of Queensland Rail through the provision of competitively priced infrastructure that is essential to attract new investment to this State. We live in a broad global economy. We

must ensure that rail infrastructure is available and is competitively priced. Queensland industries which are reliant on efficient and effective transport need that service to be competitively priced in order that they may expand.

A number of issues were raised during the debate. I want to deal with one in particular before I move on to the principles of the elements of National Competition Policy. The member for Maroochydore referred to clause 71ZZE, which states that an inquiry can continue despite a change in membership. There is nothing sinister or surreptitious about that. The intention of that clause is to ensure that the inquiry process—which can become quite involved—is not halted solely because of the absence of one member who may be suffering from a prolonged illness or something like that.

The member for Maroochydore referred also to the competition principles agreement. She asked why it was only an annexe to the legislation and not incorporated in it. She asked also why the Queensland Government has abrogated responsibility on this issue and left it to its Federal counterpart to control access to infrastructure in Queensland. In simple terms, the second part of the member's query is not true. As I have explained to the honourable member before, this legislation is about ensuring that we control things in Queensland within the broad context of National Competition Policy. Everyone should know that, through the COAG discussions, the Premier was able to negotiate an exemption for Queensland Rail in the coal and minerals area until the year 2000. That exemption is important, because it gives Queensland Rail until the year 2000 to adopt world's best practice in relation to coal and minerals. It gives considerable breathing space to a very vital part of Queensland Rail business and the income of Queensland.

I believe that that should be contrasted to the position adopted in New South Wales in which a decision was made by the Government of the day not to apply for a similar exemption for coal and minerals. I understand that from 1 July it is basically catch-as-catch-can for coal and minerals in New South Wales. I believe that that represents an abrogation of responsibility, and I am sure that most members would agree with me.

Mr Johnson: Would you like to see that happen in Queensland?

Mr HAYWARD: I made the point that we would work towards it by the year 2000.

That was a specific agreement as part of the COAG discussions.

Mr Johnson: I made reference to that.

Mr HAYWARD: I acknowledge that, but I make the point that another State has simply said, "We are mad about competition. As far as we are concerned, we will adopt it straightaway." The importance of that exemption is that it gives Queensland Rail breathing space to mature and develop to ensure the adoption of world's best practice by the year 2000.

Mr Ardill: That was the Liberal Government in New South Wales that accepted that.

Mr HAYWARD: I made that point. I said that the previous New South Wales Government went down that track in an obsessional bid to embrace competition. The potential effect of that is the destruction of a considerable income-earning proposition for that Government. The Premier of Queensland—as usual—was wise enough to recognise that problem and was able to address it under the COAG agreement.

The competition principles are part of a State/Federal Government agreement which is being incorporated in Federal legislation currently in the process of debate. Those principles have legal status as a COAG agreement and have been widely publicised for consultation and debate. As they are the subject matter of Federal legislation, the competition principles are only an annexe to this Bill. As those principles are the subject matter of Federal legislation, it is not considered appropriate to incorporate them in the State legislation. However, as noted in this Bill, the principles are annexed to it simply for convenience.

Mr Johnson: What was that last part?

Mr HAYWARD: The principles are annexed to the Bill for the sake of convenience.

The second issue raised by the member for Maroochydore is of more concern to me. She asked why the Queensland Government had abrogated responsibility on this issue. That simply is not true. The matter is addressed in this legislation to ensure that the issue remains under the management of the Queensland Government. The draft Federal legislation provides that the issue can be managed by the States. The States do not have to choose to do that, but the importance of their doing so is that it leaves them with autonomy.

Mr Johnson: How many States have opted to manage their own?

Mr HAYWARD: I cannot imagine why a State would not opt to manage its own, but certainly Queensland has.

Mr Johnson: Bear in mind that we're the only State that currently owns our own operation.

Mr HAYWARD: As I said, there have been obsessional charges towards competition by some State Governments. They have certain political or personal motivation towards the process of competition. I believe that it needs to be managed. We have made that clear, and that is what this legislation is about.

Mr Johnson: Have you seen the Federal legislation?

Mr HAYWARD: I have had an opportunity to see it. The importance of the issue of management by the States is that their regime has to reflect the general principles incorporated in the competition principles agreement. We accept that and our regime does that, but we still maintain the management and the control in Queensland. I believe that that is important. As indicated by the Opposition's support for this Bill, the importance of the issue is acknowledged by both sides of this House. Far from abrogating responsibility on this issue, the Government is moving to ensure, through the provisions of this Bill, that this matter remains under State control.

Mr Johnson: Is that an ironclad guarantee?

Mr HAYWARD: Yes. The member for Maroochydore questioned why the provisions are to be incorporated in the regulation rather than in the prime legislation. In saying that, I think she was implying that it is some sort of underhanded way of avoiding debate about that in this House. I hope that that is not the case. From what I have heard in the House this afternoon, there has been fairly wide and varied debate regarding these issues. The member for Maroochydore should be aware that all regulation is subject to review by the Committee of Subordinate Legislation which is comprised of members of this House. I am certainly aware of that, as I am sure most members would be. That regulation provides the ability to implement provisions quickly once the Federal Bill is finalised and becomes law. I think that the member for Maroochydore should also note the sunset provision in the section which provides an incentive to move

this to primary legislation within a short time frame.

The Hilmer report is about Queensland being part of National Competition Policy. That means that we have to provide third-party access to our rail lines. The basic principle is that monopolies are in a position to charge a monopoly fee and therefore they should be freed up. Third-party access would be given where monopoly situations exist, particularly, say, in relation to Queensland Rail. So the opportunity is there now for third parties to be able to come onto the QR track at an agreed price—it costs them to come onto the track—which is determined by negotiation. Ultimately, if a price cannot be agreed by negotiation, it is agreed by arbitration. Those monopolies can provide a rail service to the State, excluding coal and minerals, as I said, until the year 2000.

Mr Johnson: You said "coal and minerals". I question you on this because I understand from the departmental officers that it is only coal.

Mr HAYWARD: I meant to say coal. I call it the Coal and Minerals Division. I meant to say that they can provide a rail service, excluding coal, until the year 2000. This can potentially lead to greater competition in the provision of rail services. Off the top of my head, I cannot think of examples where people might want to seek third-party access onto rail tracks. However, after 1 July 1995, we will all have the opportunity to sit back and see who thinks they are able to run a service competitively on our tracks. Ultimately, that will benefit all Queenslanders because it will provide competition, which means a reduction in prices. That is what the Hilmer report addresses. It argues that, by providing competition, prices are reduced, which benefits everyone. I know that there is a lot of theory in that before it gets put into practice, but that is the world in which we live and the world in which we have to deal.

Through this legislation we are ensuring that Queensland retains control over that process. Of course, the legislation will provide the opportunity to ensure better integration of railway infrastructure with other forms of transport infrastructure. I think that that is what the member for Gregory was hinting at earlier. That notion of competition will, in effect, drive that integration.

Specific issues have been raised during the debate, some of which were passed on to me by the honourable member for Everton.

Mr Johnson: I didn't know he wrote anything down.

Mr HAYWARD: No, he recalled those issues and he was able to pass them on to me in some detail.

