



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

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TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2013

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.

For the sitting week, Madam Speaker acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land upon which this parliament is assembled.

ASSENT TO BILLS

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor letters in respect of assent to certain bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letters for the information of members.

The Honourable F. Simpson MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 22 March 2013

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012, the Fossicking Act 1994, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005 for particular purposes”

This Bill is hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

22 March 2013

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 March 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker regarding assent to certain bills [\[2371\]](#).

The Honourable F. Simpson MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 27 March 2013

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Ambulance Service Act 1991, the Child Protection Act 1999, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Forensic Disability Act 2011, the Health Act 1937, the Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999, the Health Practitioners (Special Events Exemption) Act 1998, the Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Integrity Act 2009, the Public Health Act 2005, the Public Service Act 2008, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Regulation 2009, the Radiation Safety Act 1999 and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009, for particular purposes and to repeal the Dental Technicians Registration Act 2001, the Health Practitioner Registration Boards (Administration) Act 1999 and Speech Pathologists Registration Act 2001”

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Regulation 2009 and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Rules 2009 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes”

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

27 March 2013

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 27 March 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker regarding assent to certain bills [\[2372\]](#).

REPORT

Auditor-General

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General a report titled *Report to Parliament No. 10 for 2012-13—Results of audits: local government entities 2011-12*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 10—Results of audits: local government entities 2011-12 [\[2373\]](#).

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Oxley State School, School Lights

Ms Smith, from 527 petitioners, requesting the House to install flashing school lights at Oxley State School [\[2377\]](#).

Thorneside, Noise Barriers

Mr Davies, from 372 petitioners, requesting the House to build a fence or noise mitigation barrier in order to reduce the railway noise for the residents of Railway Parade and adjacent streets at Thorneside [\[2378\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3)—

Steve Irwin Way, Realignment

2 petitioners, requesting the House to not realign the Steve Irwin Way, as proposed in the Bruce Highway Upgrade Planning Study, so that it preserves the remnant forest for the future of the animals and ancient trees [\[2379\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, lodged and sponsored by the honourable member indicated—

Oateson Skyline Drive, Bus Route

Mr Dillaway, from 169 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse the proposed decision to close the bus route 212 along Oateson Skyline Drive and to review the frequency and hours of operation of route 212 with the objective of increasing patronage [\[2380, 2381\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Uranium Mining

Ms Palaszczuk, from 758 petitioners, requesting the House to preserve the current prohibition on uranium mining in Queensland [\[2382\]](#).

Alexandra Hills TAFE Campus

Ms Palaszczuk, from 290 petitioners, requesting the House to seek an assurance that it will not close the Alexandra Hills TAFE campus [\[2383\]](#).

Sumners Road Interchange Project

Ms Palaszczuk, from 146 petitioners, requesting the House to call upon the LNP Government to honour their pre-election commitment and allocate funding to complete the Sumners Road interchange project [\[2384\]](#).

Powerlink, Infrastructure

Mr Hobbs, from 593 petitioners, requesting the House to designate projects listed on the petition as private infrastructure and reject Powerlink's application for community infrastructure [\[2385\]](#).

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

22 March 2013—

- [2320](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 20—Correction to Report No. 13—Review of the Retirement Villages Act 1999
- [2321](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg) to an ePetition (2016-12) sponsored by Mrs Miller, from 1,093 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse its decision to close the Barrett Adolescent Centre and keep the centre open
- [2322](#) Response from the Minister Health (Mr Springborg) to an ePetition (2032-13) sponsored by Mr Mulherin, from 146 petitioners, requesting the House to rule out any cuts to the funding of staff, services or future development plans at Caboolture hospital
- [2323](#) Response from the Health (Mr Springborg) to an ePetition (2044-13) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 187 petitioners, requesting the House to approach the Federal Treasurer and request the reversal of the Commonwealth decision to reduce health funding to Queensland Health by \$103 million in 2012-13
- [2324](#) Response from the Health (Mr Springborg) to an ePetition (2046-13) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 187 petitioners, requesting the House to approach the Federal Treasurer and request the reversal of the Commonwealth decision to reduce health funding to Queensland Health by \$103 million in 2012-13
- [2325](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to an ePetition (2041-13) sponsored by Mr Wellington, from 353 petitioners, requesting the House to retain the compulsory voting system that is currently in place in Queensland

26 March 2013—

- [2326](#) Report by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection titled 'The State of Waste and Recycling in Queensland 2012'
- [2327](#) Queensland Liquor and Gaming Commission—Annual Report 2011-12

27 March 2013—

- [2328](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 20—Gasfields Commission Bill 2012
- [2329](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 21—Subordinate legislation tabled between 27 November 2012 and 12 February 2013
- [2330](#) Response from the Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr McArdle) to an ePetition (2033-12) sponsored by Mr Trout, from 121 petitioners, requesting the House to formally oppose the Federal Government's push to privatise Queensland's electricity industry
- [2331](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 26—Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2012 and Review of Lobbyists Code of Conduct

28 March 2013—

- [2332](#) Queensland Theatre Company—Annual Report 2012
- [2333](#) Board of Trustees of the Townsville Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2334](#) University of the Sunshine Coast—Annual Report 2012
- [2335](#) Ipswich Girls' Grammar School and Ipswich Junior Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2336](#) Board of Trustees of the Rockhampton Grammar School—Annual Report 2012

- [2337](#) Queensland University of Technology—Annual Report 2012
- [2338](#) Queensland College of Teachers—Annual Report 2012
- [2339](#) Brisbane Girls Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2340](#) Central Queensland University—Annual Report 2012: Volumes 1 and 2
- [2341](#) Board of Trustees Brisbane Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2342](#) James Cook University—Annual Report 2012: Volume 1
- [2343](#) James Cook University—Annual Report 2012: Volume 2
- [2344](#) Toowoomba Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2345](#) Rockhampton Girls Grammar School—Annual Report 2012
- [2346](#) University of Southern Queensland—Annual Report 2012
- [2347](#) University of Queensland—Annual Report 2012
- [2348](#) University of Queensland—Financial Statements 2012
- [2349](#) Griffith University—Annual Report 2012

2 April 2013—

- [2350](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to a paper petition (2071-13) and an ePetition (2055-13) presented by Mr Watts, from 1,777 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to repeal all laws and amend any regulations that prevent local governments from having the authority to approve or restrict Adult Entertainment Permits
- [2351](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) to an ePetition (1966-13) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 631 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that no mining applications are granted on any part of the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve

3 April 2013—

- [2352](#) Response from the Minister Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier (Mr Elmes) to an ePetition (2045-13) sponsored by Ms Palaszczuk, from 21 petitioners, requesting the House to support the passage of the Multicultural Recognition Bill 2012 when it comes before the House
- [2353](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell) to an ePetition (2036-13) sponsored by Mrs Miller, from 116 petitioners, requesting the House to take immediate action to reduce the amount of coal dust and other air pollution in the Wynnum Manly district and surrounding suburbs and attaching report titled 'Tennynson Dust Monitoring Investigation', September to October 2012
- [2354](#) Response from the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (Mr Langbroek) to a paper petition (2073-13) presented by Mr Latter, from 472 petitioners, requesting the House to leave teacher and teacher aide staffing in the Special Education Program at Loganlea State High School as it was allocated in 2012
- [2355](#) Response from the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (Mr Walker) to a paper petition (2076-13) presented by Mr Young, from 134 petitioners, requesting the House to note the Lammermoor resident's objection to the proposed mobile phone base station at Lammermoor Water Reservoir, Yeppoon, and to take into consideration the health implications for people living in the vicinity and the visual amenity and property valuations for this residential area
- [2356](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to an ePetition (2009-12) sponsored by Dr Robinson, from 1,399 petitioners, requesting the House to reassess the current self-regulation scheme and enact state legislation that will place further restrictions on outdoor and shopfront advertising with the intention of preventing the display of material that is sexually explicit, offensive and/or inappropriate for children

4 April 2013—

- [2357](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2067-13) presented by Mr Davies, from 145 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a bridge from the mainland to Stradbroke Island via Russell Island
- [2358](#) Interim response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2069-13) presented by Ms France, from 206 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the dangerous intersection at Bribie Island Road and Old Toorbul Point Road and look at options to minimise the risks posed
- [2359](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Community Safety (Mr Dempsey) to an ePetition (1982-12) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 277 petitioners, requesting the House to restore and increase funding to the Emergency Services Cadet Program, one of the most successful youth programs in Queensland

[2360](#) Response from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) to a paper petition (2068-13) presented by Dr Robinson, from 417 petitioners, requesting the House to rescind the recent closure of the off-leash area for dogs from Flinders to Amity Point beaches and return the area to an off-leash area for the exercise of dogs

5 April 2013—

[2361](#) TransLink Transit Authority: Final Report—1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012

[2362](#) Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee: Report No. 90—Inquiry into the Crime and Misconduct Commission's release and destruction of Fitzgerald Inquiry documents

8 April 2013—

[2363](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 26—Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012

[2364](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 27—Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012

[2365](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2073-13) presented by Ms Trad, from 801 petitioners, requesting the House to stop the planned closure of the following bus services: 220 Wynnum to City; 225 Wynnum to Carindale; 240 Capalaba to Wynnum; city express 214 Cannon Hill to city and 232 Cannon Hill to city

[2366](#) Response from the Minister Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2072-13) and an ePetition (2043-13) presented by Mr Shuttleworth, from 807 petitioners, requesting the House to allow newsagencies at Ferny Grove Shopping Village and at Arana KMart Plaza to have the ability to top up, register, refund and change expiry dates on Go Cards

11 April 2013—

[2367](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience (Mr Crisafulli) to a paper petition (2081-13) presented by Mr Knuth, from 162 petitioners, requesting the House to redraw the divisional boundaries of the Tablelands Regional Council to move the Walsh River, Watsonville and Irvinebank towns into Division 2

15 April 2013—

[2368](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 19—Oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission: Erratum

[2369](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 24—Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012: Government response

[2370](#) Response from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade (Mr Nicholls) to a paper petition (2079-13) and an ePetition (2056-13), presented by Mr Mulherin, from 419 petitioners respectively requesting the House to declare an immediate moratorium on the shedding of any jobs from all government departments and agencies, and on the transfer or sale of any government services to non-government organisations

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012—

[2386](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 35

[2387](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 35, explanatory notes

Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013—

[2388](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 36

[2389](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 36, explanatory notes

Fossicking Act 1994, Geothermal Energy Act 2010, Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004—

[2390](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 37

[2391](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 37, explanatory notes

Liquor Act 1992, Wagering Act 1998—

[2392](#) Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 34

[2393](#) Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 34, explanatory notes

Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991—

[2394](#) Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Regulation 2013, No. 38

[2395](#) Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Regulation 2013, No. 38, explanatory notes

Classification of Computer Games and Images and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013—

[2396](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 39

[2397](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 39, explanatory notes

Recording of Evidence Act 1962, Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991—

[2398](#) Recording of Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 40

[2399](#) Recording of Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 40, explanatory notes,

Drugs Misuse Act 1986—

[2400](#) Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 41

[2401](#) Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 41, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[2402](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 42

[2403](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 42, explanatory notes

Weapons and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012—

[2404](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, 2013, No. 43

[2405](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, 2013, No. 43, explanatory notes

Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011—

[2406](#) Commonwealth Games Arrangements Regulation 2013, No. 44

[2407](#) Commonwealth Games Arrangements Regulation 2013, No. 44, explanatory notes

Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[2408](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 45

[2409](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 45, explanatory notes

Property Law Act 1974—

[2410](#) Property Law Regulation 2013, No. 46

[2411](#) Property Law Regulation 2013, No. 46, explanatory notes

Magistrates Act 1991—

[2412](#) Magistrates Regulation 2013, No. 47

[2413](#) Magistrates Regulation 2013, No. 47, explanatory notes

Local Government Act 2009—

[2414](#) Local Government (De-amalgamation Implementation) Regulation 2013, No. 48

[2415](#) Local Government (De-amalgamation Implementation) Regulation 2013, No. 48, explanatory notes

Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Act 1999—

[2416](#) Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 49

[2417](#) Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 49, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2422](#) Code of Practice—Care of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals in Queensland

[2423](#) Code of Practice—Care of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals in Queensland, explanatory notes

MINISTERIAL PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Housing and Public Works (Mr Mander)—

[2418](#) Ministerial direction, dated 8 April 2013, from the Minister for Housing and Public Works (Mr Mander) to the Queensland Building Services Authority under section 7 of the Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991

MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following member's papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Inala (Ms Palaszczuk)—

[2419](#) Opposition Diary—Leader of the Opposition, 1 February 2013 to 28 February 2013

[2420](#) Letter, dated 2 April 2013, from the Leader of the Opposition (Ms Palaszczuk) to the Integrity Commissioner (Dr Solomon)

REPORT TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[2421](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any Bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by Her Excellency the Governor, viz—

Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012'

Insert—

'Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013'.

Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012'

Insert—

'Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013'.

Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012'

Insert—

'Health Practitioner Registration and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013'.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Boston Marathon, Explosions**

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.35 am): Today, the people of Boston have suffered a terrible tragedy. Currently we are waiting to find out exactly who or what was responsible for explosions that took place near the finish line around four hours into the Boston Marathon and what the motivation might be. I am told that the Boston Marathon is one of the oldest and largest sporting events in the United States of America and that the participation and crowd numbers are big enough to make it a possible target for a deliberate act of terrorism. Sadly, the very real fear and the very real prospect is that today's tragedy was no accident.

At the outset, I would like to extend the best wishes and deepest sympathies of all Queenslanders to the people of Boston, particularly Mayor Menino and the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mr Patrick. Like many Queenslanders, I have been to Boston with my family. I know the city, and the scenes I have seen on TV this morning are far too familiar and bring it very close to home. Today my thoughts and the thoughts of all Queenslanders are with the people of Boston.

McDonald, Mr A

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.36 am): Last week I was greatly saddened to hear that one of Queensland's true industry leaders, Alexander 'Zanda' McDonald, had succumbed to the injuries he sustained in a tragic accident on his family's property several weeks ago. As head of McDonald Holdings, or MDH, Zanda made an enormous contribution to this state and, indeed, our entire nation. The McDonald family has been in the cattle business in Queensland for over 180 years and currently runs Australia's largest privately owned cattle operation. Given the strength of that family tradition, Zanda's commitment to the beef industry and its future was perhaps not surprising.

However, Zanda was not a man to rest on the laurels of his family's achievements, nor was he one to sit back and wait for others to set the pace. Well known as an innovator and prominent leader in the industry, Zanda earned both respect and recognition for his vision, drive and astute management. Under his leadership, MDH collaborated with the CSIRO to become the first

commercial beef producer in the world to trial germ cell transplantation technology in cross-breeding programs for higher quality meat. His positioning of MDH at the forefront of developments in the beef industry was formally recognised when he was named AgForce's producer of the year in the innovation category of its 2011 Red Meat Awards.

Zanda McDonald was hardworking, dynamic, generous and above all else a devoted family man and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him. On behalf of the government and the House, I would like to take this opportunity to place on the parliamentary record our sincere condolences to Alexander McDonald's family and friends.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Scott, Mr A; Day, Mr J

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.38 am): Yesterday morning, 15 April, provided an historic sporting moment when Adam Scott became the first Australian to win the fabled Masters Golf Tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in the United States of America. The Masters and the coveted green jacket had long been an elusive prize for Australian golfers, with Adam Scott's boyhood hero, Greg Norman, among others, having come agonisingly close to winning over the years. However, this was to be the year, with Adam playing golf with a steely determination and sinking a crucial putt on the second playoff hole to take victory.

While Adam Scott may have been born in Adelaide, he is very much a Queenslander. Adam attended The Southport School and the Kooralbyn International School and has had a long association with the Sanctuary Cove Golf and Country Club. Adam's victory has certainly put a smile on the face of Queenslanders and should also provide a real boost for the golf industry in this state. Queensland has some fantastic golf courses and is a great golfing destination all year round.

Also doing Queenslanders proud at the Masters was fellow Queenslander, Jason Day, who also placed in the event. Like Adam, Jason is an incredibly talented golfer and we hope that his day at Augusta will come in the years ahead. On behalf of the House and all Queenslanders, I pass on our congratulations to Adam Scott and Jason Day for their wonderful success at the Masters.

Thursday Island, Community Cabinet

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.40 am): I am pleased to inform the House that on Sunday, 26 and Monday, 27 May, I will be taking my cabinet to Thursday Island for the government's eighth community cabinet meeting. The member for Cook, David Kempton, is a great advocate for the Torres Strait and has lobbied hard to have a community cabinet held in his seat. I am delighted we are going to spend two days in this dynamic and unique area.

I am looking forward to seeing firsthand the challenges and opportunities which exist in this very beautiful part of Queensland. This is a chance for local people to meet and discuss issues close to their heart with ministers and heads of government departments. I encourage community members to apply to arrange a meeting with myself and other ministers so that we can best understand and work together to optimise the unique opportunities in Queensland's far north and Torres Strait. Relevant information and meeting application forms can be found on the Queensland government website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au.

Health System, Complaints Handling

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.41 am): I have received two reports that paint a deeply disturbing picture of dysfunctionality in the handling of health related complaints, and I urge members to take note. In 2009 complementary legislation to create a national regulatory scheme for the health professions supplanted state based arrangements. Today the responsible agencies are the Medical Board of Australia and its Queensland board, supported by the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency, otherwise known as AHPRA.

In 2012 Mr Richard Chesterman was engaged by the CMC to report on allegations that serious incidents in the Queensland health system were being mishandled. Based on his recommendations, two reviews were ordered. The first review was to determine whether in known cases in which a patient died or suffered serious bodily harm criminal charges should have been laid. The second was to determine whether the medical board provided a timely and appropriate response to complaints.

I am disappointed these important reviews were not completed sooner. At first AHPRA and the medical board declined to release the relevant files due to confidentiality and privacy concerns. Senior criminal barrister Mr Jeffrey Hunter SC was appointed to conduct the first review. I table his report dated 28 February.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 28 February 2013, titled 'Review of files held by the Medical Board of Queensland, Queensland Board of the Medical Board of Australia and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency' by JR Hunter SC [2374].

At least 23 instances of harm concerning six medical practitioners were identified. In Mr Hunter's view, these ought to be the subject of a police investigation into whether or not criminal offences were committed. Details were referred to the Queensland Police Service on 6 March.

To conduct the second review a former assistant commissioner of the Health Quality and Complaints Commission and medical negligence barrister, Dr Kim Forrester; the director of Medical Services at Greenslopes Private Hospital, Adjunct Professor James Houston; and the inaugural chair of the Queensland Nursing Council, Professor Elizabeth Davies, were appointed. I table the final report of their review panel dated 5 April.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Final Report Chesterman Report Recommendation 2 Review Panel' [2375].

It identifies significant delays in the handling of complaints and notifications, a lack of consistency and predictability in decisions about cases of a similar nature and delays and inconsistencies resulting from cross-jurisdictional obligations. The review panel found that 363 of the 596 files it examined—that is, about 60 per cent—were not handled in a manner that was timely and/or appropriate and/or in compliance with legislative objectives. In a majority of cases, delays meant that doctors, who potentially posed a risk of harm to the public, continued to practice without their competency being assessed and in the absence of safeguards, supervision or monitoring. The worst case took 2,368 days or nearly 6½ years to reach a final decision. Further delays and inconsistencies were caused when agencies, such as the Health Quality and Complaints Commission, were involved through processes outlined in the national law.

In relation to the appropriateness of decisions, the review panel found clear evidence that processes followed by AHPRA and the medical board did not provide adequate protection for the public. The panel said AHPRA and the medical board afforded much more lenient treatment to doctors than other regulated health professions.