The member for Gregory raised the issue of employees being disadvantaged by changes in Queensland Rail, specifically with regard to the issue of relocation and what happens to their existing homes. I thought that that matter might be raised; I think it was raised at the Estimates committee hearing the other night. It is a very important issue. As I think I said the other night, Queensland Rail has a policy that, where an employee has accepted a transfer and cannot sell his or her house, Queensland Rail will undertake to buy that house at market value so that the employee can move on and establish in a new location. That will be full and fair payment. Honourable members can believe me when I say that. If members know of cases where there is not full and fair payment, I ask them to tell me about them because I know of none. I am determined to ensure that, during the massive transition in Queensland Rail and as a result of the competition that will occur in the future, everybody will win; there will be no losers. I am determined that all employees of Queensland Rail will have an opportunity to advance their careers. I have had the opportunity of speaking to rail workers and I have given them that assurance. They were pleased to hear that.

Mr Johnson: I am pleased to hear you say that, too.

Mr HAYWARD: I cannot make it any clearer. Of course, this will all be done by negotiation. Some people will always argue that their place is worth a million dollars when it is not, but by negotiation there will be full and fair compensation.

The member for Gregory raised the issue of insufficient resources being provided for maintenance of the rail network, thus leading to safety problems. I think this issue was also mentioned the other night at the Estimates committee hearing. Queensland Rail is providing the resources to ensure that maintenance levels are adequate, but I think the important aspect of this legislation is that it provides the potential to promote better utilisation of the rail network. Competition gives more companies the opportunity to use that rail network, which is one of the primary objectives. Of course, greater use of that network, which is promoted by this legislation, means that there will be more money to keep the network in good order. The competition will place more companies on the network, but that means that more money will be available.

It is all counted as part of the purchase price of getting access to that rail infrastructure. More money will be available to spend on that rail network.

The Bill also serves to act as an active strategy by the Government to ensure that resources are adequate to maintain that network. So, again, it is driven by competition. If people want to get on that network, they have to be able to get on that network and be guaranteed that they can run their train on that network. So, in effect, competition ensures that the network itself is maintained adequately and properly.

The member for Indooroopilly said that Queensland Rail was not subject to FOI or judicial review. That is simply not right. The legislation makes clear that the commercial operations of Queensland Rail will not be subject to FOI.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: No, he did not talk about commercial operations, he said that that would not apply at all. FOI will continue to apply to Queensland Rail, as it should, in relation to areas where Government funding is provided through community service obligations. I think that is fair, and that should be understood. However, when it comes to commercial dealings, I am sure that honourable members would appreciate that dealings can occur where it would be of a considerable disadvantage to the trading ability of Queensland Rail to have its dealings with competitors subject to freedom of information legislation. Community service obligations, as the whole House would appreciate, include the Citytrain urban passenger services, the low volume branch lines and long distance passenger services. The area in which people can apply the FOI legislation is fairly wide.

Mr Johnson: Just going back to those branch lines—if I could just talk about community service obligations, you made mention of this in the Estimates, too. There is no capital funding there for the upgrading of those facilities and you are coming in to CSOs there.

Mr HAYWARD: The point still applies as far as CSOs are concerned from the point of view of FOI legislation.

The member for Mooloolah raised a number of issues concerning the services to the north coast. He mentioned the Sunshine Coast Commuters Association, an organisation of which I am very well aware, as would be any member of Parliament who is in any way active on the northern line. The

Sunshine Coast Commuters Association in its most recent newsletter—and this matter was raised by the member for Mooloolah—asked why Queensland Rail is selling old passenger rollingstock instead of using it to increase services.

There are a couple of simple reasons for that. Basically, we first need to expand the capacity of the line as far as the whole Citytrain network is concerned. We will do that through duplication of the tunnels and also through the quadruplication of the track at Northgate. That will give us the opportunity to ensure that we are able to increase passenger services, but secondly, and also importantly, that we are able to ensure that freight trains are able to go through. One of the problems that occurs, certainly on the Sydney line from the briefings that I have received over a period of time, is the congestion that occurs through the mix of freight and passenger services. The completion of the tunnels later this year will have the effect of increasing the capacity of the network by about 80 per cent. Therefore, we will be able to provide more passenger services. Also, freight services will not be using the line, so the congestion that occurs now will be relieved. We will also be able to expand the number of services on those lines.

Mr Ardill knows well, as I am sure a number of members do, that the simple commercial reality, learned from experience, is that people will not use old trains, and we are talking about 1950s vintage stuff. I am informed that people just do not get on the old trains; they wait for the modern electric trains to come along, and one can understand that.

I will have an opportunity to talk with the commuters association services to areas such as Nambour, Mooloolah and Gympie and the fact that it is a much longer trip than a trip from the city to the suburbs. Of course, these old sets are not air conditioned and no-one can argue with the fact that they are certainly less comfortable. We have to get new sets, but it is all about the timing, getting the tunnels finished and completing the quadruplication in the Northgate area so that we have the capacity to be able to push services to the coast. The other thing that makes it difficult, from the point of view of getting passengers on board, is that the locomotives hauled with the old train sets are simply slower than the modern electric trains. In addition, the potential is there, as always occurs, for disruption of the existing timetable services. There are lots of problems involved.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

Mr JOHNSON (4.27 p.m.): I wish to comment on Part 3—Access to Rail Transport Infrastructure. In relation to the current contract existing between Australian National Railways and Queensland Rail, under this legislation will the contract agreements be valid for the use of the standard gauge network from the border to Acacia Ridge and on to Fisherman Islands?

My colleague the member for Maroochydore has asked me to relay a question in relation to proposed new section 71D, which states—

"(b) in particular, to make provision to ensure agreements for access comply with the competition principles and the objectives of this Act."

The footnote to that section states—

"To aid readers, the relevant provisions of the Competition Principles Agreement are in the attachment to this Act. The attachment is not part of the Act."

I ask the Minister: what is the legal status of this attachment?

Proposed new section 71ZZE—Change of membership of board states—

"The inquiry of the board of inquiry is not affected by a change in its membership."

Does this mean that people hearing evidence can be changed part way through a hearing? If that is the case, I find it very undesirable.

Proposed new section 71ZZM refers to the carrying of dangerous goods. Recently, I witnessed a derailment at Yamala, just east of Emerald. Hydrofluoric acid in unmarked containers was being carried on a train that was also carrying fuel. That train was derailed and, of course, the fuel tank overturned. Proposed new section 71ZZM(1) states—

"While on or travelling by a railway, a person must not possess or have in their luggage any dangerous goods."

Subsection (4) goes on to state that a person must not send dangerous goods by rail unless—

- "(a) the goods are marked and labelled to show clearly that they are dangerous goods; and
- (b) the goods are packed, and otherwise marked and labelled, in a reasonable way considering . . ."

I want to bring to the attention of the Minister the fact that there could have been anomalies in the legislation in the past. I am anxious to hear his replies to those four queries.

Mr HAYWARD: The first one was concerning the national rail contract. Did you ask: will the access requirements apply to them as well?

Mr Johnson: The first part of that question was: how will the contracts with the national railways be now under this new legislation? Will those contracts still be valid?

Mr HAYWARD: Yes.

Mr Johnson: The other part of that questions was: will those current coal contracts be valid under corporatisation for five years?

Mr HAYWARD: Yes. I am right with the second one.

Mr Johnson: Page 15.

Mr HAYWARD: The second one was to do with the issue of COAG and the attachment. The member for Maroochydore raised this one and I thought I responded to that.

Mr Johnson: You did cover it but I am just asking for a more detailed response. What is the legal status of this attachment?

Mr HAYWARD: Basically, they remain legal documents because they were established under the principle of COAG. They are legal documents. It is as simple as that. That is what they are.

Mr Johnson: Page 42 deals with the change of membership of the board.

Mr HAYWARD: I thought I said before that, if an inquiry is under way and a person goes sick, the membership in effect is then changed. What this is about is ensuring that, if someone does have a prolonged illness, the conducting of an inquiry does not have to go back and start again. What has happened is that the membership has changed. I think that is a pretty sensible recommendation as part of the legislation.

Mr Johnson: The other part that I alluded to was Part 8—General, on page 45 of the Bill, which deals with the carrying of dangerous goods. I make reference to the derailment at Yamala just east of Emerald recently where there was a quantity of hydrofluoric acid on route to one of the mining areas in unmarked containers. I find this a very disturbing factor because that acid was on a train that was also carrying fuel. The fuel tankers were derailed and turned over, and it could have been a very explosive situation. It was certainly a volatile situation. Emergency

services and police will verify that. I think the Minister and his people in that area of management should be made aware of that fact so that there is no recurrence. It is a part of this legislation.

Mr HAYWARD: That is one of the great strengths of this Act. That is why the legislation is there. Previously, that sort of provision was not there. It now is, of course, and dangerous goods are dealt with under the Dangerous Goods Code. The Act will now ensure that the carriage of goods on rail complies with this code.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 23 and Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Hayward, by leave, read a third time.

ELECTORAL AMENDMENT BILL

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (4.36 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Electoral Act 1992."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Borbidge, read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (4.37 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The introduction of this Bill gives this Parliament the opportunity to heighten the credibility and integrity of the democratic process in this State. The Electoral Amendment Bill 1995 outlines amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 with the intent of preventing the distribution of bogus how-to-vote material at polling booths on election days. On the surface, one would think that any fair-minded citizen would agree with such measures, because to deliberately seek to mislead people as they exercise their most

basic democratic right is outright political fraud. As a Parliament, we pass all sorts of laws aimed at protecting citizens from practices involving dubious consumer deals or criminal fraud. It seems logical then that measures should be implemented to protect citizens from deliberate attempts to mislead them as they prepare to cast their vote.

In the past, this duty rested primarily on the honour and good faith of political parties, but events in relatively recent times indicate that this informal sort of gentlemen's agreement is no longer adequate. Members may recall that on polling day in the Mirani by-election last year, a how-to-vote card which was nearly identical to that of the Confederate Action Party was handed out to voters advising them to put the Labor candidate second. The National Party sought a Supreme Court injunction on the day to prevent further distribution of the card, which contradicted the official Confederate Action Party position which gave its second preference to the National Party candidate.

The problem, as members may recall, was that the court required a sample of the original document, rather than faxed copy, in order to deal with the matter. As a result of the time constraints involved in this process, it became fruitless attempting to pursue this course of action because it was too late in the day to recover the situation. This Bill aims to ensure that such a situation would not arise in future. It is based on similar Victorian legislation and outlines procedures which would require how-to-vote cards to be approved by either a returning officer or the Electoral Commissioner.

The Bill sets out procedures for provisional approval of sample how-to-vote cards prior to the polling day, including actions required of returning officers and the Electoral Commissioner and the time frames applying to such procedures. It contains provisions for review of such decisions by the Electoral Commissioner or the District Court as part of the appeal process. It also ensures that the process is undertaken well before polling day so that individual candidates and parties have ample time to have how-to-vote cards approved. Each approved how-to-vote card would be required to carry the following endorsement at the end of the card: "registered by the returning officer for (Insert name of relevant electoral district)".

The Bill provides a maximum penalty of \$6,000 for breaches of the Act. It also provides for registered how-to-vote cards to be available for public inspection as soon as

practicable after registration. In this regard, the returning officer must give a copy of the how-to-vote card to the Electoral Commissioner and make a copy available for inspection at the office of the returning officer and each polling place in the relevant electoral district.

The Bill provides that only registered how-to-vote cards may be handed out in the vicinity of polling booths on polling day and prescribes a maximum penalty of 100 units or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both, for breaches of this nature. It also empowers persons in charge of polling places or people acting on their behalf to demand the handing over of any unregistered

how-to-vote cards and prescribes the maximum penalty for persons failing to comply with such requests. The Bill outlines the prescribed forms to be utilised when submitting sample or format how-to-vote cards for provisional approval as well as a multiple electorate how-to-vote card statement. These are outlined in Schedule 2 of the Bill.

This Bill offers the Parliament a chance to strengthen the integrity of our democratic process. I commend it to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wells, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.41 p.m.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**218. Primary Industries Department Stationery Supply Tender**

Dr WATSON asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the invitation by the Department of Primary Industries for the provision of a Stationery Supply and Distribution Service to the Department (Invitation to Offer, Invitation No. 12)—

- (1) Has this tender now been cancelled?
- (2) If so, has the tender been cancelled to permit a study by a consultant to inquire into the effect on country centres?
- (3) What is the expected cost of the consultancy?
- (4) Given the distribution patterns contained in Appendix D of the Invitation Documents, what further information is expected to be derived from the consultancy?
- (5) Why was the decision to conduct the consultancy taken so long after the Invitation to Offer had been published?
- (6) How much is spent on stationery and its distribution each year?
- (7) What was the original expected saving from going to tender?

Answer

1. Yes.

2. The State Purchasing Council Secretariat will undertake an assessment of the impact of all Managed Supply and Distribution Arrangements, which includes, the impact on regional employment and economies.

3. Unknown—If a consultancy is required the Secretariat of the State Purchasing Council will seek competitive offers.

4. The review is to determine the impact of Managed Supply and Distribution Arrangements on a range of issues which include regional employment and economies and is not confined to stationery.

5. The review is not to be commissioned by DPI.

6. For the 1993-1994 financial year the Department expended in excess of \$850,000 on general stationery and forms.

7. An investigation into DPI's stationery requirements has identified potential benefits including:

- cost savings to the Department through reduced administration;
- fixed pricing on stationery items;
- a wider selection of stationery items available; and
- improved management information on the Department's expenditure for stationery.

221. Charter Boats and Ferries

Mr GRICE asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

- (1) Are charter boats and ferries operating in Queensland waters required by Government to carry public liability insurance?
- (2) If not, what action does he propose to take to ensure both the operators and their paying clients are fully protected?

Answer:

Through the Transport Operations (Marine Safety Act) 1994, Parliament regulates the maritime industry to ensure marine safety. The legislation inter alia places a general safety obligation on owners and masters of ships about the condition, safety equipment and operation of ships.

At present no other Australian State or Territory has a compulsory third party insurance (CTP) scheme for boats. The Parliamentary Travelsafe Committee Report No. 14, tabled November 1994, recommended that the issue of CTP for boats be investigated by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission (MAIC).

Preliminary investigations recently carried out by the MAIC have suggested the introduction of any compulsory insurance scheme would be very complex because of the small insurance pool and the general unavailability of unlimited personal injury insurance in the marine portfolio. A formal response to the Parliamentary Travelsafe Committee's report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 23 May 1995.

To date, the Government's promotion of greater responsibility amongst shipping operators and its further development of the maritime industry's effectiveness and efficiency has ensured it is unnecessary to prescribe public liability insurance for ships. Instead, prudent ship owners are expected to carry insurance appropriate to their operations, as is the case in other industries not subject to prescriptive insurance.