These findings raise serious doubt about the ability of the medical board, AHPRA and the existing health complaints management system to protect the public, uphold necessary standards of practice or maintain public confidence. I will discuss the ramifications with my fellow state health ministers and the Commonwealth minister. There is much to gain from a uniform national approach to credentialing and registration of health practitioners, but it has to be underpinned by a seamless, transparent, simple, easy to access and understand complaints referral, handling and investigation system. Meanwhile, draft legislation to create a Queensland health ombudsman, as the lynchpin of a new and accountable complaints reporting system, will be introduced into this parliament before July of this year.

Blain, Mr C

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.46 am): The life of a police officer can be dangerous and challenging. The family of every police officer prays that they will return home safely at the end of the day. Sadly, this is not always the case. On 29 March Constable Casey Blain tragically lost his life in a motor vehicle incident on the Gulf Development Road at Routh Creek about 15 kilometres east of Georgetown.

Constable Blain was a well-liked and respected officer who joined the Queensland Police Service as a recruit on 25 May 2009. He graduated as a constable in December that year. As a fresh faced young police officer, he went on to serve the Mareeba community, the very town in which he grew up.

Being a local boy, he knew everyone and everyone in town certainly knew Casey. He was a person who loved serving the community, assisting those who needed a hand and helping those coming off the rails to get back on track. This is what drew him to recently accept a position as a school based police officer where he could make a real difference to the lives of youth in their most

impressionable years. Unfortunately for the community, Casey never got to take up this position before his life was taken. He was a tremendous example of what a police officer can achieve in a small community, offering both friendship and leadership to so many.

Casey also found time for another career in which he continued his service to the community, but this time in a different uniform. He was a reservist in the Australian Army. He was very proud of this and very proud of the flag.

Outside work, Casey was a dedicated husband to Lena and proud father of young Mark—a remarkable young boy. He spent every waking hour outside of work with them both. I would like to express again my sympathy to his immediate and extended family, which includes the member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt. I would also like to extend my sympathy to his colleagues within the Queensland Police Service, hundreds of whom attended Casey's funeral service.

Policing is a tough profession, but it provides people like Casey Blain with the ability to make a difference every day. His life and his contribution will not be forgotten.

State Planning Policy

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.48 am): Our government's reform of the planning and development system continues to gain momentum with the release this week of the draft single state planning policy for statutory public consultation. I table a copy of this important document for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper. Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning: State Planning Policy, Draft for Consultation, April 2013 [[2376](#)].

The state planning policy will encourage flexible, innovative and locally appropriate approaches to planning and will empower and support councils to make the best planning decisions for their communities. It sets out the state interests that councils must take into account when preparing or amending their local planning schemes and, in some cases, assessing certain types of development applications. This will make it easier for the councils to reflect and balance state interests in local planning schemes and ensure the approval of the right development in the right location without undue delays.

The state planning policy is another important step in our ongoing reform of the planning system. Our government understands that streamlined planning, assessment and approval processes will allow the property and construction industries to grow and flourish, as they should. Fixing what was a confusing and convoluted planning regime is a critical action our government can take to build all four pillars of our economy and develop opportunities for all Queenslanders.

Soon after coming to office I set out how my department would change the planning legislation, the policies, the planning processes and most of all the attitudes and culture that controlled planning in this state. We have been working hard to achieve this turnaround. Earlier this month the Premier announced that three councils—Redlands, Rockhampton and Mackay—will take part in a 'planning health check' pilot project that will identify best practice processes for council planning systems. The pilot scheme will be used to create a simple system for a council to assess its processes against the state government's expectations of best practice, to identify areas for improvements and to report against meaningful key performance indicators.

In March, we amended the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009 to reduce the number of referral triggers. The next major cab off the planning rank will be the introduction in June of a State Assessment and Referral Agency, otherwise known as SARA. SARA will enable a coordinated state response and ensure the state's interests in development are properly balanced. These initiatives, combined with the new regional plans due to be rolled out later in the year, show that we are delivering better planning outcomes for Queensland communities and all Queenslanders.

Queensland Rail

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.50 am): The Newman government is committed to improving the affordability, reliability and frequency of Queensland public transport. That is why yesterday's announcement that we will transform Queensland Rail into a statutory authority is so important. It will allow this government to further improve the performance of the rail network, bring costs under control and deliver more services.

Transferring Queensland Rail from a government owned corporation to a statutory authority brings it closer to government, not closer to privatisation. It will allow this government to start to fix the mess left by those opposite—a mess they were repeatedly warned about and a mess that two former transport ministers chose to bury.

Unlike those opposite, we already have a track record of delivering better services. Since we came to government we have delivered 150 additional weekly train services. We have taken peak on-time running from its lowest level in three years during the final months under Labor to the highest in eight years. In our first year we reduced the number of major safety incidents by 10 per cent, compared to the final year under Labor. We will continue the work already underway to make Queensland Rail more efficient so we can employ more train crew, deliver better timetables and add more trains to the network.

Our plan is in stark contrast to those opposite whose record is one of assets sales, the most expensive rail service per kilometre in Australia, falling patronage and 15 per cent fare increases. Just like fares under Labor, the cost of running Queensland Rail has been increasing year after year after year—by about \$100 million a year. For taxpayers, it is the most expensive rail network per kilometre in Australia. However, this is not news to the opposition. Labor were warned in 2009 and chose to ignore the problem. They buried the report. Former transport minister Rachel Nolan admitted in the *Quarterly Essay* that it was all too hard for her. The Leader of the Opposition when she was transport minister was warned about the looming costs as late as 2011. She oversaw increases in the areas of marketing, finance and corporate of between 60 and 120 per cent over just two years.

Then the Leader of the Opposition had the gall to come out in the *Queensland Times* last week and accuse the government of planning to sell off Queensland Rail which would lead to increased fares she said. How would she know that was the case? That is right, because they sold it off and then increased the fares by 15 per cent every year for five years.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members.

Mr EMERSON: Let me repeat: she knows fares go up when you sell off assets because that is what she did and fares went up every year 15 per cent year after year after year after year. They took the easy way out. They buried their heads in the sand and Queenslanders are paying for it. Under the LNP we are doing the opposite. We are bringing Queensland Rail closer to government, improving reliability, frequency and affordability for Queenslanders.

Fiscal Responsibility

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.54 am): Governments can support families best by living within their means. Every day the Newman government is working to support Queensland families. We are doing this through our extensive cost-of-living relief measures, our focus on driving efficiencies in service delivery to deliver more with less and our commitment to living within our means so we can keep taxes and charges as low as they need to be.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt you, Treasurer. I warn members on my left and my right to please cease the interjections across the chamber. Give courtesy to the person with the call. I call the Treasurer.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When we came to office the situation was diabolical. Spending had been left unchecked, deficits were structural and debt had ballooned. Fees, taxes and charges continued to rise. This great state had gone from a position of financial strength to paying more for its debt than Tasmania. Those opposite will not admit it, but the state was heading towards \$100 billion of debt if things had remained unchanged. The Newman government has redressed the trajectory of debt and it is estimated that debt will be \$4.8 billion lower in 2014-15 than Labor had projected in their figures, with the corresponding reduction in interest payments saving \$1.3 billion over the forward estimates.

Madam Speaker, I am not standing here today saying that the problem is fixed. We still have a long, tough road ahead. As the independent Commission of Audit's executive summary states—

... if the Government were to achieve a consistent fiscal surplus of 1% of revenue year after year, it would take 50 years to reduce debt by \$25 billion (ignoring growth in the base and inflation impacts for simplicity).

You have to say 'simplicity' when you are talking to those opposite. Madam Speaker, we would all do well to remember that debt is just deferred tax. Sooner or later someone has to pay, and if it is not us it will be our children and if it is not them it will be their children. Labor always wants someone to pay.

I ask the House: how can any government that is serious about the future not live within its means today? This government is standing up for Queenslanders whilst federal Labor continues to rack up over a quarter of a trillion dollars' worth of debt on the nation's credit card. Labor has squandered the good financial management of the Howard coalition government that actually paid off debt, left Australia with assets in the bank and got our AAA credit rating back. Yet do we see any fiscally responsible actions from federal Labor? We do not. As the stock of debt heads towards the debt ceiling of \$300 billion, we do not see Wayne Swan applying the brakes. Instead, we see federal Labor hit the debt accelerator with more big spending promises. None of these promises have been developed with any real consultation with the states or with any substantive detail. They just ride the media cycle with promise after promise unfunded and ongoing. Throwing more money at a problem is not necessarily the answer and it is certainly not reform.

This year Commonwealth Labor will have a net interest bill of over \$8 billion—roughly the cost of fully funding the Gonski education reforms or the Commonwealth's contribution to a National Disability Insurance Scheme. And still federal Labor continues to try to distract us all with rhetoric about planning for the nation's future. All the time the mountain of debt which the nation's taxpayers and the children of these taxpayers will have to pay back continues to climb.

To prove my point, since 2007 federal Labor has introduced 29 new tax grabs from the alcopops tax, the carbon tax and the minerals resource rent tax to the announcement on Saturday about the cap on self-education expense deductions of \$2,000, continuing to rob Peter to pay Paul. Federal Labor's insatiable appetite for spending can only be satisfied, as it was in Queensland, by higher taxes both today and tomorrow.

Queenslanders must live within their means to ensure tomorrow is just as bright as today. Our side of politics understands our fundamental commitment to live within our means. However, it seems that deficit and debt are still locked in Labor's DNA.

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (9.58 am): I rise to update the House on my department's response to the closure of the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay and the appointment of Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association to ensure that important community services are continued to be delivered on the Redcliffe peninsula. In the late afternoon of Thursday, 28 March, the day before Good Friday, after numerous attempts to contact the board and management of RCAMB throughout the course of the day, my department was advised by a representative of RCAMB that the organisation was likely insolvent and could no longer provide funded programs to the local community.

At this time I instructed my department to activate its contingency plans to ensure that those important services funded by my department could continue to be delivered to clients in the area—a plan that included retaining the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association to deliver services in the event that RCAMB was not able to. Since its engagement, the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association has been liaising with key stakeholders, established alternative operating premises in the area with support from other stakeholders and provided oversight of the Humpybong Contact Centre. The Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association is delivering programs previously funded by my department including domestic violence counselling, family support, older person activities and the community support program.

I am pleased to report that those services previously provided by RCAMB continue to be provided by the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association and, in some cases, by the staff that previously provided them at RCAMB who are now working for the Pine Rivers association. But it is not just the response concerning our actions in ensuring the continuity of services that I wish to focus on; it is also the response of my staff in engaging with RCAMB staff who have been left in limbo by the callous act of their previous management who effectively locked them out of their office. The department of communities is one of three government agencies which have previously provided funding to RCAMB, the others being the department of health and FaHCSIA. Like so many other organisations which receive funding to provide services, my department has no legal obligations to

the organisation beyond ensuring that the money it is provided is expended for the purposes for which it is given. However, despite this fact I am pleased to report that my department has worked tirelessly to ensure that what support could be provided to staff at RCAMB has been provided.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.01 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts is absent from the House this week. Minister Walker is undertaking an investment attraction mission to China, followed by his attendance at the 2013 BIO International Convention in Chicago. Minister Langbroek is acting minister during this absence.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Commission of Audit

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.02 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House:

- notes it is now 47 days since the secret Costello audit report was presented to the government;
- notes the Premier committed to finally reading the secret report at Easter; and
- calls on the Premier to outline to the House the report's 155 secret recommendations and the impact they will have on jobs and services.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.02 am): My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. After the minister's undertaking that she would appoint auditors to examine the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay based at Redcliffe, will the minister advise on what date she appointed the auditors and on what date they arrived in Redcliffe to commence work?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. The audit, which is being undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers, was engaged by the Minister for Health so the member might like to direct that question to him. When it comes to this particular matter—that is, of the RCAMB—the opposition has zero credibility. While we are out there making sure that important community services continue to be delivered to the people on the Redcliffe peninsula, those opposite are shedding crocodile tears and pretending to care about the Redcliffe people and their community.

What is the real motive of those opposite in pursuing this matter? They would have us believe it is their concern about the workers and their concern about the delivery of services into the Redcliffe community, but recently the *Courier-Mail* had a front-page article which read 'EXCLUSIVE: Failed federal MPs boost state Labor. Lucky Losers'.

Ms Palaszczuk: What has this got to do with anything?

Ms DAVIS: It has a lot to do with it.

Mrs MILLER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, what is your point of order?

Mrs MILLER: I would like to table all the local government councillors who are in this chamber today, and you are out of line.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! You are out of order. Please take your seat. I warn the member under standing order 253A. The minister has the call in respect to answering a question. I call the minister.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I refer back to this quite interesting article that appeared in the *Courier-Mail* titled 'Lucky Losers'. I will take a moment to read from that article. It states—

QUEENSLAND Labor MPs beaten in the federal election would be parachuted into winnable state seats under options being considered in secret party talks.

It is believed Shayne Neumann and Yvette D'Ath are in line to bolster state ranks after a likely wipeout in the September 14 federal poll.

Mr Neumann and Ms D'Ath would take up the state seats of Ipswich and Redcliffe respectively—covering the federal electorates of Blair and Petrie which they now represent. The move would bolster Labor's thin state ranks and could fast-track its response to the Newman government's dominance.

Labor MPs told the *Courier-Mail* that discussions involving the idea of Mr Neumann and Ms D'Ath moving to the state level had taken place within the party and were still a live option.

Their interest in Redcliffe is only Yvette D'Ath staring down the barrel of defeat at the upcoming state election. They do not care about the people of Redcliffe. They do not care about the workers of the Redcliffe community association. We are about ensuring that services continue to be delivered in the area, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. The minister mentioned previously that an audit was being undertaken by her department. Will the minister confirm that the audit being done by her department of the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay is an actual, thorough forensic audit?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is true that my department was making some investigations into the Redcliffe community association. As the opposition well knows, there were some allegations made about that organisation and the department is looking into it. With regard to a forensic audit, which I have never suggested that the department—

Ms Palaszczuk: You said an audit.

Ms DAVIS: I take the interjection. At no time did I say that our department was undertaking a forensic audit. What our department is doing is ensuring that vital community services continue to be delivered on the Redcliffe peninsula. That is what my department has been doing. After the announcement or contact by the Redcliffe community association that it was unable to provide those services into the community, we implemented a contingency plan. As I mentioned in my ministerial statement, departmental officers were working with the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association, a well-regarded local community association.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister clearly said the fact is that the government has already appointed an auditor. I table the press release.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, take your seat. That is not a point of order under the standing orders.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Let us have order in the House. At this point I will not accept the tabling of the document. I will make a more detailed ruling as to the timing of tabling. The minister has the call, and I call the minister.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The opposition leader again shows that she is not interested in the vital community services that need to be delivered on the Redcliffe peninsula, and that is what our department is doing. Our department is making arrangements with the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association, which had a great relationship with RCAMB in the past and so understands the needs of the Redcliffe community.

The Leader of the Opposition can pretend to have an interest in what is happening in Redcliffe. However, what she is interested in is nothing more than recycling federal Labor members after the next federal election.

Madam SPEAKER: I would ask the minister to stay relevant to the question.

Ms DAVIS: I have already answered the question with regard to the audit. At no time did I suggest—and I acknowledge the press release—that it talks about a forensic audit, which was what the question was about. We are working with the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association in order to deliver services out in the community. That is what is important. In fact, the member for Petrie has been very happy with the way that the Department of Communities has been working to get those services on the ground. Those opposite shed crocodile tears and pretend to care. In fact, the only people they care about are their own.

Premier's Reading Challenge

Mr SHUTTLEWORTH: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the House on the 2013 Premier's Reading Challenge and the importance of educating young Queenslanders?

Mr NEWMAN: My government is absolutely passionate about education for young Queenslanders. As the parents of two teenage girls, my wife and I have been very passionate about their education, and I know all the parents in this chamber feel exactly the same way. Today we are demonstrating our commitment to education and to improving literacy and numeracy through the launch of the 2013 Premier's Reading Challenge. I will be out at one of my state schools this morning, along with Minister Langbroek, to launch that very important initiative and to promote the importance of reading in state and non-state schools from prep to year 7 with participation being the key focus. My parents introduced me to the joys of reading at a very early age. I think it is every parent's responsibility to their kids to do that. If kids can experience that joy, a lifelong love of learning can then result from that interest in reading.

Last year almost 800 schools and 118,000 students participated, which was up from 680 schools and 111,000 students in 2011. In the last two years Queensland primary schoolchildren have read more than 2.6 million books as part of the reading challenge, a massive achievement for all participants. In relation to education, I should note that last week the minister and I launched our Great Teachers = Great Results initiative, which is an action plan for Queensland schools that has real, tangible initiatives to improve outcomes for our kids, because we are passionate about education.

This week we have the big Gonski debate. The state premiers are being asked by the Prime Minister and her minister to sign up to something on Friday. I have to say today that the information is a bit scant. I can say that we know that the universities in this state and across the nation but, more particularly, the students are going to suffer to supposedly pay for the Gonski reforms. We also know that \$195 million will be ripped out of early childhood education over the next six years in Queensland alone. An amount of \$195 million will be coming out of our kindergartens, again because of one of these so-called expiring national partnerships. This is what they do all the time. I say to the commentators out there, the media and the union who are urging us to sign up: where are they when we hear about these cuts? I say today that it is not right to hit the uni students of Queensland; nor is it right to hit the mums and young kids who are going to kindergartens that will see a \$195 million cut. We need to approach this Gonski proposal very cautiously indeed.

Driscoll, Mrs E; Mills, Ms L

Mr MULHERIN: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Will the minister confirm that Emma Driscoll was employed by the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay as its HR officer and that Leesa Mills was employed as its IT officer?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. As the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mulgrave, who are former ministers from the last government in Queensland, would know, the management of organisations and whom they appoint to provide services is a matter for those organisations. It is not a matter for government. That is why they have a board and a committee. Those matters are a determination for the board. Once again, rather than seeking to work with this government to ensure that vital community services are delivered out into the Redcliffe Peninsula, all those opposite want to do is muckrake and politicise this issue. They do not care about the people in Redcliffe who are attempting to access domestic and family violence support services. They do not care about that. All they are after is a cheap political grab on this matter.

What we are interested in is ensuring that an arrangement is made in order to provide essential community services to the people of the Redcliffe Peninsula, and that is exactly what we have been doing. The Leader of the Opposition can make her way out to Redcliffe and attempt to drum up some media frenzy on this matter—a drop-in point to go and visit Yvette D'Ath, the federal member for Petrie. She could kill three birds with the one stone. We know they have the federal member for Petrie on the radar to recycle once the federal election is over in September. While out of her office she could also have a bit of a chat to the former member for Stafford, Stirling Hinchliffe, who is down there on staff. While she is at the campaign office she could also have a bit of a chat to the worst Treasurer

in Queensland, Andrew Fraser. That is what those opposite are about: recycling has-beens. What Queensland does not need is Andrew Fraser again handling our books. That is why we have a \$65 billion debt. That is why the Treasurer is working hard to ensure that Queensland gets back in the black, and that is what this government is about. It is about getting Queensland back in the black in order to be able to fund organisations to provide important community services, just like we have done with the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre, and to provide community services to the Redcliffe community.

Great Teachers = Great Results

Mr LATTER: I note the Premier's commitment to education, but my question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. Can the minister inform the House how the Newman government's Great Teachers = Great Results policy will help Queensland students achieve their potential in all schools across the state?

Mr LANGBROEK: Last Monday the Premier and I visited QUT. We announced Great Teachers = Great Results, a \$535 million commitment commencing in 2015. Up until now we have not been able to recognise, reward and deploy our best teachers, classroom leaders and principals, but this initiative changes that. This initiative enables us to identify the best teachers in the state. Once we have done that, we can reward them, upskill them and deploy them to where they are needed most. It is a substantial investment in teacher quality and one that will strengthen the most potent ingredient in student outcomes: the teacher.

What did we hear in response from the opposition? The Leader of the Opposition came up with this: there has been no consultation with schools, no consultation with principals and the unions, and certainly no consultation with students. I know that the Leader of the Opposition's preferred speaking option is repetition not least of all because she does not have a great deal to say most of the time, but this was a bit over the top. So I thought we would look back at some of the former government's policies and ask whether there was consultation with students when she was in government. It would explain a great deal. Did the former government go to a grade 8 geography class and ask them to design the Traveston Dam? Did the previous government ask a year 10 IT class to design the Health payroll system? Maybe they asked a year 11 economics class to design the budget that left us with a \$73 billion debt. But that is harsh because not even those economics students would have put us into this position.

Here we have a policy that will give \$50 million in bonus payments to great teachers. Here we have a policy that will put 300 master teachers in the schools that need them most. Here we have a policy that will give up to 200 scholarships for masters degrees to high-performing teachers every year. Aside from that, beginning teachers will get mentoring, schools will get more freedom to make their own decisions and we are tackling problem behaviour. It is a policy. It is what detailed, aligned and effective policy looks like. In this one document there are 15 initiatives. In this one document there are 15 more initiatives than have come from those opposite. It is time for those opposite to put up or shut up when it comes to policy initiatives and detail.

Ms Palaszczuk: How are you paying for it?

Mr LANGBROEK: I take that interjection. Let us compare it to Gonski. There is no detail about how it will work. There is no detail about how the money will be spent. There is just one big promise to recklessly spend huge sums of money they do not have on a plan that has not worked in the past and will not work in the future.

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

Mr PITT: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I refer to the minister's media statement issued late on the Thursday before Easter which states—

Staff from my department and senior representatives from the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre will be on site to assist clients from Tuesday morning.

I ask: will the minister confirm that the departmental staff actually visited the site on Tuesday, 2 April?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. Had he listened to my ministerial statement this morning he would know that on the Tuesday after the Easter long weekend there were departmental officers available to talk to staff on the ground about the future of the funding for community services into the Redcliffe area. In fact, even further than that, when it was found that access could not be gained to the current premises the department made available the Redcliffe child

safety service centre for staff of RCAMB to speak to the department. So in fact what we were doing was providing an alternative venue so that staff could be assisted where they could after the closure of RCAMB.

I am really pleased with what we have done. We are under no obligation past funding an organisation to assist staff, but it was really important, under my direction, that departmental staff be available to assist those RCAMB staff members who unfortunately found out on the Thursday before Easter that they would not be required to report to work on the following Tuesday. My heart goes out to those people, but we have done what we can do. That is, we were out on the ground in the week after the Easter long weekend to support those staff. The Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre was working with staff to help them with no-interest loans if they needed them and to provide petrol vouchers. And our department offered to connect people with counselling services if they needed them. I think my department has worked really well to try to assist those staff members where they could. We have been trying to assist them. In fact, I am happy to report, as members will recall I mentioned in my ministerial statement, that many of the members of the staff component that were funded by department of communities funding are now working and delivering services on behalf of the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Association.

In what is a very unfortunate situation I think my department has worked very well to try to assist the staff, certainly in arranging to continue to deliver services out into the Redcliffe community, and that is what is very important.

Mining Industry, Water

Mr MALONE: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on the government's pilot mine water release program in the Fitzroy Basin over this summer's wet season?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Mirani for the question. He, like so many other members who represent electorates in Central Queensland, knows the importance of the coal industry to our region. Equally, every member of this House should appreciate the importance of the coal industry to the Queensland economy. Every Queenslander depends on the coal industry to provide a range of government services that make our lifestyle in Queensland the envy of the rest of Australia and indeed many places in the world. So every member of this parliament should support positive steps to ensure the coal industry can continue to operate in a balanced, environmentally responsible way. Indeed, it would be an indictment on any government that chose to do otherwise.

The previous government failed completely to address some major issues that became major impediments for the coal industry and therefore threatened the economic future of Queensland and the lifestyle of every Queenslander. One of those was the issue of legacy mine water. The previous government was completely unable to deal with this issue to the extent that when we came to government we inherited a legacy issue that will take many years to address.

We said from the start that the pilot project we put in place was about developing a long-term strategy to address that legacy issue which threatened the Queensland coal industry. We put in place a pilot project that was about understanding how the river system worked and gathering the data necessary to ensure a whole-of-system management process could be put in place to manage the issue over a long period of time. After the first wet season, which the member for Mirani referred to, that data is now becoming available. The important point to make at the outset is that every piece of that data is publicly available. Every piece of that data is available on the Fitzroy water website as soon as we get it so that everybody can see and understand what is happening. I will not try to quote those numbers today, but the figures indicate that the releases have had a barely discernible effect on any of the sensitive receptor sites that we identified.

We will produce a report that everybody can comment on, but members should always understand that there are people out there who are determined to attack the coal industry. There are people out there who are determined to attack the Queensland economy. While we will accept comments from everybody, we understand that there are people who will always make comments from that perspective. They are about destroying the coal industry. They are about destroying Queensland's economy. They are about destroying the job opportunities of the people who live in the electorates of Mirani, Callide, Gregory—

(Time expired)

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

Mrs MILLER: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I refer to the closure of the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay office, and I ask: will the minister explain whether a scribbled note in nikko pen is an acceptable way to advise clients and staff? I table it for the benefit of the minister.

Tabled paper: Photographs showing a closed office directing clients to phone Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre [2424].

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat, member for Bundamba. Unless a document is to be tabled, if you hold it up in that way you are using it as a prop.

Mrs MILLER: I am referring, Madam Speaker, to—

Madam SPEAKER: Is the member tabling that document?

Mrs MILLER: I am tabling that document for the benefit of the minister so that she can answer the question in detail.

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have just outlined what the department has been doing with the staff of the Redcliffe Community Association Moreton Bay in providing assistance to them after it was made known to the department that the organisation was unable to fulfil its commitments under the funding arrangement with the department.

I was not aware that there was a note on the door, but I am advised that there were staff from the Department of Communities on site on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the Easter long weekend to assist workers from the former community centre and any clients who may have arrived to receive services. Worrying about a sign on a door at a community centre shows the real depth of concern of those opposite with regard to the delivery of services into the community—in the gutter! It is not about the community. It is not about delivering services into the community.

Mr Bleijie: They hate community centres.

Ms DAVIS: I take the interjection from the Attorney: those opposite do not like community centres—anything that delivers our good work to the community. Those opposite are not supporting the good work of the Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre in providing those services that are no longer able to be delivered by the former Redcliffe Community Association.

Let us not forget what this is really about. This is not about the community centre. This is about Redcliffe—not the Redcliffe community but the state seat of Redcliffe at the next state election. It is about recycling the current member for Petrie, Yvette D'Ath, and parachuting her into a state seat at the next state election. We know about Yvette D'Ath and her Redcliffe ambitions and we know about Shayne Neumann—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: The minister will take her seat. It is very difficult to keep order in the House, and I appreciate that the issues at hand are stirring heated emotions. I would ask for the minister's assistance with respect to addressing the question at hand and I would ask the members on my left to cease their interjections, as I will start warning members under standing orders. I call the minister to answer the question.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I feel I may have addressed that issue. We have had staff on the ground and the fact that there was a notice put on the door is not about delivering services into the community; it is just a cheap shot by those opposite about what is a very concerning matter in the local community—that is, ensuring that those community services that the Redcliffe community requires are still being delivered.

Queensland Economy

Mr GRANT: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House if he is aware of any misinformation about the status of the Queensland economy and any alternative views?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Springwood for his question. I know from visits I have made to his electorate that he is vitally interested in the state of the Queensland economy and wants to know the real state of affairs, not the mistruths and half-smart commentary that we are hearing

from certain sections of the union movement. There is indeed a pile of misinformation being peddled by that doyen of economic soundness—Mr Alex Scott, the head of the Together union. Members may of course have heard of Mr Scott. He is well known as an economic commentator. His credentials are well known. In fact, I suspect he may be advising the shadow Treasurer, although, because I have not been asked any questions by the shadow Treasurer, it is difficult to know just exactly what his policy would be or indeed his concern about the Queensland economy. He seems to have no concern about the Queensland economy, having asked me not one single question.

Perhaps Mr Scott and his knowledge of the Queensland economy came from his most recent bout of push polling where he spent in those economically sound terms \$100,000 of hard pressed union members' money on a poll that his own executive has concerns about. In fact, we read stories that members of the executive are now writing to Mr Scott saying, 'Who authorised the money and to what purpose? Why are you spending \$100,000 in relation to a push-polling exercise?' Of course, we did bell the cat in relation to Mr Scott's push-polling exercise over a month ago when it first started as part of his major effort to try to provide some support to the opposition here in Queensland. But he has spent \$100,000—apparently much to the angst of members of his own executive, apparently for no purpose that he has disclosed to his executive. One would think that Mr Scott would be better placed coming to the table and talking with the Queensland government and supporting negotiations for a wage rise for his members. His members have been waiting now since the end of last financial year for a wage rise. But, no! Mr Scott claims, as does seemingly the shadow Treasurer and the Manager of Opposition Business in the House, that Queensland is in the doldrums. Let us turn that around. Let us turn that around and let us set that straight. Queensland's economy is going well.

Ms Trad: It's flatlining!

Mr NICHOLLS: Our international trade increased by 16.6 per cent from September to December in seasonally adjusted terms, from \$12.7 billion to \$14.8 billion, while imports increased by 7.4 per cent. I hear the word 'flatlining'. I hear those opposite talk about state final demand. The measure of growth is gross state product. Perhaps if the shadow Treasurer actually asked some decent questions we would be able to educate him rather than listening to Mr Scott.

(Time expired)

State Land, Cattle Grazing

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. The northern cattle-grazing industry is under severe financial pressure and, following poor seasonal market conditions, many producers are at the point of collapse. Given these exceptional circumstances, will the minister consider amending the Nature Conservation Act to allow short-term access to national parks and other available state land for low-pressure grazing in north-west Queensland to suitable applicants in the absence of any significant financial assistance?

Mr DICKSON: I thank the member very much for the question. We will do everything we can to help graziers in Queensland, as we have already demonstrated. In the past they have suffered major fire events in North Queensland and we have moved the boundary a bit to allow some cattle to graze in some areas. We will consistently do this into the future, as we will do with every single department within government. Be it Health, be it Education or be it Main Roads, we continue to progress forward because we actually care about the people of Queensland—unlike those opposite, who never, ever looked after the people of Queensland. They allowed us to get into a huge debt situation which we are today digging ourselves out of.

As far as our national parks are concerned, at this point in time we are doing a scientific review of all of our national parks in Queensland and we are looking for the best possible uses for each individual part of our protected land in the great state of Queensland. We have 12.5 million hectares of land in Queensland and we will ensure that it is used to its best possible potential—unlike Labor that just squandered millions of dollars, and I refer to one particular parcel of land in Queensland at Springbrook. It spent \$41 million of taxpayers' money to buy huge swathes of land just for arbitrary pictures on a glossy brochure to tell the people of Queensland, 'We're doing a great job! We're here to protect Queensland's future.' Let me go further with that particular piece of land it bought there. It has kept the community away from using a sporting field. You are no longer allowed to use sporting facilities in Springbrook. That is what the Labor Party has delivered for the people of Queensland. What hypocrisy we always get from those opposite!

I would be very pleased to sit down with the member for Mount Isa and discuss this matter after question time. I would be very pleased to do that. But back to the Labor Party, it has given Queensland nothing but debt and disarray. The LNP is all about taking Queensland forward. We care about Queensland families, and we will continue to care about them from now into the future. That is what our priority is and we will not let the people of this state down. We have great opportunity and great potential, and we will move forward.

Canossa Private Hospital, Palliative Care

Mrs SMITH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I refer the minister to the LNP's commitment to invest in the health needs of Queenslanders, and I ask: will the minister please provide an update to the House on the progress of the palliative care unit at Canossa Private Hospital in the electorate of Mount Ommaney?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Mount Ommaney for her question. She has a very heartfelt and abiding interest in the issue of palliative care in her electorate and of course represents her constituents very well.

We know that, when it comes to running a good health system in Queensland, there are many challenges, but one of the most effective things that we can do is assist people in all stages of their care. One of the most crucial things is to make sure that we compassionately and properly look after Queenslanders as they are coming towards the end of their life through appropriate end-of-life care.

Indeed, as soon as I became the Minister for Health in Queensland the member for Mount Ommaney came to me and put this issue on her agenda as one of the most important issues in her electorate. Prior to her election to this place the previous government transferred the palliative care beds over from Canossa to QEII. Those beds had been provided to Canossa under an arrangement since around about 2005. Notwithstanding the fact that there were 10 beds that then went down to six beds—they were very much an ad hoc arrangement—the previous government had no proper and comprehensive plan to increase the number of public palliative care beds in that particular western corridor.

We know that more and more people require proper and appropriate palliative care in their community. Indeed, this government has significantly increased funding to provide palliative care services. Through the tenacity, hard work and positive representations by the honourable member for Mount Ommaney, I have been to Canossa on two occasions. I have spoken with the hardworking and very patient staff and management of this hospital and given a commitment that we would be working with the honourable member and the good team there to provide palliative care beds. Indeed, in early April this year—I think it was 2 April—those palliative care beds started operation at Canossa. Those six beds will go a long way to ensuring that the needs of people in that district are met appropriately. This has meant an additional investment of \$1.9 million to provide those six palliative care beds. I commend the honourable member for Mount Ommaney for her very, very strong, very compassionate representation to me to ensure that that happens. That means that we have more publicly funded palliative care beds available.

If we look at what has happened at QEII and what is happening at Redlands, we see that we are expanding services around Queensland. But the important thing was to maintain that service, which has done very well in an extremely compassionate environment. I congratulate the honourable member.

Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service

Mr JUDGE: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works regarding the imminent loss of the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service. Does the minister foresee any adverse consequences associated with the Newman government's decision to cease funding to this service in terms of increasing the risk of homelessness and placing additional pressure on the already strained public housing system? If so, what plans are being put in place to address these critical issues?

Mr MANDER: I thank the honourable member for his question. Last year, this government had to make some very tough decisions because of the debt that we inherited from the previous government. One of those tough decisions was to stop funding for the TAAS services that were operating throughout this state. But we did it for other reasons as well. Advocacy and advice to tenants is offered through a whole range of different avenues. Of course, the greatest way it is offered is through the Residential Tenancies Authority—the RTA—and also through other community organisations. Just last week I heard a quote from the Salvation Army in Townsville, which talked

about the fact that quite a few non-government organisations supply advocacy for people to get into housing and that 'as far as advocacy groups go, there doesn't seem to be a shortage problem in Townsville'. I am hearing stories like that right across the state.

A review a couple of years ago by the previous government of the TAAS services brought out a couple of very relevant points. When we look at their performance report produced by the department, we see that 60 per cent of the core service outcomes were reported as unresolved, or unknown. A further 27 per cent were reported as info only. This is a gold plated service where 27 per cent of its business is duplicating the role of the RTA. In fact, the same report reveals that three-quarters of TAAS services are provided over the phone and in writing, not face to face.

This government believes that those services are important, but they are being offered at the moment in ways that are far more cost effective. We are not into wasting money. We want to use that money for—and this pun is intentional—concrete solutions. We will put roofs over people's heads with the money that we will save through that money that currently goes to TAAS services. I am looking forward to announcing some of those new arrangements in the next few weeks, which will show very practical solutions to helping the 20,000 people in Queensland at the moment who regard themselves as homeless.

Unlike the opposition, which is very good at scaremongering—going out and frightening the living daylight out of people rather than providing practical solutions—we will not fall into that trap. I am looking forward to talking about those solutions and helping those people put a roof over their heads, which is everybody's right in this state.

Emerald and Longreach, Agricultural Colleges

Mr JOHNSON: Unlike the Labor opposition's line of negative questioning this morning, I have a very positive question for the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister inform us of his recent appointment of new local boards for Queensland's agricultural colleges at Emerald and Longreach and the role they will play in getting those colleges back on track?

Mr McVEIGH: I thank the member for his very positive question. On 28 March, I appointed new local boards to manage the Emerald Agricultural College and the Longreach Pastoral College. After the disgraceful financial mismanagement of the colleges under the Labor Party, it is essential that we have new local management to oversee the two colleges to get them back on track and into the black. The new boards will be responsible for setting the strategic direction for their respective colleges, ensuring that they have the right training that suits today's agricultural industry. The boards will commence on 1 May this year and will comprise experienced appointees, including grain growers, farm managers, advocates for rural training, agrifinance professionals, a veterinarian, cattle producers, past students and agricultural industry representatives. I congratulate the board members on being selected and the strong field of candidates we had apply for these positions. In particular, I congratulate Donald Brown, who will chair the Longreach Pastoral College board, and Mike McCosker, chair of the Emerald Agricultural College board. Both have worked tirelessly to help get these colleges back on track. I would also like to pay special tribute to the member for Gregory, Mr Vaughan Johnson, who has been working alongside me to make sure that we have a viable business model for these colleges. His local knowledge, his rural expertise and constructive leadership is invaluable to the whole of regional Queensland.

This is only the first in a series of challenges and changes that we will implement to strengthen the colleges. The new major change will be to appoint a new director to each college to ensure board recommendations are implemented and outcomes are being achieved. The future success of both colleges will require a team effort and the boards and the colleges will need the full support of the agricultural industries.

Queensland is a great state with great opportunity. The LNP government is standing up for Queensland families. By working together, we are delivering better services in health, transport and education. That is why I am confident that these new local boards will assist us to deliver the best possible education and training to our next generation of agricultural employees.

CSG Industry

Mr HOPPER: My question is to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. In reference to the exposure of the impact of coal seam gas on the environment in the Condamine River on ABC's *Four Corners* on Monday, 1 April, which documented evidence that there is increased

bubbling of methane in the river, local cotton-growing cattleman George Bender stated, 'I've never seen it bubble like this before. If it was natural, wouldn't it be there all the time?' Does this concern the minister, and what measures have been taken since this program was aired two weeks ago?

Mr POWELL: I thank the honourable member for Condamine for his question. Like many members in this chamber, it was with interest that I watched the *Four Corners* program regarding coal seam gas. Many of the issues raised in that *Four Corners* program that evening are matters that are currently before the Crime and Misconduct Commission and therefore I am limited in what I can say. But to address the particular matter that the member has raised, let me first of all explain to members what the LNP Newman government has done in the field of coal seam gas since coming into power in March last year.

On the back of community concern around this industry we have put in place the GasFields Commission. We continue to see positive feedback from landholders across the Surat Basin in their interactions with chair John Cotter and his GasFields Commission. We have undertaken, and put out for public comment, the underground water impact report. We have refined our coal seam gas water policy, and we have done that in conjunction with landholders throughout the Surat Basin, and have received very positive feedback from peak bodies such as AgForce on developing that water policy.

In terms of particular concerns around the industry, and concerns around methane gas in particular in the Condamine River, both I and the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines take any such concerns raised by constituents, whether it be in Condamine or in Warrego—wherever it might be—very, very seriously and we undertake investigations where necessary.