In the future, the MAIC will continue to investigate the feasibility of an insurance scheme including such matters as costing and extent of insurance cover. The investigation will also examine whether compulsory insurance should extend to commercial operations.

The Government will maintain a close watch on marine safety and will continue to develop appropriate marine safety strategies which take into account the advice of the Maritime Industry Consultative Council on marine safety issues and the needs of industry and users.

222. World Heritage Listed Areas

Mr ROWELL asked the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

With reference to a number of councils and freehold property owners in North Queensland who have land in World Heritage Listed areas and as the councils have to provide facilities, such as roads, with no rate base, and a number of landowners have to pay rates on World Heritage Listed areas which substantially restricts the level of activities they can carry out in these areas, and as the State

Government increasingly is introducing the 'user pays' concept as a revenue base—

- (1) Will the State Government give consideration to providing financial assistance to local authorities who have World Heritage Listed and National Parks areas within their boundaries to alleviate the burden on their ratepayers of supplying services, such as roads, to a wide range of people?
- (2) Will consideration also be given to providing financial compensation to landholders who have land within World Heritage Listed areas because of the restrictions being placed on certain activities on their properties?

Answer:

(1) The cost of maintaining roads and providing visitor services on national parks is met by the Department of Environment and Heritage.

Local Government has access to the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme administered by the Department of Transport, which provides funding for maintenance of roads into national parks.

Additionally, the Local Government Grants Commission takes into account both the area of non-rateable land, and expenditure disabilities created by special attractions such as highly visited national parks, when determining the allocation of financial assistance grants.

World Heritage Listing does not affect the rate base of Local Government because it is not a change in land tenure.

(2) The *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* already provides for the payment of compensation where existing use rights are constrained by the requirements relating to the management of World Heritage values.

Similarly, the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* provides for the payment of compensation when a regulation giving effect to a World Heritage Management Area is commenced. Compensation is payable where land is injuriously affected by a restriction or prohibition imposed under a regulation unless that restriction or prohibition already applies under some other Act.

225. International CFIDS/ME Awareness Day

Mr HEALY asked the Minister for Health—

As 12 May 1995 was recognised as International CFIDS/ME Awareness Day (Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), what is his department's commitment to funding research that will allow relief to the hundreds of Queenslanders currently suffering from this debilitating and distressing illness?

Answer:

Funding for medical research in Australia is driven from a national level through the National Health and Medical Research Council. Given the wide range of subjects and diseases, the Council

provides research funding based on judgements about scientific merit and peer review.

Queensland Health acknowledges the debilitating effect of chronic diseases such as Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFIDS/ME) on sufferers and actively seeks means of providing relief to sufferers by providing funding for medical research and development.

For example, Queensland Health provides \$4.4 million of operational funding to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR), which allows it to develop its own research program. Their research agenda focuses on diseases characteristic of our sub-tropical environment.

The Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR) targets the development of vaccines and other measures against viral illnesses such as Glandular Fever, Malaria, Ross River and Dengue Fever, which are not infrequently the precursors of chronic fatigue syndrome. Influenza is another precursor of chronic fatigue syndrome. Queensland Health collaborates with general practitioners in programs to maximise influenza vaccination in populations at most risk.

Queensland Health also awards grants of \$100,000 to the Arbo-Virus Research Program and operational funds of \$228,000 to Sir Albert Sakzewski Laboratories at the Royal Brisbane Hospital to research these precursor viral illnesses.

226. Eastlink

Mr SPRINGBORG asked the Premier and Minister for Economic and Trade Development—

Has Cabinet approved the connection of the Queensland and New South Wales electricity grids via the proposed National Electricity Grid Connection referred to as Eastlink?

Answer:

In response to the question made by Mr Springborg, I can advise as follows:

(1) Yes.

It is a proposal approved by the Liberal and National Party Government in New South Wales and has been endorsed by the Queensland Cabinet. The Government will give full consideration to any recommendations arising from the current Environmental Impact Statement process.

229. Sunshine Motorway

Mr LAMING asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

(1) Does the Government intend to construct an access loop on the Sunshine Motorway approach just north of the Mooloolah River to allow traffic in the South Mooloolaba/Bundilla area to access the motorway from Brisbane Road to travel north on the motorway?

(2) If not, why not?

(3) If so, when will construction commence?

Answer:

The Government currently has no plans to construct a new access loop.

During the initial planning for the interchange it was decided that the additional loop was not required because traffic counts on the existing Mooloolaba Bypass showed that a relatively small volume of traffic travelled from Bundilla to the north.

In the current situation motorists wishing to travel north from Bundilla can access the motorway via Karawatha Drive or via the Mooloolaba Road interchange.

The construction of an additional access loop would be a complicated and expensive undertaking. It would require the resumption of a number of properties and could not be justified in terms of potential traffic usage.

232. Cardwell Ambulance Centre

Mr LITTLEPROUD asked the Deputy Premier, Minister for Emergency Services and Consumer Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier on Rural Affairs—

Will he provide a detailed explanation of the unfortunate circumstances where, on 15 May 1995, a person residing at Cardwell and living next door to the ambulance centre, suffered a cardiac arrest and in spite of his proximity to the centre, an unacceptable lengthy delay occurred before an ambulance officer came to assist this person?

Answer:

At midday on 15 May, a 56 year old woman collapsed at the fish shop at Cardwell. Her daughter ran to the ambulance station two doors away. However, the station was unattended so it appears she returned to the shop and rang 000.

The Cardwell ambulance station has two permanent officers on staff and three honorary officers. Cardwell station has two ambulance vehicles.

At that time, one of the permanent officers and one of the honorary officers were in Tully getting repairs to the electrical system on one of the ambulances. (Tully officers are particularly nervous about the electrical system on their vehicles following a previous electrical fault which resulted in a fire which severely damaged the Cardwell station.)

At 1204 hrs, the QAS received a call to respond to an unconscious collapse in Cardwell. The Cardwell officers were then at the Tully station awaiting repairs to the vehicle. As the repairs had just been completed, the officers immediately picked up the vehicle and set off for Cardwell 42 kms away.

In the meantime, the relatives had made contact with the Doctor in Cardwell who attended the scene and pronounced life extinct. One of the other honorary officers in Cardwell noticed that the doctor was in attendance and stopped to render assistance as well. The Doctor rang the ambulance to advise them. The ambulance continued to the scene anyway.

Although the actions of the officers are understandable, in retrospect the decision to take

the car to Tully and leave the station unattended was not the optimal decision that could have been made.

New instructions have been issued by the regional staff to ensure that the occasions when Cardwell is unattended are minimised.

This is a tragic incident in which a serious illness has arisen when the local ambulance crew was out of town. Unfortunately, in small towns there will be times when this does occur either due to the crew being on another case or, as in this incident, when urgent other business is required. Procedures have been put in place within the region to ensure that such times are reduced to a minimum.

Cardwell station manages an average of 600—700 cases per annum of which the majority are casualty room cases. The staffing level is similar to that at many other small towns in Queensland. The mixture of permanent and honorary staff is the best means of providing service to such communities.

The Cardwell station is a good station with three very committed and energetic Honoraries. This incident is out of character for the local team.

I express my condolences to the family.