I can report to the member that the Coal Seam Gas Compliance Unit within the Department of Natural Resources and Mines is coordinating work in conjunction with the coal seam gas industry, in particular Origin Energy, to assess the possible cause of this gas leakage. In terms of my department's responsibility, we are responsible for taking water and sediment samples to test for any potential contaminants, providing independent verification of the environmental and water quality impact of the emissions and reviewing Origin's gas seep studies. The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has taken sampling, repeated over time, to test for potential longer term accumulation of contaminants and test results have been assessed by government ecotoxicologists and do not indicate any environmental harm. Let me reiterate that: the study, the scientific data that has been collected by my department, indicates that there has been no significant environmental harm over time. We will continue to take any concerns raised by your constituents—by any constituents in the Surat Basin—very seriously and my officers and the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines will be on the ground to make sure that occurs.

Events Queensland, Flood Assistance Program

Mr GIBSON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister inform the House how the Newman government is supporting events impacted by this year's extreme weather in communities such as my own that have faced four floods within 12 months?

Mrs STUCKEY: May I thank the honourable member for Gympie. As he just stated, there is probably not another member in the House who has had four floods in such a short space of time. What a tower of strength he has been for his community through these very difficult times. As I gaze around this chamber I see a number of champions for their communities because there were so many electorates that were affected by this year's recent weather events. I notice the member for Lockyer, of course, as well as the members for Beaudesert, Burnett and Bundaberg. There are just so many of them here today.

Today I have good news from the Newman government. We do recognise the social and economic value of events, especially those held in our many regions across our great state. Last week I was very pleased to announce the Tourism and Events Queensland 2013 Events Flood Assistance Program. I did this while I was visiting the great electorates of Bundaberg and Burnett. While I was in Bundaberg it was impressed upon me the amazing job that has been done by everybody, in particular the fantastic members Minister Dempsey and Stephen Bennett. Whilst very little does remain of the tragedy that occurred there, there are still some very stark reminders and there is still much work to do. I do hope that areas such as these will put forward applications to hold events in their communities.

This \$150,000 one-off fund will provide financial assistance to events that have suffered or could have gone ahead albeit for this bad weather. We also would be keen to see some new events created that can be held within the time frame. These events must be held in a council declared area that was named under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements of January this year. Assistance with marketing costs, temporary infrastructure or engagement of specialised personnel for the duration of this event are all eligible uses of this funding.

Events, particularly in our smaller communities, are vital to the local economy and we want to give communities affected by recent storms and flooding some confidence that they can go ahead with events in their communities. Some 56 council areas have been affected and I imagine a number of them will put forward applications. Applications will close on Friday, 3 May. Events need to be held between 1 June this year and 29 September. This week is yet another important week for all of us to remember that we do live in a great state with great opportunity.

Regional Community Association Moreton Bay

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Will the minister advise the House why she has not directed her department to forensically audit the public funds granted to the—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I will not have interjections while members are asking questions. I have ruled on this before. I did not see who was laughing and interrupting but I will warn members under the standing orders. I call the member for South Brisbane to start again.

Ms TRAD: Will the minister advise the House why she has not directed her department to forensically audit the public funds granted to the Regional Community Association Moreton Bay, and will she commit to doing so today?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for the question. There is currently an audit being undertaken in conjunction with Queensland Health. That investigation is ongoing. It is appropriate that that is where the audit occurs. What is disappointing about all of the questions today from those opposite is that they do not deal with the real issue of ensuring that services continue to be delivered out into the community, and that is what we have done.

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. There have been several questions today that have dealt with services being delivered on the ground and I ask the minister to consider her phrasing.

Madam SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I call on the minister to answer the question.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is an audit underway in conjunction with Queensland Health and that is ongoing. As I mentioned earlier, there are three bodies that did fund the RCAMB. One was the Department of Communities, one was Queensland Health and the other was the federal government body FaHCSIA. Whilst I have shared with the House today what the Department of Communities has been doing to provide funding to an organisation to continue to deliver services into the community, and I understand that Queensland Health has engaged the Richmond Fellowship to continue to deliver mental health services to those people who need support out in the Redcliffe community, I wonder what it is that FaHCSIA—the federal Labor government body—has done in order to provide continued service into the Redcliffe community and to support those workers that those opposite purport to really care about. My advice is that they have done nothing to assist and to continue to provide services into the Redcliffe community.

Mr Newman: So what's Yvette D'Ath doing?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the Premier. It is a question of what Yvette D'Ath has done and talking to Minister Macklin and departmental officers about what FaHCSIA provided funding for through RCAMB. What is important here is that this state government has acted swiftly in order to make sure that we continue to provide services into the community.

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order. I have asked the minister if she will direct her department to conduct a forensic audit today and she has not answered the question.

Madam SPEAKER: Member, please take your seat. You have asked your question. I ask the minister to answer the question.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have answered the question, that is, there is an audit being undertaken at this very time. It is being done. Whilst those opposite clearly are not happy that we are still providing services to those vulnerable people in Redcliffe, in a radio interview with

Gary Hardgrave, Yvette D'Ath had this to say about what the Department of Communities was doing—

The primary focus here has got to be the clients and the staff and volunteers from the organisation and what we can do right now to support them. I certainly appreciate that we've seen the Department of Communities step in very quickly as far as some of the state programs and trying to assist.

(Time expired)

Sport and Recreation

Mr GRIMWADE: My question without notice is to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister please inform the House how the Queensland government is helping to ease the cost of living for Queensland families and is ensuring Queenslanders have access to sport and recreational opportunities and facilities wherever they live in Queensland?

Madam SPEAKER: The time for questions has expired. Such is life.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Visitors to Public Gallery

Madam SPEAKER: I wish to acknowledge visitors to the parliament today: the Mount Ommaney National Seniors from the electorate of Mount Ommaney, Eight Mile Plains State School from the electorate of Stretton and Moreton Bay Boys College from the electorate of Lytton.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Newman Government, Ministers

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.02 am): Today I want to talk about the bungles of the Newman government, but before I get to some of the bungles of the different ministers, I will talk at length about the answers that the Minister for Communities gave today in this House. Obviously, the minister does not care about the staff at the organisation. Whilst I acknowledge that services are being delivered, staff were very upset to learn late in the afternoon and later in the evening of Easter Thursday that they would not be getting paid. That is disgraceful, because in the weeks leading up to that the minister knew that issues had been raised, not only by the *Courier-Mail* but also by members in this House, about the community organisation of Moreton Bay. I am also very concerned that over that weekend the minister failed to come back from holidays to sort the issue out. When I called for a forensic audit of the organisation, the minister put out a press release. The minister is leaving the chamber. She does not want to hear it. She is not prepared to sit here and listen to the accusations. She is running away. She is leaving the chamber.

When I called for a forensic audit, in a press release the minister said, 'The fact is the government has already appointed an auditor.' I was just assuming, as I think everybody else in this House was assuming, that the Department of Communities was doing that audit. However, the member for South Brisbane asked whether today she would commit to undertaking a forensic audit. There was no answer to that specific question. Also today, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked a very important question about the expenditure of taxpayer funds to the community organisation. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked the minister whether Emma Driscoll was employed as the HR officer and Leesa Mills was employed as the IT officer. Those two people would have been in receipt of taxpayer funds. Were those positions advertised? Who was on the board that appointed people to those positions? How much money did they receive and how much money was received by Norsefire, the company that was formerly run by the member for Redcliffe and subsequently run by his wife? The people of Redcliffe deserve a strong voice. They deserve a member who is accountable and who is ready to explain issues that happen in the community.

Ms Trad: They deserve a government that listens.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is correct; they deserve a government that listens and a government that cares. A minister should have made inquiries as to the nature of the expenditure of public funds and immediately set about finding out why those issues were not being addressed.

I was prepared to meet with the workers. They told me of the distress they felt when they were not paid on Easter Thursday. They also told me about the distress they felt when a sign was placed on a mop bucket to tell the community that their services were no longer being delivered. They told me that staff from the Department of Communities did not come out to the organisation until the Thursday, which is in direct contradiction to what the minister said in this House today. The minister needs to clarify when staff of the Department of Communities were on the ground in Redcliffe. She needs to explain when she or people from her office have sat down and spoken to the staff.

I feel for those staff members. One day they have a job, but on Easter Thursday, while many members of this House were enjoying time with our family and friends, they suffered the stress of not knowing whether they would be paid in the future; yes or no? It is not good enough for the Minister for Communities to wash her hands of this affair. The minister has had over two weeks to get across the entire details of this community organisation. If she cannot get across those details, she should move aside and let any one of a number of government backbenchers take over the job. Bring back David Gibson, the member for Gympie. Put him in a position to answer the questions of not only the people of Redcliffe but also the people of Queensland.

Government members and ministers have a very clear attitude that harks back to the Joh era. It is, 'Don't you worry about that!' We ask the questions and they say, 'Don't you worry about that; that's not important.' That brings me to the Minister for Transport and his recent bungles. Who can forget the botched bus review? How embarrassing for a Minister for Transport to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order! Members will cease interjecting. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: How embarrassing. It was not passed to Ipswich City Council; it was not passed to Logan City Council; it was not passed to Moreton Bay Regional Council. There was an uproar and local councillors were upset. I am quite sure there were a number of backbenchers who were very upset as well. We had the seniors coming out. The member for South Brisbane—

Mr Choat interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Ipswich West will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I know that the member for South Brisbane had a lot of concerned residents in her community. We had over 200 people at a rally at Inala Plaza.

This is a minister who botched a bus review. Now we see that he is setting Queensland Rail passenger services up for either privatising or franchising as was done in Melbourne. Do not be fooled, it is not about bringing it closer in to government, it is about shedding staff and getting it ready to franchise.

When we talk about botches and bungles, how can we not talk about Michael Caltabiano? He was hand-picked by the Premier and sacked by the Premier. He was receiving \$10,000 a week. Then we have the botched Callinan review—that is one of my favourites—where the Attorney-General says, 'Don't you worry about that. We are going to commission the Callinan review to look at the CMC but'—guess what?—'you're not going to see the report because the CMC has concerns about some of the investigations that are happening and it may jeopardise future prosecutions.' Yet again, another botched review and no public report. We are still waiting to see the public report.

Ms Trad: It can't be made public; it's got operational matters in it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, member for South Brisbane. It contains operational matters.

Then we have another bungle by the Premier—the Cape York trial. We had the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs saying, 'No, we are not going ahead with it.' We had the Premier on radio saying, 'No, we are not going ahead with it.' They probably had a call from Canberra—from Tony Abbott perhaps—to say, 'No, you are going to keep the Cape York trial.' That was another botched, bungled review.

This government is incompetent. They cannot manage bus reviews. They cannot manage the Callinan review. We still have a secret Costello report out there. They cannot manage their backbench. What more can I say—'Don't you worry about that.'

(Time expired)

Mr Choat interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Ipswich West will cease interjecting. I call the member for Cook.

Napranum, Housing

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (11.12 am): Last week the Minister for Housing, Tim Mander, and I visited the Napranum community to inspect the progress of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing. Whilst we were there the minister gave an impromptu and very inspirational speech to a group of local men.

NPARIH commenced in 2009 and is scheduled to provide 1,141 new houses to remote Indigenous communities over 10 years. In addition, the program will see 1,200 existing dwellings refurbished. In recent months contracts have been let for over 290 module dwellings, the first of which are now being delivered into remote communities.

The community of Napranum near Weipa is one community to benefit from this program with 15 new houses on track to be in place by 30 June this year. In order to provide local employment and training opportunities, Napranum Shire Council has been given the opportunity to build an additional five houses on top of the 15 already scheduled for construction. These houses are being built by local community members who are actually achieving capacity to become builders and ultimately take over the construction of houses within the community.

At the moment, 65 per cent of the work on these properties is being done by local Indigenous workers. The minister and I were happy to see work progressing very well. Once complete, these properties will bring the number of new dwellings delivered by NPARIH in Napranum to 48. In addition, 69 existing dwellings have been refurbished under the program. Provided the council successfully delivers the five houses it is currently building—and every indication is that they will—the minister has agreed to their request to deliver the entire balance of the NPARIH program via their council construction team.

Napranum Shire Council is also keen to advance homeownership within its community and is currently in the process of finalising its proposed selling prices for existing housing. With regard to homeownership, the minister reports that Palm Island is the first Indigenous community to agree on initial valuations which will apply to the sale of existing houses. The minister has written to the mayor of Palm Island agreeing to the proposed valuations which will allow applications for homeownership by Palm Island residents to start to be assessed. This is a first in Queensland's history.

The Newman government is committed to delivering for Indigenous Queenslanders. The department, in partnership with the Commonwealth and perhaps more importantly in partnership with local councils, is doing a great job of putting roofs over the heads of those people who live in my electorate.

Canossa Private Hospital, Palliative Care

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (11.15 am): I rise today to deliver to the House a good news story. This is a good news story about the Newman government delivering front-line services to this great state of Queensland. Earlier today we heard the Minister for Health outline his commitment to palliative care and confirm the reopening of the palliative care beds at Canossa Private Hospital in the Mount Ommaney electorate.

I want to give members a bit of background. On 15 December 2010 the previous state Labor government announced that it would be withdrawing funding for public palliative care beds in my electorate of Mount Ommaney. There was an uproar. This caused an absolute uproar. There was a rally outside the hospital which I attended as a concerned community member. It was great to see the then shadow health minister, Mark McArdle, come out in support of those palliative care beds staying open.

What also occurred at that time is that the then federal minister for health, Nicola Roxon, announced that 10 new palliative care beds would be opened at QEII Hospital. This was an inspiring announcement because what the Labor federal and state governments were saying was that they were actually going to increase the number of palliative care beds. But this really was not the case. Some beds were opening here and some beds were closing there. In their typical convoluted, incorrect and deceiving spin the state and federal Labor governments tried to convince the people of Queensland that this state was maintaining all those vital services and more.

That was wrong, wrong, wrong. Let me tell members why it was wrong. This is what our problem with budgets comes down to. Those opposite cannot add up. They do not understand basic maths. Let us have a look at this. Both the state and federal Labor governments said that they were going to increase the number of palliative care beds. They said that they were going to put 10 new beds into QEII, but they were taking seven beds from Canossa. That actually meant—let me work this out—that three new beds were opening.

We heard the health minister say that in the growing western corridor we need a service providing end-of-life care. People need dignity and support. It is specialist care. Canossa had been providing that exceptionally well. What Canossa had been providing, which the previous government did not mention, was a great training facility. Again I say that this is specialist care. People going into this field need to have specialised training. That is what Canossa provided. First and foremost, the people in palliative care appreciated the service that Canossa provided. This facility provided dignity. It provided support. It provided understanding which is paramount for families in this most emotional time.

The people who require the services of palliative care come from many, many different walks of life. They have excelled. They have battled. They have been a part of their families' good times and tough times. When the tough times have visited them, Canossa palliative care has been there to provide them with support. The unerring delivery of dignity that people of Queensland and Australia need when confronted with such an adversity is what Canossa delivered—great care.

This facility was recognised by the nation and, when last year in March the service was closed by the previous Labor government, it was our duty—it was up to us—to get out there and make sure that this vital service was reinstated. I am so pleased and proud to be part of a government that made the tough decisions early so we can continue to provide vital front-line services for all of Queensland. At the end of the day, I am pleased to announce and pleased to tell the good news story that the Canossa Private Hospital opened up its public palliative care beds on 2 April and the community is better for it.

Newman Government, Performance



Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.20 am): The state and federal LNP have been consistently attempting to scare Queenslanders about government debt, to use this fear to justify cuts to front-line services—cuts which are all about funding the LNP's election promises. In March, Tony Abbott issued an alarmingly worded press release saying—

Labor's debt and deficits have left Australia more vulnerable to an economic shock and mean less protection in the event of a financial crisis.

In the same month, the Liberal Party issued a media statement saying that we should only compare Australia's debt as a percentage of GDP with Chile, Finland, Sweden and Norway, to paint a negative picture. However, sadly for Mr Abbott, the facts set out in the latest Queensland Treasury Corporation investor booklet, the 'blue book', explode his claims, just as the independent QTC analysis exploded Treasurer Tim Nicholls's debt claims when he went overseas last year to sell our state's potential to investors. At page 15 of the latest QTC 'blue book' it states—

Among countries with a AAA credit rating from all three of the major rating agencies, Australia has the lowest level of gross debt ...

The graph on the very same page details how Australia's debt position compares very favourably with other developed countries around the world.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! There are too many interjections.

Mr PITT: Of course here in Queensland over the last year we have come to know the reason for this dishonesty from the LNP on debt. It is all about painting a story of horror to justify savage cuts to front-line services to fund their election promises. If you add up all the new spending measures and cuts to revenue of the LNP in the front table of Budget Paper No. 4, it reaches a total well in excess of \$6 billion.

The LNP went to the election knowing full well they could not deliver on their promises to Queenslanders without cutting front-line services. They decided to mislead Queenslanders and worry about the consequences of breaking their promises later—promises on the cost of living that have simply been abandoned, such as ongoing cuts to electricity bills of \$120 per year, and promises to lower debt without asset sales that they have now admitted are a complete fallacy. Under this

government, gross debt is increasing by more than \$20 billion over four years. And while peak debt is projected to be 3.3 per cent lower, this is largely the result of at least \$2.8 billion in asset sales so far by the LNP including the sell down of QR National and the ElectraNet business.

The simple fact is that cuts to front-line services and jobs across Queensland are about paying for the LNP's \$4 billion in unfunded election promises. And these cuts represent more broken promises and dishonesty from this government, such as the promises from the Premier to create 420,000 jobs and lower unemployment to four per cent in six years. The Treasurer early last year described Queensland with an unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent and state final demand over the year to the March quarter at 7.9 per cent as an 'economic basket case'. He is now attempting to convince Queenslanders that a higher trend unemployment rate of 5.8 per cent with state final demand from the June to December quarter last year contracting by 0.8 per cent is 'great'. 'Economic basket case' and 'great'—I am not really sure who the Treasurer is trying to convince because Queenslanders simply do not believe him. For the Treasurer's benefit, I use state final demand figures here because he has removed the publication of gross state product figures in the state accounts. I will keep it simple for the Treasurer, as he said today: if you do not release the information, we cannot use it.

On seasonally adjusted figures, more than 28,000 full-time jobs have been lost in Queensland since March 2012 with fewer overall jobs to go around. This has contributed to a significant fall in the participation rate or people actively looking for work of more than 1.1 per cent seasonally adjusted. If the same percentage of Queenslanders were looking for work as in March last year, both the trend and seasonally adjusted unemployment rates would now be over seven per cent here in Queensland. The Treasurer issued a remarkable media release in response to these figures saying that they reflected a 'positive trend', when the LNP drove unemployment to over six per cent—levels not even seen during the global financial crisis.

During the period of this so-called 'positive trend', on the Treasurer's newly preferred trend measure—and we are not sure which measure he wishes to use: one minute it is seasonally adjusted and the next minute it is trend—2,400 full-time jobs were lost in March with over 10,000 full-time jobs lost over the preceding six months. I think most Queenslanders would strongly agree—and hopefully those members who wish to remain in this chamber after the next election should be asking serious questions—that this is not a 'positive trend'. Unfortunately a trend we are seeing emerge here in Queensland is the LNP breaching the trust of Queenslanders. You cannot trust a word this Treasurer says on debt and you cannot trust him on employment or on the state of the economy.

Thatcher, Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (11.25 am): 'You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot help the wage-earner by pulling down the wage-payer.' These words originally penned by Abraham Lincoln were written down on a piece of paper and kept by one of the western world's most influential leaders as a source of inspiration. Indeed, she was one of the people whom I referred to in my maiden speech alongside Churchill and Reagan.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to rise in this august House to speak about the recent passing of the Rt Hon. the Baroness Margaret Thatcher. Dubbed the 'Iron Lady' by a Soviet Union journalist, Baroness Thatcher was Britain's first female Prime Minister, who was elected in 1950 as the member for Finchley in the House of Commons. Baroness Thatcher was a true leader in every sense of the word and one of the west's true conviction politicians. As she stated—

No great party can survive except on the basis of firm beliefs about what it wants to do. It is not enough to have reluctant support. We want people's enthusiasm as well.

Whether you lean to the Left or to the Right of the political pendulum, you certainly cannot deny that Baroness Thatcher left a remarkable legacy in Britain and around the world. Along with other prominent figures from the era, she assisted in bringing an end to the Cold War, along with President Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev and Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Baroness Thatcher was a true world leader and never minced her words or led anyone to doubt the truth of her convictions particularly on the world stage. For example, when addressing the threat of communism she stated—

The Russians are bent on world dominance, and they are rapidly acquiring the means to become the most powerful imperial nation the world has seen. The men in the Soviet Politburo do not have to worry about the ebb and flow of public opinion. They put guns before butter, while we put just about everything before guns. They know they are a superpower in only one sense—the military sense. They are a failure in human and economic terms.

Regardless of your political persuasion, there should always be respect for the office of Prime Minister. It was extremely disappointing to note that many Labour MPs in the House of Commons chose to boycott the tributes in the House of Commons to Baroness Thatcher. In the passing of such a former Prime Minister, no matter what political party they hail from, it is essential to mark respect for their achievements and position. It was disgusting, may I even say disturbing, to see many of Baroness Thatcher's detractors who were probably not even born during her tenure as Prime Minister of Great Britain celebrating her death in the streets. It makes me ponder the question: where has the respect in society gone? I could not fathom celebrating the death of other former prime ministers or premiers.

My political leanings may not agree with the ideologies of former prime ministers such as Gough Whitlam, Bob Hawke, Paul Keating or premiers such as Peter Beattie or Wayne Goss. The difference, however, is that I respect the high office they held and their overall contribution to our society. I was extremely disappointed in those individuals on the other side of politics that have displayed contempt and utter disregard of one individual's achievements in life. Baroness Thatcher had not even passed away 24 hours before many people were gathering in the streets. The lobbying to have the song *Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead* climb up the British pop charts says more about the way in which segments of the Left in modern society are heading rather than the legacy of this courageous lady.

Baroness Thatcher's political principles changed the face of modern western politics in her almost forensic pursuit of her ideological enemies. John Campbell stated in his 2009 book *The Iron Lady* that, according to Baroness Thatcher—

... there were in principle, as she put it in a speech to the West German Christian Democrats, 'only two political philosophies, only two ways of governing a country', however many party labels might be invented to obscure the fact: the Marxist-socialist way, which put the interest of the state first, and the way of freedom, which put the people first.

John Campbell went on to say—

Modern Western forms of democratic socialism as practised by the German Social Democrats or the British Labour party she regarded contemptuously as merely watered down versions of Marxism without the courage of Moscow's convictions ... the Labour party—under the influence of its increasingly dominant left wing—was becoming ever more openly Marxist. True to Hayek, she believed that socialism was a slippery slope—literally the road to serfdom—which would lead inexorably to Communism if the slide was not halted and reversed.

Baroness Thatcher adhered to the credo of, 'We do not seek to lead people's lives for them, nor to boss them around, nor to regulate them into apathy. A government for all the people must have the humility to recognise its limitations and the strength to resist the temptation to meddle into citizens' lives.' Baroness Margaret Thatcher was without a doubt one of the most significant political figures of our lifetime. I wish to place on the record in this chamber my deepest sympathies on the passing of the Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret Thatcher.

Uranium Mining

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (11.30 am): The LNP's decision to overturn Labor's 23-year ban on uranium mining in Queensland has no economic justification and is a betrayal of the Premier's clear commitment to the people of Queensland, both before and after the state election. Let me begin by addressing the Premier's poor excuse for breaking his commitment to Queenslanders. Apparently, Julia Gillard made him do it. What an irony! When it comes to funding absolute basics like better education for our kids or support for people with a disability, the Premier is gung-ho and takes the fight up to the Commonwealth. But when it comes to uranium mining and keeping an election commitment he scurries off quickly to hide behind the Prime Minister's skirts. Even by the Premier's own admission, the decision to break a key election promise was made with no modelling on the number of jobs to be created or on any increased investment in regional Queensland. In fact, documents obtained under right to information reveal that the only investigation undertaken by the government was its direct contact with the uranium industry to provide them with the information on the economic benefits of opening up the industry to Queensland.

There has been a decided lack of transparency around the LNP's decision to lift the ban on uranium mining in Queensland. Even under the Queensland Resources Council's most optimistic and overinflated scenario, Queensland would only get \$900 million in estimated royalties from uranium mining. This would equate to an average royalty gain of \$30 million per annum or just one per cent of current royalty income. In comparison, the value of Queensland's total agricultural exports last financial year exceeded \$7 billion. In October last year there was much hype and rhetoric from the LNP about the uranium industry creating thousands of Queensland jobs—once again with no evidence to substantiate these claims.

Consequently, it is of note that there is a current conspicuous silence on the number of uranium jobs to be created in the implementation committee's report and the minister's own press release. Is that because when the LNP finally got around to looking into it the facts bear out what Deloitte concluded only a few years ago? That is, in Queensland only 155 direct jobs would be created from uranium mining over the long term. One hundred and fifty-five jobs only make up 0.6 per cent of the 28,000 full-time jobs lost under the Newman government's first year in office or 0.3 per cent of the jobs currently supported by the Great Barrier Reef or 0.2 per cent of the agricultural jobs in Queensland. I make these comparisons with agriculture and tourism because these are two established industries which are placed at greatest risk by a uranium industry in Queensland.

Mr Cripps: How?

Ms TRAD: Haven't you read the report, Minister?

Mr Cripps: How are they placed at risk?

Ms TRAD: I take on board the minister's interjection. It just proves that he has not read the report. I will quote from the report, if the minister will listen. The implementation committee report clearly identifies two significant problems with the uranium industry: transportation and the management of radioactive mine water—two problems for which the committee failed to find any adequate solutions.

On the issue of transportation, the minister still refuses to rule out shipping uranium over the Great Barrier Reef, threatening Queensland's greatest environmental asset and 60,000 Queensland jobs. On the issue of storing and treating radioactive mine water, history shows the risks are even higher. In 2009 the Ranger uranium mine in the Northern Territory was found to be leaking 100,000 litres per day of contaminated mine water into the earth below Kakadu. In the same year a poorly engineered dam collapsed, releasing six million litres of contaminated water into Kakadu. The implementation committee report acknowledged the potential impacts on water and that these groundwater resources are 'extremely important for irrigation and stock watering with approximately 1,500 megalitres of water per day being drawn from the Great Artesian Basin alone'.

The risks to both the reputation and sustainability of our agricultural industry and food security from uranium mining are real. On the same day the implementation committee handed down its report, environmental groups and unions joined together to release an alternative report highlighting the many risks associated with mining. I table a copy of the report for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'High risk—low return: the case against uranium mining in Queensland' [\[2425\]](#).

I take this opportunity to thank the organisations which collaborated on the report for their hard work and dedication to this issue, particularly Robin Taubenfeld from the Nuclear Free Alliance. In conclusion, the *Economist* in March last year featured a comprehensive investigative economic analysis of the nuclear industry and concluded, 'Barring major technological developments, nuclear power will continue to be a creature of politics not economics.' This is poor economics and poor politics.

(Time expired)

Thatcher, Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret



Dr DAVIS (Stafford—LNP) (11.35 am): Repetition is the basis of all learning. So I, too, rise to pay tribute to Baroness Margaret Thatcher, who died on 8 April. She worked her way up from being a grocer's daughter to Britain's first and only female Prime Minister and the longest serving British Prime Minister of the 20th century. She was indeed well qualified to speak on the value and importance of hard work and character in becoming a good and well-educated citizen, and the collective benefit to society when that becomes widespread.

Her philosophy was apparent in an interview published in *Woman's Own* magazine in September 1987, in which she said—

I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand 'I have a problem, it is the Government's job to cope with it!' or 'I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!' or 'I am homeless, the Government must house me!' and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first. It is our duty to look after ourselves and then also to help look after our neighbour and life is a reciprocal business and people have got the entitlements too much in mind without the obligations.

Thatcherism, in my view, places great emphasis on the responsibility of good government to maximise individual and collective abilities so those with indisputable need can be cared for. Once a culture of avoidable welfare, dependency and entitlement becomes entrenched, moving its recipients out of their comfort zone can be very confronting. Her strength and conviction in doing so created enemies but equally remind us of the need to make personal sacrifices in fighting for what you honestly believe makes for a better society.

Margaret Thatcher transformed Britain, the Conservative Party and even the Labour Party. Indeed, Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair continued many elements of Thatcherism such as privatisation, contestability and financial deregulation, albeit with a more flexible persona. A recent review in the *Economist* regarding the performance of the Nordic countries began by reminding us that 30 years ago Margaret Thatcher turned Britain into the world's leading centre of thinking the unthinkable. She inspired other countries to follow her lead and those who did have survived the global financial crisis in a much healthier state. For example, take Sweden, a country for which I have a particular affinity as my mother is a Swede. Once a high-taxing, increasingly welfare oriented state, it realised in the early 1990s that this was simply unsustainable. It instead donned the golden straitjacket of fiscal orthodoxy with a pledge to produce a fiscal surplus over the economic cycle. Like Thatcher's Britain, there is now a focus on individual choice and competition rather than paternalism and bureaucratic hindrance. This has paid remarkable dividends financially and in terms of provision of state services such as health and education.

In March 2012 Queenslanders had the foresight to vote for a government that encourages individual productivity and responsibility, so lessening reliability on government handouts and preserving the ability to care for those with truly no other options. The opinion polls suggest that on 14 September this year Australians will vote in a way that will allow the whole nation to prosper.

We can, indeed, be grateful to Baroness Margaret Thatcher for being a freedom fighter who empowered individuals to be their best by taking responsibility for their own lives as free as possible from micromanagement by, and dependency on, the state. Continuing to apply and advance that powerful philosophy is, indeed, in the public interest as evidenced by the progress being made in Queensland under the Newman government.

Newman, Mr C

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (11.40 am): On Monday, 25 March on ABC Coast FM Annie Gaffney asked the Premier if his government intended to fully privatise the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital. Instead of answering this important question, the Premier used this time to once again launch a personal attack on me. His words were, 'Let me just talk about Mr Wellington. I remind people that because of Mr Wellington we had over 10 years of the latest batch of Labor government.' Only the Premier could fathom how his answer was at all relevant to the question about our new Sunshine Coast Hospital. Indeed, I am flattered that the Premier thinks I had so much power. The truth is that, by attacking me in order to dodge or not answer this important question, the Premier is losing the respect of all Queenslanders. Before the election the LNP promised the people of the Sunshine Coast a new public hospital as planned by the previous government and it has reneged on that promise.

Twelve months ago the LNP government was swept into office with a huge majority promising prosperity and positive change. Instead, it has destroyed the lives of thousands of Queenslanders and shattered their hopes and dreams for a future. The drover's dog could have won the last election because Queenslanders did not like the Labor government that much and they wanted a change. The Premier need not flatter himself with his belief that he led the LNP to victory because the people wanted his government. While the LNP won the last election, its present track record will ensure that winning the next election will not be as easy. Next time they will need more than the drover's dog to get over the line.

Often when I ask the Premier questions to which the people of my electorate want answers he responds not with answers but with personal attacks. By not answering these questions he is treating the people of my electorate with contempt and sheer arrogance. I have a thick skin and the Premier's insults are like water off a duck's back. In truth, the Premier is dreaming if he thinks he can intimidate or threaten me. Unlike the Premier, I owe no favours to any other person, to any party, to any lobbyist or any toady. My only loyalty is to the people I serve: the people of Nicklin. Whether the Premier likes it or not, they elected me to represent them and they deserve to have their questions answered.

I will once again set the record straight so that the Premier can understand the history of this parliament by providing him with some facts. In the 1998 hung parliament, the Nationals, the Liberals and One Nation were too busy fighting amongst themselves and there was no hope and no prospect of a stable government for Queensland. I gave Labor my support to form government on condition that I would only support it on matters of supply and votes of no confidence. This I did to provide stability, and history shows that Queensland had a stable government. Many even said it was a jolly good Liberal government. The facts are that three years later the Beattie government romped home in 2001 with 66 seats, decimating the Nationals, wiping out One Nation and leaving the Liberals with just three members in this House. From then until the LNP win in 2012 the Labor Party won every election by a significant majority. These are the facts. Instead of blaming me for the 13 years of Labor government, the Premier should take a long hard look at his own party's performance, most notably its talent of losing elections. Even in 2009 when Queenslanders were desperate for change, incredibly the LNP lost the unlosable election. The reason was that from 1998 to 2009 Queenslanders had no faith in the Liberals and that is because they just were not up to the job.

I have represented the electorate of Nicklin since 1998 and at every election the Liberals and the Nationals have wheeled out the same tissue of lies in their bid to defeat me. Did honourable members know that in the March election last year they spent over \$197,000—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member will resume his seat. I invite the member to withdraw the comment about 'lies'. It is unparliamentary.

Mr WELLINGTON: I withdraw the comment. In March last year the LNP spent over \$190,000 trying to rid me from the electorate—more than they spent on getting the Premier the seat of Ashgrove. The voters of Nicklin do not want to be taken for granted by a party that sees them as 'just another seat'. They do not want to be treated with contempt by a Premier who will not answer questions put to him. When the people of Ashgrove voted for the Premier, they bought a lemon. I challenge the Premier to ask them for a second term. We all know they need have no worries because the word is that the Premier already has his sight set on the blue ribbon seat of Moggill. I have great sympathy for the present member for Moggill. He is a decent man who, because he would not step aside to allow the Premier to parachute into Moggill—

(Time expired)

Rural Fire Brigade; Australian Volunteer Coast Guard

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (11.45 am): I rise this morning to talk about some of the great opportunities I have had as the Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers. On 12 March I joined rural firefighters at the Bli Bli and District Rural Fire Brigade station to witness a handover of \$75,000 by Energex CEO, Terry Effeny, to the Rural Fire Service to benefit that region as well as Caboolture and Warwick. Attending that station at Bli Bli, I was amazed at the quality of work in the building of the fire station. A lot of the work was done by volunteers, resulting in a magnificent station to service the rural firefighters in that region.

I also congratulate and make mention of Energex and their support for rural firefighters in the south-east corner of Queensland. There are 18 rural fire brigades in the Bli Bli area and they call themselves the north coast rural fire brigades. That is only one of three donations that Energex is making throughout the south-east corner of Queensland.

All honourable members would know that there are about 35,000 Rural Fire Service volunteers in Queensland and they protect 93 per cent of the rural estate in Queensland. They do that without pay and they do it gladly. They save much of the infrastructure and help to allay many concerns of people in rural areas. The quality of the equipment donated by Energex to these brigades was significant and of a nature that will assist them tremendously. It included lighting plants, chainsaws, GPS and Kestrel weather meter kits, portable pumps and generators. This is a great effort by Energex in supporting the 56 brigades throughout the south-east corner of Queensland. This financial year alone they have attended 322 incidents across that region. I say congratulations to Energex on their great work.

On 6 April I attended the coastguard headquarters at Mooloolaba. Along with the Speaker of the parliament, Ms Fiona Simpson; the Sunshine Coast Deputy Mayor, Chris Thompson; and the patron of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, Michael Alexander, I attended the launch of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard QF6 Mooloolaba's new state-of-the-art rescue vessel, which is named *Rhondda Rescue* as a tribute to QF6's patron Michael Alexander's late wife, Rhondda. Rhondda had done a huge amount of work as a volunteer with the coastguard service at Mooloolaba.

The *Rhondda Rescue* is a 45-foot custom designed and built rescue vessel worth more than \$1 million. The coastguard at Mooloolaba raised more than \$850,000 towards the vessel and topped up that amount with gaming grants as well.

The vessel is a custom built vessel and can operate in all weather conditions, day and night. It is fully networked with broadband radar navigation, thermal imaging, infrared and a night vision system on board. The *Rhondda Rescue* is equipped with a floating stretcher, which is used to safely recover people who may have sustained a spinal injury, and a 'line-throwing cannon', which enables rescuers to reach people in shallow water who may be in trouble. The vessel has the range and endurance to travel more than 400 nautical miles, making it the longest range vessel on the Queensland coast. As I said, the Coast Guard QF6 Mooloolaba can come to the aid of many people in that region when they get into trouble.

The *Rhondda Rescue* is based at the only deep all-weather port between Brisbane and Bundaberg, so it has a great opportunity to work within that region. The QF6 Mooloolaba supports the Queensland Water Police in marine search and rescue and medical evacuations and is a vital element of Queensland's search and rescue plan.

(Time expired)

Water Prices

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.50 am): Recently I attended a meeting in Mutchilba, where irrigators in the SunWater Mareeba-Dimbulah relief irrigation scheme expressed outrage that the government has failed to honour its pre-election commitment to cap water price increases to CPI plus \$2. It was unfortunate that the member for Cook was unable to make it, but those attending the meeting appreciated his verbal support of their demands.

Irrigators are angry that the government appears to be either unwilling or powerless to deliver affordable energy and water pricing. They feel betrayed that a clear election promise has been abandoned by the LNP. As I expressed to those at the meeting, the Minister for Energy and Water Supply has proven willing to listen to my constituents and resolve water issues in my electorate quickly. However, he is hamstrung by a corporate model of utility management and his party's privatisation agenda to package and restructure water ownership, distribution and retail for sale after the next election.

Previously, water delivery was a government function and the minister set the price at the cost of delivery because it was understood that the income generated would return to the budget bottom line through the success of the agricultural industry in the region. Corporatisation has isolated water delivery, and the corporate entity does not have access to the broad income stream generated by successful agricultural communities.

The LNP are now offering independent co-op arrangements for irrigators to take over distribution and delivery of water while the bulk water remains under the corporate structure. Farmers will be handed a run-down infrastructure and they will have added difficulties in trying to negotiate licence quotas from the bulk water owner, SunWater—if SunWater's name does not change. This creates a conflict of interest for SunWater, which makes a significant profit on the water it sells to Cairns and highly populated areas and will naturally prioritise its own profits above the community service responsibility to agricultural producers. The state government has created a situation where farmers are damned to fighting for adequate water allocation if they take responsibility for the distribution and damned to unsustainable production costs set by QCA if they do not opt in.

Corporatisation is a failed model of utility management and it must be abandoned before the agricultural industry is sacrificed. In today's *Courier-Mail* the Minister for Transport is quoted as saying that if the government wanted to privatise Queensland Rail it would leave it as a government owned corporation. If the government can restructure Queensland Rail from a profit motivated entity to a government controlled service then the same can be done with water and energy.

This government has a perfect opportunity to retain the income-generating aspects of our water and energy delivery without making the same mistake the Labor government made when it sold the profitable arm of Queensland Rail. It is imperative to do whatever it takes to achieve affordable pricing, reduce the cost of production and return viability to farming. Farmers have had enough of empty election promises that never eventuate while they are overwhelmed by unsustainable costs of production. Many farmers I speak to ask me if governments, both federal and state, are really interested in the survival of agriculture at all. Last week a sugarcane farmer from the coast wanted to know if the government was fair dinkum or if he should sell his farm to the Chinese while he can still get a good price for it.