233. Tallon Bridge, Bundaberg

Mr SLACK asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the recently completed Bundaberg "Tallon" Bridge—

- (1) Has the contractor and sub-contractor been fully paid?
- (2) Are there any outstanding claims or pending legal action in respect to unresolved payment claims?
- (3) What repair work was done to the bridge prior to its opening and are there currently any cracks or faults requiring repairs?
- (4) Has the bridge been fully inspected and will he give an assurance that the bridge is free of any indication that faults will occur in the future?

Answer:

(1) The parties to the contract to build the Tallon Bridge are Queensland Transport and McConnell Dowell Constructors (Aust) Pty Ltd.

Queensland Transport has honoured its contractual obligations in paying progress payments to the contractor for works completed.

The contractor is obliged to submit a Statutory Declaration with each progress claim in which the contractor declares that all wages and claims of workmen have been paid in accordance with the awards.

On submission of the contractor's Final Claim, the Final Statutory Declaration shows that the contractor is to declare that as well as the wages claims, that all payments due to subcontractors have been made.

Under the contract payment provisions Queensland Transport does not process payments unless the Statutory Declaration is duly completed.

The contractor is yet to submit its final claim.

Queensland Transport is not made aware of the contractual arrangements between the contractor and his subcontractors and suppliers.

(2) The contractor has presented some claims. Queensland Transport is assessing these in accordance with the contract.

The contractor has not notified Queensland Transport of legal action.

Queensland Transport has not received any notification regarding legal action between the contractor and others.

(3) During the latter stages of the construction, treatment was required to shrinkage cracks in some of the deck spans.

These were treated prior to asphalt surfacing works on the bridge and prior to the bridge opening.

These cracks did not affect the structural integrity of the bridge.

All cracking problems have been rectified and there are no other faults requiring attention.

(4) The specifications for the bridge construction included Quality Assurance provisions.

Payment for completed works included the provision that work be conforming to the specifications.

Queensland Transport maintained staff on site during construction of the bridge. Duties included monitoring compliance with the specifications.

Progress Inspections and Quality procedures have been followed.

Under normal operating conditions there is no reason why the bridge should not last for its design life.

The Austroads Bridge Design Code 1992 shows that the normal design life is 100 years.

During the normal life of the bridge, it is expected that some maintenance will be required to some of the elements, eg expansion joints and deck wearing surface.

The bridge has been fully inspected and there is no evidence that faults will occur in the future due to the construction processes.

234. Casino Control Act

Mr LINGARD asked the Treasurer—

With reference to the recent incident at the Treasury Casino when two children were left at the front door for several hours whilst their parent gambled and due to the restrictive entry provisions of the *Casino Control Act* police were unable to accompany the children into the Casino to enable the identification of their parent and police were left in the position of having to care for the children for several hours until the parent came forward—

Will he amend the Act to enable police to accompany children under 18 years of age into the

Casino, particularly the video surveillance room, when situations such as this arise?

Answer:

I am aware of an incident at the Conrad Treasury Casino on Sunday, 14 May 1995, where two young children aged 11 and 8 were left unattended by their father while he was in the Casino. I presume that this is the incident to which the Honourable Member refers, although the facts do not fully accord with his question.

Let me summarise the events.

- . At 6.15 that evening, Conrad Security became aware of the children playing, unattended, near the front of the Casino in Queen Street.
- . When they were still there—and still unattended—30 minutes later, the Casino Security Shift Manager became involved. He spoke with the children and ascertained that they had, in fact, been left in the nearby McDonald's store and had followed their father to the Casino.
- . Police were notified at 7.25pm, and uniformed Officers arrived at 7.46pm.
- . The children's father came out of the Casino at 8.05pm and was reunited with his children.
- . At 8.16pm, he was formally excluded from the Casino. The Police then returned to duty.

In all, then, Police involvement was only about 30 minutes in total. It is most unlikely that actually taking the children into the Casino could have shortened this involvement in any way.

Nonetheless, as soon as the incident came to the attention of the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, steps were taken to ensure that a clear policy and set of procedures were in place to deal with any future incidents. A meeting between senior officers of QOGR and Police Officers has been arranged for 29 May to finalise this.

Generally speaking, however, there does not appear to be any need at present to amend the Casino Control Act to achieve the desired goal. Police Officers have a common law obligation to ensure the safety and well being of all children. The welfare of the child is paramount. On this basis, I see no impediment to a Police Officer, in the execution of his duty, either escorting a child through a Queensland Casino in search of its parents or accessing the video surveillance room.

This view has been discussed with both the Juvenile Aid Bureau and the Department of Family Services who agree that it should form the basis of operating procedures from here on in.

Naturally, these procedures will be kept under review and should any changes (legislative or administrative) be necessary, they will be implemented.

235. Old Bruce Highway

Mr TURNER asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the number of accidents and delays in getting from the Palmwoods-Keil Mountain Road onto the old Bruce Highway—

Will he advise what proposals his department has to overcome this dangerous and serious problem?

Answer:

Traffic delays in accessing the Connection Road from Palmwoods and the Keil Mountain Road have resulted in higher priority being assigned to upgrading of this intersection in the Roads Implementation Program (1995/96—1999/2000).

Queensland Transport's North Coast District is currently investigating the most appropriate intersection treatment.

237. Goondiwindi Hospital

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the Goondiwindi Hospital and to communities serviced by the hospital which includes people in New South Wales—

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to downgrade bed numbers at the Goondiwindi Hospital?
- (2) Will he give an undertaking to visit the hospital so he can acquaint himself with its role, particularly as it is situated on the national highway?

Answer:

(1) No decision has been made in relation to the future bed number allocation for Goondiwindi Hospital. The Darling Downs Region has submitted its draft Regional Service Plan which outlines the bed configuration and future role of the Hospital. This draft plan is currently being assessed. Let me give this assurance to the people of Goondiwindi, Goondiwindi Hospital will require to provide them with the services they need and deserve.

(2) Yes, it is my intention to visit the Goondiwindi Hospital.

238. Land Valuation Act

Miss SIMPSON asked the Treasurer—

With reference to the proposed changes to the *Land Valuation Act*, primarily the shift from unimproved capital valuations to site valuations—

How much will the Government reap in increased land tax revenue under the proposal?

Answer:

The Department of Lands issued a working paper "Valuation of Land Act Reform in Queensland" in March 1993 which canvassed, inter alia, the desirability of a move to site values for rating and taxation purposes.

However, there are no specific proposals to amend the basis of valuation in the current Act.

In these circumstances, there are no implications for land tax revenue.

239. Regional Development Organisations

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development—

With reference to the importance of regional development organisations like the Gulf Local Authorities Development Association and the Cape York Peninsula Development Association—

Does the Government recognise and support their endeavours to promote business in remote areas?

Answer:

Yes, my Department realises the important role of regional development organisations in developing strong regional economies and promoting business growth and diversification.

A range of project-related assistance is provided to regional development organisations throughout the State, including the Business Advice for Rural Areas and Regional Economic Development programs administered by my Department.

The Business Advice for Rural Areas program provides the services of a Business Facilitator to groups or individuals seeking to develop, expand or diversify businesses in rural areas and provide new job opportunities. This is achieved by supplying appropriate 'start up' information and advice, and on-going support and assistance.

Since 1992, a Business Advice Office has been active in the Cape York Peninsula under the management of the Cape York Peninsula Development Association. Funding for that position has recently been extended until 1998.

My Department is currently discussing with the Gulf Local Authorities Development Association a proposal to support a Business Officer for the Gulf for a two year period.

The Regional Economic Development program assists regional development organisations fund the development of tourism and economic strategic plans for individual regions, identify new business opportunities, conduct feasibility studies and market investment opportunities.

The Cape York Peninsula Development Association has received funding of \$29,000 and the Gulf Local Authorities Development Association \$16,050 under this program. Discussions are continuing with these organisations on further funding to develop economic development strategies for both regions.

In addition to the range of assistance provided through these State-wide programs, my Department has provided additional support for remote regional development organisations. This support has been provided in recognition of the difficulties experienced in raising sufficient funds for their operations in areas with low levels of business activity, limited infrastructure and low density population.

Since 1990, my Department has made \$78,000 available to the Cape York Peninsula Development Association to support its operation expenses and the details of further funding for the period to the end of this financial year are soon to be finalised.

My Department is also working on a further new initiative, which is part of the current 1995-96 budget. This initiative is to provide interim core funding of \$62,500 each to the Cape York Peninsula Development Association and the Gulf Local Authorities Development Association to further assist the development of these organisations.

Both of these associations are also members of the newly established Far North Queensland Regional Development Network. The Network, which is to develop strategies to ensure the continued economic development of the Far North, Gulf and Cape regions, is to receive up to \$100,000 per annum for the next three years from my Department.

241. Yeppoon-Rockhampton Road

Mr LESTER asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

What roadworks are proposed for widening and upgrading the Yeppoon-Rockhampton Road?

Answer:

The 1995/96 Roads Implementation Program provides for the construction of 2 km of the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road at Malara Flats at an estimated cost of \$1.9M.

The project will upgrade a narrow section of two lane pavement and provide increased overtaking opportunities by the addition of two overtaking lanes.

The outcomes of this project will be improved safety for motorists and improved attractiveness of the Capricorn Coast area for tourists.

243. Nullinga and Flaggy Creek Dams

Mr GILMORE asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

- (1) What is (a) the status of planning for the Nullinga Dam on the Walsh River west of Mareeba and (b) the likely cost of the dam and the area of irrigable land commanded by the dam?
- (2) What is (a) the status of planning for the Flaggy Creek Dam north-west of Cairns and (b) the likely cost of the dam and associated works?

Answer

1. Nullinga Dam and Tinaroo Falls sites were originally considered in the early 1950s as options to provide supply to a proposed irrigation area on the Atherton Tablelands. The Tinaroo Falls site was identified as the superior site, and the Tinaroo Falls Dam was subsequently completed in 1958. There has been no significant consideration of the Nullinga site since the 1950s.

As part of my Department's Atherton Tablelands Development Strategy, consideration of the availability of future water supplies may possibly

include some consideration of the Nullinga Dam site.

2. There are no present plans for the Flaggy Creek Dam site, which has long been identified as a possible source of water supply to the Cairns City region. This site was first investigated in 1952 and costs were reviewed in the 1980s.

Preliminary estimates indicate that a dam of 260 000 megalitre capacity at this site could provide a supply of 48 000 megalitres per annum. A dam of this capacity was estimated to cost some \$45 million in 1986.

246. Blackfellow and Black Duck Creeks

Mr FITZGERALD asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to proposed dam sites on the Blackfellow and Black Duck Creeks in the Gatton Shire that were investigated by the Water Resources Section of the Department of Primary Industries—

- (1) Has the investigation shown any of the three sites to be suitable?
- (2) If so, which sites are preferred and what is the estimated cost, capacity and yield of each?
- (3) Is further study being done on potential water storage sites in the Gatton, Laidley and Boonah Shires?

Answer

1. Preliminary investigations of potential storages sites on Blackfellow and Black Duck Creeks in the Gatton Shire were carried out in 1990 by consultants to the Department.

The consultants conclusions were that whilst it was technically feasible to construct dams at these sites, in each case, the cost of any additional supplies provided would be very high.

2. Not Applicable.

3. At this time, further study on potential storage sites in the Gatton Laidley and Boonah Shires is restricted to consideration of small weir proposals including the weir in the Clarendon area being progressed under the Operation Lockyer Revival initiative.

247. Clermont Stock Inspector

Mr MITCHELL asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

Following upon the Acting Minister for Primary Industries' reply that Clermont will continue to receive the services of a locally based stock inspector—

Will he advise when Clermont will be provided with a full time stock inspector?

Answer:

The Clermont Stock Inspector position has been advertised. Selection interviews are taking place within my Department this week (week commencing 22 May 1995).

The Stock Inspector appointed as a result of this selection process will take up duties as soon as this can be arranged.

253. Pioneer River Bridge

Mr MALONE asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the long delays for traffic crossing the Pioneer River during peak times—

Will he give an indication of (a) the projected capital works that are planned to address this problem and (b) when work will commence on the project?

Answer:

The outcomes of the Mackay Bridge Study and East West Connector Report were released in March 1995.

The duplication of Ron Camm Bridge was recommended as the preferred option for the provision of additional cross river capacity.

A transportation study shall be carried out to consider the long term road network needs and traffic demand requirements. The study shall be carried out in conjunction with the Mackay City Strategic Planning process.

The project has been included in the National Highway Strategy. The Federal Minister for Transport is currently finalising the Federal National Highway Strategy allocation to the State and is expected to announce the approved forward strategy for Queensland in June 1995.

254. Mourilyan Wharf Facilities

Mr ROWELL asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

While it has been established that the sugar industry infrastructure, such as sheds, shiploader etc., was paid for by the sugar industry, it is unclear who paid for the wharf and molasses storage tank at the Port of Mourilyan—

- (1) How was the wharf funded?
- (2) How was the molasses storage tank funded?
- (3) How will the Ports Corporation dividend to the Government be assessed in lieu of the sugar industry contribution to the facilities at Mourilyan?

Answer:

(1) The Mourilyan Wharf was constructed by the Ports Corporation of Queensland (then the Harbours Corporation of Queensland) in the early 1960s using loan funds.

The users of the port infrastructure such as the Mourilyan Bulk Sugar Terminal Organisation and the Australian Molasses Pool were charged a harbour due, (currently 85 cents per tonne of product shipped through the port) to recompense the port authority for port operational expenses such as loan servicing, development, planning and administration.

(2) The molasses tanks were also funded by the then Harbours Corporation through usage agreements with the molasses industry. Typically the Harbours Corporation negotiated loans with financial institutions and the loan servicing and repayment costs were reimbursed to the Harbours Corporation by the then Australian Molasses Pool (now the Mourilyan Molasses Terminal Pty Ltd).

(3) Genuine user funded assets, which are shown in the accounts of the port authorities, will be excluded from the asset base used for the calculation of port authority target rates of return. This will remove any undue pressure to generate higher profits to meet rates of return requirements on assets already contributed by port users. The Government has previously given a commitment in this respect.

Whilst the funding arrangements associated with the construction of the wharf and the molasses tanks at Mourilyan require those assets to be included in the Ports Corporation of Queensland's asset base, the shiploader at Mourilyan and considerable more infrastructure located in other Queensland ports will be excluded from the asset bases of Queensland port authorities.

However, it should be realised that the proposed dividends are related to port authority profits, therefore they will not be directly affected by the value of a port authority's asset base.