There is so much at stake and the government cannot afford to stand idly by, blaming market forces, while an industry that has been the backbone of our economy for 200 years is ruined. The government must, rather than point to this independent co-op arrangement and brag about possible benefits, prioritise the reduction of water pricing in line with its pre-election commitment of CPI plus \$2 to the relief areas in the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation scheme if it is genuinely interested in the survival of our agricultural industry in Queensland.

Kirrama Range Road

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.54 am): On 15 November last year the member for Mulgrave spoke in parliament on the issue of the Kirrama Range road. On 19 March this year the member for Dalrymple spoke in parliament on the same issue. On both occasions both members made misleading statements motivated by politics, not a genuine concern for the people or communities affected by this important issue. I did not respond to either of those attacks at the time.

On 20 October last year I announced a funding offer by the Newman government of up to \$2.5 million to the Cassowary Coast Regional Council for the purpose of opening the Kirrama Range road, which has been closed since 2007. At its general meeting on 28 March this year the council resolved to accept the offer. There has been a high level of public interest in the issue—some genuine but a great deal fanned by political manoeuvring by the Labor Party and the Katter party. The last thing I wanted to do was further politicise the environment in which the council was making a decision.

With the council decision having been taken to accept the funding offer—and I am very pleased that it has—I want to address the core accusation levelled at me by the members for Mulgrave and Dalrymple and their agents that I have done some sort of backflip on this issue. These are ridiculous and unsubstantiated claims. Both members point to correspondence from me to the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils in 2008 in which I argued that funding should be provided by the state government for the repair and maintenance of the Kirrama Range road. I have never denied that and I have never indicated that I have changed my mind. There has been no backflip. It has been a long, hard slog on behalf of my community to try and get the former Labor government to take an interest in the Kirrama Range road. When you are bashing your head up against a brick wall and getting nowhere, you have to try an alternative approach.

Finally, in the 2011-12 budget Main Roads allocated \$471,000 over two years to the Kirrama Range road. It was not enough but it was a step in the right direction, and on 8 September 2011 I made a speech in this place saying exactly that. I table that speech for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Speech by member for Hinchinbrook, Hon. Andrew Cripps, in *Record of Proceedings* dated 8 September 2011 [2426].

I also said that contributions for the Kirrama Range road needed to come from all three levels of government in recognition of its history, its importance to the tourism and cattle industries and its recreational use by the local community. For all of their muckraking, the Labor Party and the Katter party never acknowledged this. It does not suit their political agenda.

The member for Dalrymple is the worst offender, because he actually referred to my 2011 speech when he mentioned the Kirrama Range road in passing in parliament in July last year. I table the *Hansard* extract to demonstrate his hypocrisy.

Tabled paper: Speech by member for Dalrymple, Mr Shane Knuth MP, in *Records of Proceedings*, dated 12 July 2012 [2427].

So what about the contribution from the federal government? On 16 March this year it was reported in the *Innisfail Advocate* that the federal member for Kennedy had secured \$1 million from the Gillard government for the Kirrama Range road. On 19 March the member for Dalrymple repeated this announcement in this House. Then it was reported in the *Innisfail Advocate* on 23 March that the federal member for Kennedy had not in fact secured the funding at all. I would welcome the \$1 million from the federal government. Indeed, I said in this House in September 2011 that the federal government should contribute to reopening the Kirrama Range road, but we will have to wait and see if that money is forthcoming.

Since 2008 the financial position of the state government has deteriorated as a result of the waste and mismanagement of the former Bligh government. The Newman government is making the hard decisions to get Queensland back on track. I am very pleased that the Newman government has provided this opportunity for us to finally move forward and have this important local road reopened, particularly given the difficult financial position of the state budget.

This is the most generous amount of funding that has ever been made available for work on the Kirrama Range road, and I am proud that I have been able to secure this funding for the benefit of the people and the communities I represent. I have not done a backflip on the Kirrama Range road. I have not changed my position. I have focused on getting an outcome for the communities that I represent and it has resulted in us having a real chance to get this important road open. That is what my community wanted, and I have delivered that. The reality is that the gutter politics from the Labor Party and the Katter party has put at risk the funding offer being accepted by the council, and now we have overcome that problem. The Labor Party and the Katter party put politics before people and communities. I am focused on getting on with the job.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The time for matters of public interest has expired.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Membership

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (11.59 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the member for Redcliffe, Mr Driscoll, be discharged from the Health and Community Services Committee and the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Bates, be appointed to the committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUEENSLAND RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to establish the Queensland Rail Transit Authority, and for related purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Queensland Rail Transit Authority Bill 2013 [\[2428\]](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Rail Transit Authority Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2429\]](#).

The Newman government is taking steps to continue the reform program already underway in Queensland Rail to build a better rail business. Much work has been done over the past 12 months to improve services, efficiency and affordability. An additional 150 services have already been delivered on the Ferny Grove and Gold Coast lines. More work needs to be done if we want to drive down the cost of fares and deliver more services.

The Newman government is proposing to change Queensland Rail to a statutory authority. Queensland Rail currently receives about 80 per cent of its funding directly from the government. As the previous government sold off the profit-making parts of the business, it makes no sense for Queensland Rail to continue as a government owned corporation. This change will also bring Queensland Rail closer to government, not closer to privatisation. Queensland Rail will have a greater customer focus and deliver better train services. It will also help make it more efficient. This means Queensland Rail can employ more train crew to deliver better services and add more trains to the network. This is a great state with great opportunity. This change will help us deliver great rail services for Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SA EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (12.02 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Building Act 1975, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and to make minor amendments to the acts mentioned in the schedule. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill [\[2430\]](#).

Tabled paper: Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [\[2431\]](#).

The Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 will cut red tape by streamlining the development application process for building over or near sewers, water mains and stormwater drains. Currently there is no state-wide standard, which means the process is confusing, illogical and ad hoc. Let me explain the hoops that applicants for a building development approval often have to jump through just to be able to build a house or shed on their own property. Before work can start, you need to get a building development approval. However, the Building Act currently does not allow a private building certifier to grant approval for building work over, or adjacent to, a sewer or water main without the consent of the relevant service provider under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act. I will refer to this legislation as the water supply act from now on.

Having to obtain consent from a service provider can also trigger a requirement to lodge a planning development application with the relevant local government which then has to be assessed under that local government's planning scheme or policies. To make things more confusing, the water supply act does not set out any criteria that the applicant must address to obtain consent, nor does it detail the process to be followed when making an application. Furthermore, the act does not provide design standards that would inform the applicant about whether it would be appropriate to build over or near the infrastructure in the first place. This lack of consistency is confusing for applicants and building certifiers, costs them time and money and is something that this bill intends to correct. Needless to say, negotiating your way through this process can involve outlaying a substantial sum of money on various fees and charges. Fees vary across service providers and local government areas, but planning approvals alone can be up to \$735. When factoring in all of the approvals, the total costs can reach \$2,000 or more just to construct a small shed. Also of concern is the current absence of any mechanism to allow applicants to appeal an unfavourable decision. This is unacceptable and something that this bill will rectify.

Amendments in this bill will remove the requirement for applicants to obtain consent from service providers or local governments. Instead, building work over or near relevant infrastructure will be assessed as part of the building assessment provisions under the Building Act. As a consequence, the amendments will also provide a timely and cost-effective appeal process to the building and development dispute resolution committees. The amendments will also facilitate the adoption of a new mandatory section in the Queensland Development Code, 'Mandatory Part 1.4—Building Over or Near Relevant Infrastructure', which I will refer to as QDC 1.4. QDC 1.4 will apply consistently across the state and will provide robust performance criteria and acceptable solutions for residential buildings like houses, known as class 1 structures, and also for class 10 structures like backyard sheds. These criteria and solutions can then be used for assessment by a building certifier.

Any building application that does not comply with the performance criteria for these classes of buildings or which relates to other types of buildings such as multilevel residential unit buildings and commercial buildings—class 2 to 9 buildings—will be referred to a concurrence agency for consideration. In this case, the relevant local government, South-East Queensland distributor retailer or other service provider will be stated as a concurrence agency under the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009. QDC 1.4 will streamline the approval process and reduce the number of applications a local government or service provider will need to review. Crucially, QDC 1.4 will also provide safeguards to avoid damage to relevant infrastructure and to ensure the infrastructure remains accessible for ongoing inspection, maintenance and repair.

QDC 1.4 has been developed in close consultation with the Department of Energy and Water Supply and with water service providers, local governments and the building industry. The Newman government views the construction industry as one of the pillars of the Queensland economy. This bill delivers on our ongoing commitment to cut red tape in the industry by simplifying the building regulatory system. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. TL MANDER (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (12.07 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

CRIMINAL LAW (CHILD EXPLOITATION AND DANGEROUS DRUGS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 21 March (see p. 905), on motion of Mr Bleijie—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.08 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill. In doing so, I thank the Attorney-General for pursuing our objective of making Queensland the safest state in which to raise a child. A commitment was made by this government to amend laws to address synthetic drug penalties and child pornography and some child sex offences, including a new offence of child grooming. This bill moves to do those things. The bill will amend the Criminal Code Act 1899, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Evidence Act 1977, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 and the Disability Services Act 2006.

I will address first that significant part of the bill that is aimed at protecting our children from being exploited, which is those amendments that significantly strengthen our Criminal Code. As society evolves, technology, wi-fi and other things are developing at a fast pace and it is very important that legislation keeps up. This legislation captures animation and virtual images in the definition of child exploitation material. I think this is all about ensuring that Queensland keeps pace with technology and the changes that are happening. This bill amends the definition of child exploitation material in section 207A of the act to ensure that animated and virtual images of children are caught by that definition. I congratulate the Attorney-General on ensuring that the Criminal Code is up to date and modern and has the ability to serve its purpose.

The bill also inserts new circumstances of aggravation in section 208 for unlawful sodomy; section 210, the indecent treatment of children under 16; and section 215, carnal knowledge with or of children under 16. I have included what those sections stand for so people understand exactly what we are talking about. A circumstance of aggravation will allow for a more severe penalty if this offence is committed. That will allow for a greater punishment of those who would prey on our most vulnerable, and that is when such an offence is committed against a child with an impairment of mind. I think it is very important that we introduce such a circumstance of aggravation to protect children. Children are always vulnerable, but a child with an impairment of the mind is obviously as vulnerable as anybody in our community can get. This bill ensures that punishments are severe and are appropriately in line with the expectations of the community.

This bill also provides a new offence of grooming. Again, given technological developments, the internet and other things are being used to groom children. By ensuring that this particular offence is now captured, police will be allowed to intervene before sexual activity takes place. Again, that protects the child before their innocence is taken from them by this most heinous of crimes. This bill

will also increase the maximum penalty of five years imprisonment or 10 years if the child is under 12 to target adults who engage in any conduct in relation to a child under 16 years or a person the adult believes to be under the age of 16 years. This new grooming offence is important, because police, in their investigations, need to be able to use techniques that keep pace with those predators who are out there in our community. This amendment ensures that police are able to do that so that somebody who believes that they are dealing with a person under the age of 16 are, in fact, dealing with a police officer. I commend the Attorney-General for ensuring that we are able to conduct those kinds of investigations to protect our community.

The bill also increases the maximum penalty for the offence of possession of child exploitation material, which is section 228D of the act, from five years to 14 years imprisonment; 10 years to 14 years imprisonment for the offence of involving a child in making child exploitation material, which is section 228A of the act; making child exploitation material, which is section 228B; and distributing child exploitation material, which is section 228C. I think those penalties need to be increased. Again, I support absolutely the government's objective to ensure that Queensland is the safest place in which to bring up a child and that people in the community and predators understand that the Queensland government cannot be more serious about ensuring that the appropriate penalty is implemented if someone is found guilty of such offences. The bill also increases the maximum penalty for the offence of using the internet to procure children under the age of 16 to engage in a sexual act from five years to 10 years and increases the maximum penalty for an aggravated form of the offence—that is of a child under the age of 12—from 10 years to 14 years imprisonment and creates new circumstances of aggravation where the procuring conduct involves the offender meeting a child or travelling with the intention to meet a child. Again, these are all amendments that allow our Police Service to be armed and capable of dealing with these predators as they become more sophisticated in taking away the innocence of our youth.

Unfortunately, because of the changing dynamics of families a loophole in our Criminal Code has evolved whereby a father in a de facto relationship would not be captured under the existing incest laws. There has been a case here in Queensland where that has happened. A de facto groomed his long-term partner's daughter to have sex with him after she reached the age of 16 or 17. A father is supposed to be a role model. He is supposed to be protective and provide an environment of safety. For someone to hide behind the structure of families that exist in Queensland today and to suggest that this is not an incestuous relationship is just plain offensive. I am pleased that the Attorney-General has included that circumstance in the legislation.

This bill deals with another area of importance and that relates to drug dealers, which are a scourge upon our society. They bring great personal and family pain and their only objective is their own profit. This legislation closes a loophole by amending the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 to create a new offence of trafficking in precursors. I think it is very important that definitions in legislation are up to date and are able to be used by police. This bill amends the definition of a dangerous drug to include the synthetic drugs that are available in our community. The current definition of a dangerous drug encompasses analogues of scheduled substances. The definition of a substance is amended to include an analogue of a scheduled substance if it has similar chemical structures or a similar pharmaceutical effect to the scheduled substance. So in plain language we are trying to say that if people were dealing in drugs that have a similar structure or a similar effect—

Mr Rickuss: If it looks like a duck, it is a duck.

Mr WATTS: That is exactly right. If it looks like a duck, it is a duck. I take that interjection. There are people who have been hiding behind the technical sophistication of chemical compositions to try to get away with what we know they are doing, which is dealing in drugs and putting our youth and others in the community in danger. I think those amendments are very important parts of the legislation. I congratulate the Attorney-General on taking forward the suggestion put forward by the committee to include drugs of a similar nature in those precursor schedules, because there are drugs out there that of themselves may not be dangerous but they are the precursors to making dangerous drugs. Again, people are hiding behind the technical sophistication of chemical compositions to try to get away with what we know they are doing, which is trafficking in precursors with the intent to manufacture dangerous drugs so that they can exploit our youth and others in our community for their own financial gain. They should be punished accordingly under the Criminal Code. Again, I thank the Attorney-General for doing that.

As someone who has been involved in the hospitality industry and seen up close and personal the effects that these drugs have on our community and have had to deal with people and been witness against people who have dealt in these drugs and tried to take advantage of our youth, I can only commend the Attorney-General for giving the police the legislation to enable them to prosecute and hold accountable the people who are out there to take advantage of technical aspects of the law.

I thank my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and, of course, the secretariat who always do a lot of work for us in preparing the reports. I most of all would like to thank the Attorney-General for bringing this bill forward, closing some of these loopholes and providing Queensland an opportunity to become the safest state in Australia to raise a child. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—Ind) (12.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill. I acknowledge the policy objectives and the reasons for them. Having previously served as a sworn member of the Queensland Police Service specialising as a detective in child protection, I recognise the work of departmental staff and commend the Attorney-General on this bill. The Attorney-General and I are not always on the same page but it would seem that on this occasion we are.

Regarding the amendments dealing with child exploitation, I will speak to a few key points. In relation to the amendment to the definition of child exploitation material to ensure animated or virtual images of children are caught by the definition, child sex offenders commonly use these images to groom and sexualise children. The images are created by persons who know the intended use and thereby directly enable child abuse. They are effectively a party to the offence stemming from the grooming process.

Regarding inserting a new circumstance of aggravation for offences committed against a child with an impairment of the mind, this is again justifiable and critical to protect the vulnerable in our society and suitably punish those who immorally, callously and criminally exploit those already damaged children.

Providing a new offence of grooming to target adults who engage in any conduct with the intent to facilitate the procurement of the child to engage in a sexual act or expose the child to any indecent matter is another timely improvement to our laws. As relevant to this bill at large, this offence is loosely comparable to trafficking in precursors under the Drugs Misuse Act. Grooming is a precursor to the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

The amendment to allow the joinder of multiple offences relating to child exploitation material offences into a single count on an indictment is a sensible amendment. Today child sex offenders are often being detected with hundreds of thousands of images of child exploitation. The classification or categorisation of the images based on the nature of offending and the number of images from each category not the number of indictments is what is relevant to the seriousness of the offence and ultimately the sentencing of offenders in relation to child exploitation material.

In short, I support the policy objectives of this bill and also believe the proposed amendment of the definition of dangerous drug is a reasonable and necessary step to enable our laws to keep pace with the dynamics and impacts of drugs in our society. I do suggest that the Newman government has a real issue to address with reference to the ever-increasing number of reportable offenders being managed under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act in Queensland. Presently this role is being performed exclusively by the Queensland Police Service and it is arguably not a sustainable approach taking into consideration there is, on average, approximately 500 new offenders being entered onto the child protection register each and every year. These laws will help contribute to the number of offenders being put onto that register and the police have very limited and finite resources to ensure child safety into the future on behalf of the government. The government really needs to look at this issue. That aside, I again praise the work of the Attorney-General and the departmental staff on this bill and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (12.23 pm): Today I will give a brief contribution to the debate on the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012 as both a parliamentarian and as a qualified criminologist. The amendments touch on two separate emerging issues in wider society, that being the use of technology, such as the internet and social sites which have led to child exploitation, and the new criminality of online grooming for sexual and other crimes against some of society's most vulnerable people—that is, young children. The second issue this amendment bill deals with is to extend the definition of dangerous drug in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 to take into account the speed in which these new synthetic drugs emerge on the unlawful drug market.

In terms of child exploitation, the proposed amendment will increase from five years to 14 years the sentence of an offender who has in their possession material that displays acts of child exploitation, distributes material and/or makes material that involves child exploitation. There are many ways to identify child exploitation, but I believe and I would hope all Queensland parliamentarians would view child pornography as the most vulgar of all child exploitation and it should be condemned. I applaud the Attorney-General for taking such a tough but fair stance. I am sure all Lytton and Queensland families would see this government as one that is tough on crime. Since coming to office, the Newman government has shown commitment to its policy made during the election that Queensland would have the toughest penalties around child sex crimes and that if you do the crime you will definitely do the time whilst making Queensland the safest state to raise a child.

Another concern that this bill addresses is the change of the definition of dangerous drug to take into account the speed in which synthetic drugs are entering the unlawful drug market. This issue has been highlighted in recent weeks with media reports around drugs in sport which is damaging codes such as rugby league and AFL in our communities. This issue has been regularly discussed this year around local sporting grounds in Lytton that I have attended on sign-on days. This amendment bill will also extend the definition to ensure that drug dealers and traffickers who package, market and supply substances, intending the substance to have a similar effect on the potential user to that of a prohibited dangerous drug, will be caught and punished accordingly under the provisions of the Drugs Misuse Act.

I put on the record my gratitude to officers of the Wynnum Police Station for their continued work in breaking down access to illegal and dangerous drugs and the unlawful drug market on the bayside. Recently I was speaking with officers from Wynnum Station about the positive work in breaking down illegal drug activities in Lytton with some great results. As a criminologist I know that with illegal and dangerous drug markets being set up there is a knock-on effect in terms of higher crime rates around break and enters, serious assaults and other crimes.