Any dividend payable by the Ports Corporation of Queensland will be based on the annual profits of the organisation as a whole, and not on a port by port basis.

257. Mooloolaba Boat Ramp

Mr LAMING asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

- (1) Have plans been made to extend the public boat ramp facilities at Mooloolaba?
- (2) If so, when is this work expected to be completed?

Answer:

Land has been set aside for some time at the Mooloolaba Boat Harbour, between the existing boat ramp and car/trailer parking area and the Mooloolaba Yacht Club lease area, for provision of additional recreational boating facilities. It is envisaged that a two (2) lane boat ramp and associated car/trailer parking will be provided.

These works have been included in Queensland Transport's three (3) year rolling program for capital works and, on the basis of current priorities and funding arrangements, are scheduled for completion by the end of June 1998.

263. Tannum Sands Road

Mr BENNETT asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

What will the proposed upgrading of the Tannum Sands Road mean to the people of the Boyne Tannum area?

Answer:

The proposed upgrading of the Tannum Sands Road involves the widening and rehabilitation of 5 km of the road from a single lane strip of bitumen to a two lane sealed road.

The Tannum Sands Road provides a direct connection from Tannum Sands to the Bruce Highway.

The upgraded road will provide safer access to the Bruce Highway and encourage more visitors to the Boyne/Tannum area.

265. Graffiti Vandalism

Mr PYKE asked the Premier and Minister for Economic and Trade Development—

Is he aware of the excellent package of legislation and policies adopted by Western Australia to prevent graffiti vandalism and does he intend to implement a similar initiative in Queensland?

Answer:

(1) Yes.

(2) The Queensland Government maintains a strong interest in policies being implemented in other jurisdictions.

279. Timber Processing

Mr PERRETT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to DPI Forest Service Sales Notice 22/94 which contains, at page 35, the assurance that "domestic processing of the resource is not a requirement under this sale"—

(1) Why was this paragraph included?

(2) What guarantee will he give that the timber grown with funds provided by Queenslanders on land held by the Government on behalf of Queenslanders will be used only by Queensland processors?

Answer:

1. In order to prevent a breach of the competitive rules contained in the Trades Practices Act.

2. I am confident Queensland processors are competitive enough to enable them to grasp these opportunities.

281. Swans Lagoon Research Station

Mr STONEMAN asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the answer he gave to my question of 22 March 1995 surrounding allegations connected with the management of Swans Lagoon Research Station, wherein it was acknowledged that investigations took place and were 'thoroughly investigated'—

(1) How could the matter have been 'thoroughly investigated' without any further contact with the neighbour who gave the initial information to Mr Stewart Wood, Regional Director—North

Region or, it would appear, any other person outside the department?

(2) Why did his reply clearly state there was 'no evidence of wrongdoing' when in fact the matter of a missing horse, which was part of the information given to Mr Wood, became the subject of a Court action and conviction involving a former employee of the department in the Bowen Court in 1995?

(3) Based on this evidence that there has been a 'wrongdoing', has he as Minister misled the Parliament or have officers of the department not advised him of the truth and are involved in an attempted cover up?

(4) In view of the above will he immediately re-open the matter and have an independent investigation carried out forthwith?

Answer:

1. The matter was thoroughly investigated by the Department's internal auditors based on the allegations made by Mr Tudehope. This investigation involved checking a range of internal and external records covering the time period covering the allegations made by Mr Tudehope.

2. As I stated in my previous answer to this question no evidence of wrongdoing was uncovered in the investigation by the internal auditors based on the allegations made by Mr Tudehope. No allegations were made by Mr Tudehope to Mr Wood regarding the theft of any horse in their meeting at the Clare Club on 13 September 1993.

3. The 'wrongdoing' referred to by Mr Stoneman arose from a prosecution launched as a result of a horse bearing a Department of Primary Industries (DPI) brand being spotted by a DPI employee in a paddock in the Bowen District. Other matters arising from this court case have been referred to the Criminal Justice Commission by the police and are currently under investigation. There has been no cover-up and all matters brought to the attention of the Department have been thoroughly investigated.

4. A thorough investigation has been carried out based on the allegations made by Mr Tudehope to Mr Stewart Wood, Regional Director (North) of my Department and no further investigation is proposed. Investigations are continuing through the Criminal Justice Commission on matters raised in the Court action in the Bowen Court in 1995.

283. Broadwater Dam

Mr SPRINGBORG asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the proposed Broadwater Dam on the Granite Belt -

(1) Will he confirm his commitment to this proposal?

(2) When will construction commence on the dam?

(3) When is it estimated the construction of the dam will be completed?

- (4) What financial commitment does the Government plan to make towards the dam?
- (5) What are the cost sharing arrangements proposed between the Government and local water users in the area of capital construction costs of the dam and reticulation or any combination of the above?

Answer:

1. Yes—Provided the results of economic and environmental studies are satisfactory and agreement is reached with local growers over the extent of the scheme and cost sharing arrangements.
2. The timetable for the scheme is dependent on proposals currently being considered by local growers. Once they have reached agreement, it is anticipated that it will then be approximately twelve to eighteen months until tenders could be called for construction of the dam.
3. Construction of the dam is expected to take about two years after the successful tender has been awarded.
4. The Government and the beneficiaries have yet to negotiate funding arrangements for the dam, currently estimated to cost some \$18 million.
5. At this stage, it has not been possible to negotiate these details until the extent of the project has been finalised.

285. Darling Downs Water Storage

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

Why has his Government not committed any funds to either building new water storage facilities or planning new storage facilities in the Greater Darling Downs Region?

Answer:

Over recent years, the Government has committed significant resources to planning in the region in attempting to find cost effective solutions to the demand for more water.

My Department has undertaken an appraisal study of the available options in the Upper Condamine area and released a report detailing these in February 1992.

This information was presented to local governments, irrigators and interest groups at numerous local meetings.

Unfortunately, it was apparent that no one scheme would be favoured by a majority of interests in the region.

293. Upper Condamine Water Storage

Mr SPRINGBORG asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

What plans does the Department of Primary Industries have for the construction of water storages including weirs in the Upper Condamine system, and in particular districts in the Warwick, Allora, Killarney, Maryvale and Pratten areas?

Answer:

A report on an appraisal by my Department of possible additional water storage options was released in February 1992.

The options evaluated in that study included storages of various capacities at the Elbow Valley dam site upstream of Warwick and offstream storages in the Warwick, Yarramalong and Cecil Plains areas. This information was presented to local government, irrigators and interest groups at numerous local meetings.

Unfortunately, no one option was favoured by a majority of interests in the area.

300. Fossicking

Mr MITCHELL asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the advent of the *Fossicking Act 1994*, the Central Highlands area mainly around Clermont has become a very sought after destination for recreational fossicking and as the town attracts large numbers of tourists, many of whom stay for periods as long as three months and since designated areas for fossicking are very limited—

Will he open some of the forestry reserves in the area as designated areas for recreational fossicking?

Answer:

The Fossicking Act 1994, applies to forestry land only if the area is designated as fossicking land (i.e. commercial mining operations are also permitted), is declared as a fossicking area (i.e. available for recreational fossicking only) or the Chief Executive of the Department of Primary Industries gives a general permission for fossicking on the land.

Fossicking would be considered a legitimate recreational use of forestry land where it does not compromise existing management strategies or potential superior purposes for the area.

My Department and the Department of Minerals and Energy are currently developing policies and procedures which will enable part or parts of forestry reserves to be assessed and where appropriate to be made available for recreational fossicking.

We will be consulting with the association of Queensland lapidary clubs during this process to ensure that the final guidelines are appropriate and workable.

308. Brisbane Road, Helensvale

Mr SZCZERBANIK asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

- (1) What progress has been made on roadworks at Brisbane Road, Helensvale?
- (2) When will they be completed?

Answer:

(1) The progress on the upgrading of the Gold Coast Highway between the Pacific Highway and

Coomabah Creek is on schedule, given the Contractor Baulderstone Hornibrook has experienced delays of three (3) weeks due to wet weather. The progress of the works has also been in accordance with Queensland Rail requirements for the construction of the Beenleigh-Robina rail line.

(2) The project will be fully operational for traffic by late August 1995. The project will be fully complete by the end of September 1995.

312. Tewanin Bus Service

Mr LAMING asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the new contract about to be awarded to Tewanin Bus Service on the Sunshine Coast—

- (1) Will the Government subsidise the company adequately to ensure that they will be able to provide the advertised level of service immediately?
- (2) Will the Government fund a public education and promotion program on the Sunshine Coast to encourage residents to use the new service?

Answer:

(1) Firstly, the commercial service contract for bus services on the Sunshine Coast is to be awarded to Sunshine Transit (Qld) Pty Ltd and not Tewanin Bus Service as the honourable member's question suggests.

Secondly, as my announcement at the time made clear, the advertised service levels are to be phased in over the first one—two years of the contract, although an immediate improvement in service levels north of the Maroochy River will occur from day one of the contract.

So far as government subsidies are concerned, these new contracts are commercial in nature. That is, the cost of providing services under the contract is to be met by the operator out of revenue generated from fares, rather than from direct government subsidy.

Indeed, a key feature of the Passenger Transport reforms is that over the five year period of these initial service contracts, the previous regime of direct government subsidy, under which the Government subsidised private bus operators at a rate of between 30%—40% of their gross fare revenue, is to be completely phased out.

Under the Sunshine Coast contract therefore, as with all other commercial service contracts, the only government funding to be provided is as follows:

- (i) Reimbursement of the 50% fares concessions that operators are obliged to provide to pensioners and Queensland Seniors Card holders under the terms of the Government's fares policy;
- (ii) Payment for the transport of school children eligible for assistance under the School Transport Assistance Scheme; and

- (iii) Interest subsidy payments in respect of new vehicles purchased to provide urban or non-school services under the contract.

In addition, to achieve the previously mentioned goal of phasing out direct government subsidies to commercial bus operators, transitional funding which will reduce to zero over the life of the contract is to be paid.

- (2) A government funded public education and promotion program will be conducted on the Sunshine Coast to encourage residents to use the new bus service.

315. Savannahlander

Mr GILMORE asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

- (1) What was the total cost of the establishment of the Savannah Lander train service between Mt Surprise and Forsyth?
- (2) How many passengers have been carried on this route as at 30 May 1995?
- (3) How much money has been collected as fares as at 30 May 1995?

Answer:

(1) The cost of the establishment of the Savannahlander train service between Mt Surprise and Forsyth can be broken into two major elements:

- a. Three railmotor 2000 series carriages have been refurbished and upgraded at the Queensland Rail Workshops in Townsville. Two of the carriages are currently operating four times a week between Mt Surprise and Forsyth and the third carriage will be nearing completion within the next week and will be available for service.

The original budget for the upgrade of these three railmotors was \$650,000.00 and although the final figures are yet to be consolidated, current estimates indicate that the upgrade program will be within the original budget.

- b. Additionally, an upgrade and improvement of the Mt Surprise and Forsyth stations was conducted, and this included an interpretive centre plus a shed to house the railmotors, as well as a general repaint of the station buildings and some fencing to house cars and other motor vehicles. The budget for this was \$150,000.00, and although the work has not been completed totally, indications are that the improvements will fall within the original budgets.

(2) Total passengers carried on the Savannahlander between 3 April and 30 May 1995 was 150. Comparative figures for the Last Great Train Ride during the 92/93 period were 185 and 93/94 were 290.

(3) Total fare collections for the period 3 April 1995 to 30 May 1995 were \$2,008.00

The marketing of the Savannahlander has only been in effect for two months and interest for the product, both within Australia and internationally, has been enthusiastic and strong. The marketing lead-time cycle for this type of product, particularly in the international markets, can be as long as 12 to 18 months and therefore a lot of the progress that has been made will not immediately translate into passengers on board or fare collections.

Queensland Rail is very much involved in the Consultative Committee which is a community group concerning development of tourism in the Gulf Savannah region. I also understand that there has been extensive domestic and international media coverage of the Savannahlander and as recently as two weeks ago, the Savannahlander appeared as a feature on the 'Great Outdoors' program. Future and ongoing media opportunities will assist in creating awareness of the train and the region.

319. Carters Ridge Road

Mr STEPHAN asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the possible use of a portion of a two chain wide road at Carters Ridge, south of Gympie, for community purposes—

What impediment is in place which prohibits the use of a small section of this road reserve for a building which would enable the local rural fire brigade to keep their vehicle and equipment?

Answer:

Application/s should be made to the Department of Lands who are responsible for administering requests for temporary or permanent closure, lease, and permits to occupy crown road reserve.

If the application/s involves a State-controlled road it would be prudent to refer the matter to Queensland Transport's North Coast District Office in Gympie before making application to the Department of Lands.

Queensland Transport is unlikely to object to any such proposal provided it does not conflict with future road infrastructure improvements and safe access can be provided.

345. Victory in the Pacific Day

Mr HORAN asked the Premier and Minister for Economic and Trade Development—

With reference to the significance of Victory in the Pacific Day to Queensland, and the special

importance of this day to the many ex-service organisations with links to the Pacific Theatre of World War II—

Will the Government give consideration to a public holiday on this day to allow remembrance and celebration of this anniversary?

Answer:

The Government has considered granting a holiday on 15 August 1995 for the purposes of celebrating Victory in the Pacific Day (VP Day). Advice was sought from the Australia Remembers Committee, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the RSL and the COAG Working Group on the Uniformity of Public Holidays. These organisations, and in particular the RSL, opposed the granting of a specific holiday to celebrate VP Day. The Government was advised that a day of remembrance could be observed in a similar manner to Armistice Day.

Taking into account the views of these organisations and the economic impact of a public holiday and the fact that the 16th August is already a public holiday in Brisbane, the Government decided not to grant a public holiday for VP Day.

347. Swearing in of Members of Parliament

Mr LAMING asked the Premier and Minister for Economic and Trade Development—

- (1) Is it intended to change the provisions for the swearing-in of Members of this Parliament, before this Parliament is dissolved, so that Members are not sworn in by other elected Members but by a Queensland Supreme Court Judge, the Governor or The Clerk of the Parliament?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If so, what are the details of the new procedures?

Answer:

(1) Officers of the Parliamentary Service Commission, my Department and the Crown Law Division of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General are at present examining the legislative, procedural and customary factors required to be taken into account in the ceremonial opening of Parliament.

(2) & (3) My colleague the Leader of the House, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, will before this Parliament is dissolved table a motion in this place setting out procedures for the opening of the next Parliament.