In conclusion, I congratulate our Attorney-General for bringing forward these amendments that deal with the emerging social problems around child exploitation, grooming of children and also extending the definition of dangerous drug. I must also thank the opposition leader for her support and insightful contribution to this amendment bill debate. This shows strong bipartisan partnership on a very serious matter that impacts Queensland and its families. The bill supports the Newman government's tough stance on crime doctrine by extending the maximum penalty for child exploitation crimes. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (12.27 pm): Any legislation that strengthens the protection of Queensland children, or children anywhere, is inherently a step in the right direction. This legislation proposes changes to laws to address synthetic drugs and penalties for child pornography and certain sex offences, including a new child grooming offence. The reasons to support such changes are many, the strongest being no child should ever have to endure anything for the gratification of an adult or another person or group and those involved should be punished severely for putting a child through this. At the other end of that scale is the most recent evidence demonstrating the strong link between men having been sexually abused as a child becoming a sexual abuser as an adult, amongst many other problems. It is thought to be 10 per cent plus at least. I will address this later. Fifteen per cent of children in the most recent Victorian study were sexually abused as a child. As more offences occur in the home we can only imagine what the true data is beyond that.

The technical details of the bill seem to have been well covered by various speakers and the Leader of the Opposition, who gave a very good speech on it. The attempt of the legislation to capture the changes to the types of offences that are occurring in the real world addresses the privacy issue of at least attempting to keep up with what is going on in the outside world. This may have a preventative element as well as an appropriate punishment aspect.

The submissions are quite interesting and no doubt the quality and content of those submissions has added to the veracity of the bill. This is good parliamentary process and should be enhanced in most of the legislation that comes before us. The images argument presented seemed to be esoteric when most Australians might say there is a more black and white issue. This could be seen as a cultural type interpretation. The member for Ipswich had a similar but more expanded view. I thought he gave a very good speech on the matter. Members should not underestimate the potential damage of this type of material and the direct harm it may do to the individuals being used for the purpose. The new laws seem appropriate.

A recent Victorian parliamentary enquiry into institutions' handling of child abuse has been informed that one in 10 boys who are sexually abused after puberty go on to be convicted sex offenders. In his study of 3,000, Professor Paul Mullen, the former clinical director of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Health, saw there was a strong link between a man having been sexually abused as a child and becoming a sexual abuser as an adult. The association is strongest for boys between the ages of 12 and 16. Fifteen per cent of children more widely are sexually abused during their childhood. Ten per cent go on to conviction. Men more likely to abuse children were aged adolescent to early 20's and were involved in substance abuse and lawless behaviour. Often those were men who showed signs of social inadequacy, intellectual disability, mental health disability and disregard for others.

The common themes of access, age, drug misuse, personal experience and lawlessness are picked up by the new laws. Therefore, they are appropriate and considered. I would highlight that this is only the tip of the wider consequences of child abuse where there are much higher rates of depressive illness, homelessness, stress disorders, alcohol and drug abuse and social problems. Tragically, the risks for a child from a protective caring background suffering significant child abuse are much lower than for a child from a disadvantaged disorganised home living in a chaotic neighbourhood. I highlight that in Queensland the percentage growth of these broader offences is at one per cent to two per cent annual increments and has been so effectively for 10 years. If you look at the adjustment, that is probably true for the past 20 years.

Rather than go into detail on the issue of the drugs misuse offence provisions, I would just say that these are appropriate. I highlight that sex offenders are opportunistic offenders and part of that opportunism relates to the distribution, manufacture, marketing and consumption of a wide range of drugs. We must be very careful in discussing complicated details of drugs and their demographics. I congratulate Paul Weston, a journalist of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, and various authors from the Fairfax Press for their series about what is going on in the wider community with the types of drugs being used, who is being affected and the consequences for the broader community. For those who missed it, it was a weekly series that ran for many weeks. In particular, Paul Weston raised the issue of people making a mixture of amphetamines and bath salts, which is rather curious. It is a tradeable commodity and its links to all sorts of offenders is its greatest concern. I think it is picked up within this act.

I use that example to demonstrate why I think the changes detailed in the misuse provisions are all appropriate. The provisions that allow for the removal of the true limits under the previous Drugs Misuse Act are a progressive step forward. In merely having to address the issue of chemical structure, having a substantially similar pharmacological effect or the intent to misuse the effect of a dangerous drug, we may well see better outcomes via this legislation. It follows that amendments to the blue card and yellow card systems will pick up the problem that occurred if we reflect on the type of probable offenders and, in particular, the disabled, as I have highlighted earlier. These are enforceable, sensitive, preventative judicial steps and they are to be recommended and endorsed.

These laws have my support and, thankfully, that of the majority of the community. I have tried to demonstrate why these laws are both appropriate and targeted. Good legislation is both of those, amongst other things. If we want true change in what is occurring, this is only one part of it. We must confront the elements that produce the abuser. It is important that we do so in a focused and targeted manner, and are careful not to get carried away with becoming distracted or influenced by qualitative information that may be inaccurate and may distort how we approach real preventative strategies.

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.33 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the bill before the House in relation to changes to the Criminal Code. I start by commending the Attorney for introducing the bill into the House to tighten loopholes that exist in the law and, more importantly, put in place protections for the children of this state and indeed, hopefully, the nation as well. Looking back to when I grew up in the late 1950s and 1960s, the concept of sexual abuse was quite alien.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr Bleijie: I wasn't even contemplated then.

Mr McARDLE: If I were your parents, I would not contemplate you! Getting back to the train of thought that I lost for a second, I grew up in the late 1950s and 1960s when the issue of child sexual abuse was not even considered in the media, let alone as an issue in society. How wrong that was. As time went by, it became quite clear that it had been going on for decades. In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s there was an avalanche of reports of abuse, criminal charges and convictions. It is sad to say

that that related to many pillars of our society in regard to clergy, church officers and also club individuals such as scout masters. It is sad to say that even now a day does not pass by without some revelation in relation to child sexual abuse and the impact that that has, not just upon the child but also upon the wider society as a whole.

In this nation now we have come to a point where the federal government has ordered a royal commission be held, which will take some years. The commission will look at sections of our society that have been, shall we say, the perpetrators of this form of abuse, that is, the church and other organisations. It is about time that the spotlight was shone on that area in greater detail. During the recent conclave in Roma, a cardinal commented that he believed paedophilia was an illness. I do not know whether or not that is right, but I will say that what they do to children is a crime and there is no question about that. The impact upon the psyche of a child in the short, medium and long term is well documented, as are the outcomes for that child and their family.

I had the good fortune to grow up in a family that was an adjusted, very close and very loving family. I cannot imagine living in a family outside of that sphere, but certainly every day I see the evidence of the outcome of child abuse. Certainly every day I see the evidence of the outcome of dysfunctional families. It is perhaps ironic that we continue to pass strong laws, not just here in Queensland but right across the nation, in regard to the hideous issue of paedophilia and child sexual abuse, yet the offences keep occurring. Today there are men who are committing horrendous offences against very young children, oblivious to what they are doing and oblivious to the impact they have upon our society.

Perhaps this is a point in time when we should also consider what else we need to do to arrest the situation. In this House we have had many debates—correct debates—on how we deal with the question of paedophilia and jailing offenders. What else can we, as a society, undertake to protect our children? These amendments are important, but I pose the question: are the amendments before the House today enough in the long-term battle against a hideous illness and a hideous crime that has such detrimental effects upon our children? Is it now time to broaden the thought processes and take into account other issues or other matters with which we need to deal, rather than simply imposing stronger and stronger criminal sanctions?

These are important amendments in relation to protecting our children. The penalties relate to people who have offended. Now we also need to consider how to stop people from even considering offending and what steps we need to take to ensure that that does not occur down the track.

 **Mrs FRANCE** (Pumicestone—LNP) (12.38 pm): Today I am pleased to rise to speak to the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012. The purpose of this bill is to amend sections of the Criminal Code and the Drugs Misuse Act to better equip police with stronger powers to combat activities of child exploitation and drug production. This bill effectively introduces two new offences. One is the sexual offence of grooming under the Criminal Code and the second is the drug offence of trafficking in precursors under the Drugs Misuse Act.

I congratulate the Attorney-General and his team for their work in preparing this bill and I am proud to be part of a government that is making tougher laws to protect our children. This bill covers the appalling offence of grooming which covers behaviour of an adult using electronic communication that encourages and develops relationships with children with the express intent to encourage and engage in sexual activity.

As we all know, the internet has no boundaries and exposes our children to a wide world from just their living room. Children could be groomed from next door, the next town or across the world. The community has an expectation that the police will have the necessary powers to intervene and stop these activities before an unlawful sexual act or sex related activity takes place. We need to provide these powers to police to protect our children.

Child exploitation material offences are not victimless crimes. Children who are used in the production of exploitive material are often terribly abused and suffer severe trauma as a result. We must remember that it is not only the physical injury that a child may suffer but also the impact of ongoing psychological harm from such activities. Mums, dads, brothers and sisters, family and friends often suffer from the actions of these predators. Parents suffer emotional trauma because they could not protect their child. The child's confidence and development suffer and victims of these activities often suffer depression—

Mr Johnson: For the rest of their life.

Mrs FRANCE: For the rest of their life. I take that interjection. They often suffer depression and their social and scholastic development is severely impaired.

The police need the tools to stop these offenders and the offenders need to suffer the consequences of their actions. The Queensland government pledged to amend the laws to address penalties for child pornography and some child sex offences, including a new child grooming offence. The bill increases the maximum penalties to reflect the seriousness of these offences and to align with penalties for comparable Commonwealth offences.

The Queensland government also pledged to amend the laws addressing synthetic drugs. At a recent meeting my district superintendent of police, Superintendent Michael Brady, advised me that boxed laboratories have been increasing over the years. These boxed laboratories are carried in the boot of a car. The manufactured drug creators hire a motel room or a holiday apartment for the night and cook their drugs. This is an extremely dangerous practice. The mobile drug labs have been known to explode, causing injury to the person and damage to property. The perpetrators finish their cook and then disappear. Excess chemicals and spills are left in these rooms which again affords a safety threat to whoever may enter the room next, such as cleaners or managers, and those who might live in adjacent properties.

In August 2012 a housing commission home was severely damaged by an illegal drug lab. The damage included broken sewerage lines and damage to walls, guttering and doors, and came in at a cost of \$97,773 to repair.

Mr Costigan: What a disgrace!

Mrs FRANCE: I take that interjection. That is an absolute disgrace. It is extremely difficult to keep pace with emerging developments in the manufacture and supply of dangerous drugs.

The bill creates a new offence of trafficking in precursor chemicals to address the issue of offenders who are dealing in these substances in such large amounts. The bill further amends the DMA to provide for the issue of more forfeiture orders on conviction for offences under the DMA. I commend this legislation to the House.

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (12.43 pm): I am sure everyone in this chamber would agree that there is nothing more heinous than someone who exploits an innocent child. But that is what is happening around the world, around Australia, around Queensland and in a street near you. It is a sad disgrace in what is supposed to be a civilised world that so many adults seek to make money by exploiting children, even babies. But they would not make this filthy money unless there were so many men with this mental, sexual deviation. I think the Queensland government is attempting to find a way to bring about a decline in this situation.

In our six-month action plan the government pledged to amend the laws in relation to child exploitation material offences. Child exploitation material offences are not victimless crimes. Children who are used in the production of exploitative material are often terribly abused and suffer severe trauma as a result. There is a statistic from America that goes along the lines that most inmates in their jails have suffered some form of sexual abuse when they were children. I would think the situation would be fairly similar in Australia. So whatever we can do to prevent this happening in the future and to stop children going off the rails and spending their lives going in and out of jail and suffering terrible mental illness is a step forward.

The bill increases maximum penalties to reflect the seriousness of these offences and to align with penalties for comparable Commonwealth offences. In increasing the penalties the current penalty distinction for the offence of possession is omitted. The Criminal Code will be amended to amend the definition of 'child exploitation material' to ensure that animated or virtual images of children are caught by the definition. The amendments will insert a new circumstance of aggravation in section 208 which relates to unlawful sodomy, in section 210 which relates to the indecent treatment of children under 16 and section 215 which relates to the carnal knowledge with or of children under 16 where the offence is committed against a child with an impairment.

The amendments will provide a new offence of grooming, carrying a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment or 10 years if the child is under 12. I think that most of us would agree that that is not enough. We have to start with small steps.

I was speaking to a senior sergeant in my office yesterday. That senior sergeant was telling me about some of the children in care in my electorate and how these children are very abusive to their carers. These children have come from abusive households and their only defence mechanism is to act violently towards the rest of society.

This senior sergeant was telling me about one girl who is now 12 years old. Since she was 11 she has been going with men who are in their 40s to get money for drugs and other things. One would have to assume that this child has been abused in her home and that this has become a way of life for her. What future has this young girl got? God help her!

Grooming is particularly offensive to me. As we know from many meetings with Hetty Johnson of Bravehearts, much sexual abuse is committed by those who are known and trusted by the child. That is the most heinous of all crimes—that is, that a child is abused by someone that she or he trusts.

I commend the Attorney-General for trying to tackle this huge problem that we have in our society. I do not think that this will solve the problem by any means but, as I said before, unless we take little steps we will not make any difference at all.

There is another amendment to the Criminal Code to increase the maximum penalty for child exploitation material offences from five years to 14 years imprisonment for the offence of possession and 10 years to 14 years imprisonment for the offence of involving a child in the making of child exploitation material, making child exploitation material or distributing child exploitation material.

I just wanted to close by saying—and this is not something that relates to what we are doing here in parliament—that I have travelled to Thailand and I have seen and heard some awful things. There is an organisation called Destiny Rescue and they attempt to rescue little children, children under 10, who have been sold into sexual slavery and intimidated in that if they run away these monsters will come after their families in their villages or attack a child, a sibling. I have to say that this has long disturbed me. I have lost sleep over this at night because it is just so horrible that this sort of thing goes on. So I do commend Destiny Rescue.

There was a young lady that I heard at a chamber of commerce meeting just last week—and John Grant was there as well—Emma Jolly. I want to commend this young woman for her passion about this very issue. She will be going to Cambodia, I think, on 1 May. I do not know what she is going to do, but God bless her for trying and for trying to bring this issue to the fore. It is not a pleasant issue. It is one that we would really rather not talk about, but unless it is brought out in the open how can we even try to tackle the problem? I thank the Attorney-General for these changes. Let us hope that these changes save even one child by making these people think twice about what they are doing because of the penalties they may get if they are caught.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (12.51 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012. I note that the intent is to amend the Criminal Code. The explanatory notes state—

- amend the definition of 'child exploitation material' in section 207A to ensure animated or virtual images of children are caught by definition;
- insert a new circumstance of aggravation in sections 208 (Unlawful sodomy), 210 (Indecent treatment of children under 16) and 215 (Carnal knowledge with or of children under 16) where the offence is committed against a child with an impairment of the mind;
- provide a new offence of 'grooming', carrying a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment or 10 years if the child is under 12, to target adults who engage in any conduct in relation to a child under 16 years ...;
- increase the maximum penalties for the child exploitation material offences: from five years to 14 years imprisonment for the offence of possession (section 228D); and 10 years to 14 years imprisonment for the offences of involving a child in the making of child exploitation material (section 228A), making child exploitation material (section 228B) and distributing child exploitation material (section 228C);

and the list goes on.

This is a wide-ranging change to the Criminal Code and it is about time, and I congratulate the Attorney-General for his work in this area. The exploitation of a child who has mental and/or physical impairment has to be the lowest form of child abuse on the planet. No child under the age of 12, let alone under the age of 16, has the capacity to make an informed decision when it comes to their sexual behaviour. They need parental guidance as their young minds cannot fathom the degree of responsibility that comes with making these important decisions.

Material which can be easily distributed through social media and the like takes on a new dimension and can have long-lasting effects that can damage and harm a young person as they reach adulthood. The use of comic type programming is now commonplace during adult viewing times and can be confused as family-child imagery. Young adults who live in a less than normal arrangement—and certainly in my electorate I have some areas that I will talk about in a moment—and who are coerced into accepting what is abnormal behaviour from those adults who are meant to be protecting them need to be freed from this harm and protected.

I have personal experience in regard to these sorts of incidents—very close personal experience, I must say, sadly. I have only just in recent weeks been reminded of the effect that this type of action by adults has not only on the victim of the exploitation—we are now talking about the child—but also on the people around that child, the effect that that type of thing has on the whole

family and the extended family of a child who has been sexually abused. The sad thing is that many of these incidents of abuse go on for years and years and years. They affect not one but two, three or even more children in a family or in a household because of an in the past unacceptable veil of silence that has been brought down. I, for one, have been an advocate of exposing people who are choosing to go down this road of exploiting our children, affecting them physically and mentally for the rest of their lives but also affecting the rest of the family.

The personal experience that I talked about occurred some 10 years ago and I can assure the House that to this day those things that occurred are still with me. Those memories are still with me. I think of them virtually every day. My family thinks of them virtually every day. And we are affected by those actions virtually every day as a family. The individual that was involved in that activity has been punished. He deserved to be punished. He has had his punishment and he has done well. He is a changed man today I am pleased to say. It is still though difficult for family members to be accepting of that individual because of those things that happened a decade ago. So that individual will have a stigma attached to him for the rest of his life, and for the rest of the family when they think of him or when they see him one of the first things they think about is what happened 10 years ago.

It is high time that we got tougher on child exploitation. I commend the Attorney-General, as I said earlier, for his determination in raising these penalties to 14 years for the most part and to 10 years in other areas. I can tell the House that in my role as a member of parliament I am doing everything that I can to change things at the grassroots. As an example of that, there is an organisation called Life Education Queensland.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr CRANDON: Life Education Queensland is a fantastic organisation. I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. Life Education Queensland goes into our schools from prep through to year 8 currently and provides an education program for our children. I have two schools in my electorate in particular that I am assisting with funding over a three-year period. If I am fortunate enough to be re-elected at the next election, I will recommit to a further three years of funding to ensure that every child in those two schools goes through this particular program—that is how important I think it is—so that the children who have completed the eight years of the program, from prep through to year 8, will have been through a life education program that gives them an opportunity in an area that is bereft of opportunities, if you like, to see what it is that is important about them and their life; to assist them in the understanding of drugs, whether they be legal drugs or illegal drugs; and to assist them in the understanding of what is their private person and what is private to them and what other people do not have the right to do to them.

I commend the Attorney-General. I also commend Life Education Queensland on their efforts. I can assure the House that I will continue to be an advocate and continue to fund, as best I can, these types of programs in my electorate to try to make a difference at the base level for these people and change their lives forever.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (2.31 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Child Care Act 2002, Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001, Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and the Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Act 2002. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Education and Innovation Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 [\[2432\]](#).

Tabled paper: Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2433\]](#).

The Queensland government has committed to move year 7 from primary to secondary education from 2015. Secondary school is the right place for this cohort of students. Secondary schools have access to specialist teachers and facilities that will offer year 7 students age-appropriate academic challenges to maximise the benefit of the Australian curriculum and give them similar learning experiences to their interstate peers. The Queensland government is conducting a pilot of year 7 in 19 state high schools and almost 2,300 year 7 students enrolled this year.

My department has worked with regions and schools to ensure their workforce and facility needs have been met. At this stage, 59 primary teachers transitioned into the state secondary settings. All new buildings, relocatable buildings and classroom refurbishments required by the pilot schools for 2013 were completed by the start of the school year.

An evaluation of the pilot schools will be conducted during the 2013 school year. Learnings from this evaluation will shape future approaches to the transition of year 7 into high school ahead of the state-wide move in 2015. Technical amendments included in this bill are required to Education portfolio legislation to support the move of year 7.

The Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 amends definitions of primary and secondary education so that from 2015 primary education will be defined as prep to year 6 and secondary education will be defined as year 7 to year 12. Non-state schools wishing to offer year 7 as secondary education will need to change their accreditation arrangements. Through this bill, the Queensland government is introducing a streamlined process to reduce administrative burden on those non-state schools needing to change their accreditation status for 2015.

Stand-alone secondary schools wishing to add year 7 and combined primary and secondary schools offering education across prep to year 12 which want to continue to offer year 7 from 2015 as secondary education will be able to change their accreditation arrangements by giving a simple written notice to the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board.

Non-state schools currently eligible for government funding for the provision of year 7 or 8 will automatically be eligible for government funding for year 7. They will not be required to reapply for government funding eligibility, a process which usually involves a public notification and consultation phase.

Under normal circumstances it can take several months for a non-state school to change its accreditation status to add on a year of schooling and be granted eligibility for government funding for that year. They are required to apply to the accreditation board to change the school's attribute and funding eligibility for the changed attribute. It is anticipated this streamlined notification process will reduce the accreditation board's processing time significantly. I am advised that the accreditation board aims to process the notifications in just over one month.

Under the proposed notification process, the accreditation board will not need to consider the school's ability to meet the prescribed accreditation criteria such as an assessment of whether the school's educational program and facilities are suitable to meet the needs of a secondary education curriculum. This is considered unnecessary for a school that is already accredited to offer secondary education.

I anticipate that the simple notification process, coupled with the automatic granting of government funding eligibility as provided for in the bill, will reduce the accreditation board's processing time to just over a month from receipt. On the other hand, non-state primary schools wishing to continue to offer year 7 from 2015 as secondary education will have to apply for accreditation. This is appropriate as it enables the accreditation board to consider the school's capacity to provide secondary education including an assessment of the school's proposed educational program and facilities. Nevertheless, the accreditation board anticipates the application process will be administratively streamlined given the schools are already in operation.

The bill will enable an application from a non-state primary school for accreditation to offer year 7 as secondary education to be processed by the accreditation board prior to 2015, when the mechanical amendments around the definition of primary and secondary education take effect. The primary school will need to indicate whether government funding eligibility is sought for year 7 as secondary education. If the school is currently eligible for government funding for year 7 as primary education, it will under the bill be deemed eligible for funding for year 7 as secondary.

By removing public notification requirements and assessments around government funding eligibility, it is anticipated that an application for accreditation that satisfied all requirements of accreditation could be processed quickly by the accreditation board. I expect that an application would be decided by the accreditation board in less than two months. Non-state primary schools not proposing to offer year 7 as secondary education will not need to take any action. Their accreditation status will be changed automatically by the accreditation board to meet the new definition of primary education. Independent Schools Queensland, the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board have all been consulted about the proposed processes and support them.

To formally recognise the government's policy that prep is the first formal year of schooling in Queensland and the government's commitment to provide 13 years of state schooling, the bill amends the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the EGPA, to include prep in a state school student's basic allocation. Enrolment and full-time attendance in prep is considered essential so that students develop a set of foundation skills, knowledge and understanding to maximise their educational outcomes.

Under the EGPA, all students attending Queensland state schools are entitled to an allocation of 24 semesters of state education. This is called the 'basic allocation'. This is enough to complete years 1 to 12, which was appropriate prior to the introduction of prep in 2007. The bill ensures that students who undertake prep to year 12 will have a basic allocation of 26 semesters or 13 years of schooling.

The amendments will not change the rules around compulsory schooling. The bill makes one other important amendment. It will allow for the cancellation of the enrolment of international students at state schools for nonpayment of tuition fees. A student who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or the child of an Australian citizen or permanent resident, is required under the EGPA to pay fees for state school education. My department currently has approximately \$1.5 million of tuition fees outstanding from international students. Nonpayment of fees is more prolific with parents of dependent students—that is, people who come to Australia to study a vocational or higher education qualification and enrol their children in state schools.

Queensland charges dependent students fees of approximately \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year depending on the year of schooling the child is enrolled in. All Australian states and territories charge tuition fees to dependent students. Parents of dependent students are advised of the requirement to enrol their children in school before they apply for a visa and must prove to the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship that they have sufficient funds to pay school fees during their stay in Australia. However, the experience has been that, after the first year of enrolment, many of these parents ignore the requirement to pay as there is no power to cancel enrolment for failure to pay fees.

Debt collection has not been an effective mechanism to recoup unpaid fees. Most dependent students only attend Queensland schools for two to three years and many have left the system by the time civil enforcement options can be exhausted. The Queensland government respects the human right to access education and will not take cancellation of enrolment lightly. The director-general of my department has the power to waive or exempt a person from paying tuition fees in times of financial hardship or to enter into payment plans enabling payment of fees over a period of time. Under administrative practice, parents who have failed to pay school fees will be given at least three warnings, written and verbal, before the enrolment of their child is cancelled. If payment cannot be obtained, or if a payment plan has been entered into and not met, a final letter will advise that enrolment will be cancelled and give the parents two weeks to pay. Even if enrolment is cancelled, the student can be re-enrolled in a state school provided the outstanding payment is received.

The new power will apply to students who are enrolled in a state school prior to commencement of the bill and have outstanding fees. However, before cancelling the student's enrolment in this circumstance, the bill requires the director-general to notify the student, or their parent, of the intention to cancel enrolment should the fees not be paid within the prescribed time. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JH LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (2.41 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Education and Innovation Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education and Innovation Committee.

TAFE QUEENSLAND BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (2.41 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the establishment of TAFE Queensland, provide for other matters relating to vocational education and training services, amend this act for particular purposes, and make related consequential and minor amendments to other legislation. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Education and Innovation Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: TAFE Queensland Bill 2013 [\[2434\]](#).

Tabled paper: TAFE Queensland Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2435\]](#).

This bill will establish a new statutory body, TAFE Queensland, to act as the public provider of vocational education and training, or VET, in Queensland. This government has made a commitment to grow a four-pillar economy in Queensland and reduce the state's unemployment based on agriculture, tourism, resources and construction. Skills and training reform are a key strategy to meet these commitments and will support the economic growth of the state through increasing the prosperity of individuals and communities.

This government commissioned the first industry led review of the VET sector in Queensland. The Skills and Training Taskforce report outlined a range of recommendations to revitalise the provision of VET and the management of apprenticeships and traineeships. Based on the recommendations of the task force, this government has committed to build the capacity of our VET sector by reforming TAFE Queensland and refocusing our investment on training for job outcomes. The first step in this journey is the reform of TAFE, which has been neglected for a number of years. TAFE has been left to operate without a clear vision, strategy and action plan, leading to fragmentation within the public provider and escalating costs of delivery. The task force demonstrated that if we continue down this path Queensland's public provider, that has a proud 130-year history, will not be viable in the training market of tomorrow.

One of the task force's key recommendations was to establish a separate independent body to strategically manage the public provision of VET across Queensland, with a commercially focused board. This body would be responsible for delivering on the government's investment in publicly provided VET to achieve the best possible skills and training outcomes. Specifically, the task force outlined that we need to address the industrial relations arrangements, asset management and structure of the public provider to enable TAFE to thrive in an increasingly competitive training market. This bill marks the first step on this journey.

TAFE Queensland will be established as a separate independent body with a commercially experienced board that will concentrate on the strategic management of public provision of VET across Queensland. The separate structure of TAFE Queensland provides delineation between the purchaser and provider of VET. This allows the government to focus on the priorities and strategies for purchasing training from all providers in a broader market.

The bill establishes TAFE Queensland as a statutory body with all the powers of an individual. For TAFE Queensland to thrive in an increasingly contestable training market, it is imperative that it is established as an independent body separate to the department. This will give the new TAFE Queensland the power to manage its budget and revenues, personnel and physical assets and to develop innovative business practices to meet the evolving requirements of the training market.

The statutory body form will also ensure that the government retains oversight of its investment in TAFE Queensland through the governance, accountability and reporting framework provided for in this bill and other legislation such as the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982.

To oversee the delivery of a significant program of VET reform, TAFE Queensland will have a commercially focused board. The bill provides for seven to nine members of that board to have relevant industry and/or commercial experience, with one member being a nominee of the minister. The board will appoint a chief executive officer, with the approval of the minister, to manage the day-to-day operations of TAFE Queensland. The board will be accountable to the minister and will drive a business focus to TAFE Queensland's structures, its delivery locations, operations and supporting products and services.

The bill provides that TAFE Queensland's functions are:

- (a) to provide VET services;
- (b) to provide further education, and other forms of education, to support and complement the provision of VET services;
- (c) to produce and sell VET products;
- (d) to prepare, publish, distribute or license the use of literary or artistic work, audio or audiovisual material, or computer software;
- (e) to undertake research and development on matters relating to its functions;
- (f) to contribute to, and actively engage with, industry on matters relating to its functions;
- (g) to exploit commercially TAFE Queensland's resources, including any study, research or knowledge or the practical application of any study, research or knowledge;
- (h) to report to the minister on the performance of its functions; and
- (i) any other functions given to it under this or another act.

TAFE Queensland is required to perform its functions in a way that is efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of industry, students and the general community and on a not-for-profit basis. Effective industry engagement in skilling goes beyond having a role in delivering government funding priorities. Governance of the VET sector needs to be flexible enough to accommodate changing government and industry priorities, support new and emerging industries, respond to user choice and adapt to state and local economic circumstances with minimal disruption to the provision of demand led training and skills.

TAFE Queensland will need to have wide-ranging powers to effectively manage its resources and provide effective and efficient training. Clause 10 of the bill gives TAFE Queensland all the powers of an individual and clause 11 ensures that TAFE Queensland can perform its functions outside Queensland and outside Australia. In addition, the bill provides for the key objectives of TAFE Queensland as being efficient and effective in performing its functions. TAFE Queensland will be commercially successful and its success will be measured against financial and non-financial performance targets set in its operational plan. TAFE Queensland will be required to develop strategic and operational plans setting out its vision for the delivery of publicly funded VET.

The bill sets out the matters which the operational plan must include for TAFE Queensland. The operational plan will be used to outline both financial and non-financial performance targets for TAFE Queensland reflecting that although TAFE Queensland will have an objective of being commercially successful it will also be performing community service obligations as the public provider of VET. The bill also provides for the minister to give directions to TAFE Queensland and request information from TAFE Queensland about the performance of its functions in clauses 46 and 47. These provisions are important because they ensure that TAFE Queensland is accountable to parliament, through the minister, for its performance as the public provider.

The bill includes provisions which disqualify persons from appointment as a member or to remain a member if they are convicted of an indictable offence, become an insolvent or are not able to manage a corporation under the Corporations Act.

The bill also includes detailed transitional provisions to ensure a smooth transition in the future from the current TAFE structure operating within the Department of Education, Training and Employment to TAFE Queensland. The transitional arrangements for TAFE reform will be effected by making regulations under the act. The act includes flexible regulation-making powers to facilitate transfers between statutory TAFE institutes, the department, TAFE Queensland and other entities prescribed in a regulation.

The bill also provides for a regulation to be made to dissolve the two statutory TAFE institutes which were established under chapter 6A of the VETE Act—Gold Coast Institute of TAFE and South Bank Institute of Technology. These institutes, which currently operate as statutory bodies, will be established administratively as TAFE institutes under chapter 6 of the VETE Act until such time as the machinery-of-government process transitions them to TAFE Queensland. It is proposed that the transition to TAFE Queensland will be achieved gradually, with the first step being the dissolution of the two statutory TAFE institutes from 1 July 2013 and the gradual transfer of TAFE institutes to TAFE Queensland over the following 12 months. The bill provides for the rights of transferred employees where those employees are transferred from one relevant TAFE entity to another. This will ensure the continuity of those employees' contracts or employment arrangements.

The bill also includes an offence provision to protect the use of the TAFE brand. This provision is modelled on similar provisions in Victorian and South Australian legislation for TAFE. The provision will prevent persons from using the words 'TAFE' and 'technical and further education' in way that would suggest to a reasonable person that the person is a TAFE entity or that a TAFE institute is providing the training. The terms 'TAFE' and 'technical and further education' have a particular significance in the training market and it is important to prevent other persons from using those terms in relation to training without approval. The minister may apply for an injunction restraining a person from contravening the offence provision.

This is an opportunity for once-in-a-generation reform of the VET sector in Queensland. As identified in the task force report, Queensland has the second highest average cost of training delivery in Australia, driven by the number of non-teaching staff within TAFE, employee expenses, property and building expenses and low non-government revenue sources. This bill provides the tools to address the significant underlying challenges to efficient and effective public provision of VET by TAFE in Queensland.

This bill provides for TAFE Queensland to, over time, develop a flexible, responsive, contemporary employment model outside the Public Service Act 2008 but within the Queensland industrial relations jurisdiction. This means that, in the future, TAFE can reduce the costs of delivery and compete on an even playing field with other providers.

It is clear that we can structure TAFE Queensland operations in a more efficient way and position institutes to better work together in relation to regional and geographic groupings that make sense. The challenge for the future is for the new TAFE Queensland board to chart a clear course for how the arrangements provided for in the bill will be operationalised and, in line with our commitment in the response to the task force, this work needs to start as a priority from 1 July 2013. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JH LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (2.53 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Education and Innovation Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education and Innovation Committee.

CRIMINAL LAW (CHILD EXPLOITATION AND DANGEROUS DRUGS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 957, on motion of Mr Bleijie—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr GRANT (Springwood—LNP) (2.54 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012. In speaking to it I will refer to the explanatory notes for the amendments to the Criminal Code, the amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act and the proposed amendment to the bill brought from the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and will make comments on the Queensland Law Society's submission and their comments with respect to clauses 14 and 16.

At the outset I wish to thank a few people but just for a moment set the scene. The environment in which we speak today on such horrid topics is a fairly sterile one, yet if there was just one person in the gallery—or if in fact it was filled with people who have suffered abuse—how our words would be so charged with meaning and how our sensitivities would be heightened. With those thoughts in mind, I wish to thank the Attorney-General for the work that he and his staff have done in bringing forward

this bill. I also wish to thank the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and the staff that support them for the work they have done and I thank cabinet, because cabinet has indeed given its support for this legislation.

I refer to the explanatory notes. While time does not permit me to speak to all of the changes, I wish to touch on some of the major changes to the Criminal Code and the Drugs Misuse Act. This bill amends the Criminal Code to amend the definition of child exploitation material to ensure animated or virtual images of children are caught by the definition. It also inserts a new circumstance of aggravation in section 208, unlawful sodomy; section 210, indecent treatment of children under 16; and section 215, carnal knowledge with or of children under 16 where the offence is committed against a child with an impairment of the mind.

The bill also provides a new offence of grooming, carrying a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment or 10 years imprisonment if the child is under 12. It also increases the maximum penalties for the child exploitation material offences—from five years to 14 years imprisonment for the offence of possession and from 10 years to 14 years imprisonment for the offences of involving a child in the making of child exploitation material, making child exploitation material and distributing child exploitation material.

The amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act seek to achieve the following: create a new offence of trafficking in precursors; amend the definition of 'dangerous drug'; overcome the evidentiary difficulties in proving an analogue which has a substantially similar chemical structure and a substantially similar pharmacological effect to a scheduled drug. The amendments also provide the District Court with the power to make forfeiture orders upon conviction and clarify the meaning of section 10(4), which creates an offence of failure to take reasonable care and precaution with a hypodermic syringe or needle.

When we consider these things we realise that it is a huge task and there are so many people out there. The member for Stretton mentioned young Emma Jolly, a young lady from my electorate who is now travelling the world seeking to help people who find themselves in positions that we are discussing today. We need to remind ourselves that in the mind of just one person who is helped by this legislation its significance is enormous. It is with that gravity that we speak on it today.

I turn now to the Queensland Law Society, which made a submission on clause 14 relating to unlawful sodomy and clause 16 relating to carnal knowledge with or of children under 16. Its submission reads—

Currently under s 208(1)(c)(d) of the Code, a person who sodomises, or attempts to sodomise a person with an impairment of the mind or permits a person with an impairment of the mind to sodomise him or her is liable to 14 years imprisonment. Clause 14 proposes to increase the penalty for the actual commission of these crimes to life imprisonment. Whilst we understand that people with impairments of the mind are in a more vulnerable situation, it is our opinion that life imprisonment for this offence is excessive.

I want to make a few comments in response to those particular clauses. On the first hand, I would consider the need for education for young men. In my former role of councillor, I became aware of teenage boys skiting that they had raped a young girl with impairment of mind. I found it horrendous, horrific and something that one had to do something about in speaking with the police, who have the first carriage of justice in this respect. The need for education so they understand respect for women and the consequences of lack of respect needs to be uppermost in the minds of parents and teachers. But then who amongst those of the Law Society could say that they understand what it is like to live in the body of a person with the mind impaired? To suffer this once, or even multiple times, is just too cruel to countenance.

As I say that I support this bill wholeheartedly and thank the Attorney-General and others who have worked on it, I finish with this comment. I understand the principles of restorative justice and the benefits of making convicted offenders spend time with those they have affected so badly, but we must bring these changes through both as a deterrent and as a way for those who have offended to take their time seriously and give themselves a chance at restorative justice. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.01 pm): The Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012 seeks to amend the definition of child exploitation material to include animated and virtual images; add circumstances of aggravation to the offences of unlawful sodomy, indecent treatment or carnal knowledge of a child under 16 with an impairment of mind; provide a new offence of grooming and make sentencing provisions for this offence; increase the maximum penalties for child exploitation material offences such as the production and distribution of such

material; increase maximum penalties for using the internet to procure children for engagement in a sexual act; remove the 'right to marry' defence to incest by a de facto partner; and allow charges for multiple offences relating to child exploitation material to be joined.

The bill also amends the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the DMA, to create a new offence of trafficking in precursors to enable persons who engage in selling large quantities of substances used to create illegal drugs to be charged; amend the definition of 'dangerous drug' to tighten the control of synthetic substances that have similar effects and composition to illegal substances; make other minor changes relating to the forfeiture of proceeds relating to the production, trafficking and sale of illegal drugs; and tighten controls on the failure to dispose of hypodermic needles safely, irrespective of their use. The legislation also tightens controls on the issue and management of yellow and blue cards in Queensland.

I will not speak too much on the changes to the Drugs Misuse Act, except to say that in the initial reading of the bill the changes appear to be sensible and achieve their stated policy objectives. I commend the government and the Attorney-General for the strong stance taken with regard to the issue of child exploitation and child sex abuse.

I am pleased to support the changes that the Attorney-General has introduced in this bill. I believe that community expectations relating to the sentencing of people who engage in exploiting children sexually have not been upheld by our judiciary and these steps provide the judiciary with a means to meet higher community expectations of stronger sentences for child sex offenders. However, legislative changes to maximum sentences are only half the solution.

Those responsible for applying those maximum sentences must be mindful and aware that they have a duty to consider community expectations when determining what is an acceptable sentence for a given offence. I believe that the government has done its part with the introduction of this bill to give the judiciary the means to meet community expectations, but it is concerning to me that the Queensland Law Society expressed in its submission that the increased maximum sentence for unlawful sodomy of a child under 16 with an intellectual impairment was 'excessive'. I fully support the government's strong stance on increased maximum sentences, but I am alarmed that the Queensland Law Society believes it will make no practical difference.

As an organisation that represents the judiciary, the Queensland Law Society indicates in its submission that those responsible for applying these changes will not choose to take advantage of increased sentences to send a clear message that this behaviour is abhorrent and unacceptable in our community. The Queensland Law Society's statement reflects a judiciary that has become detached from the feelings of the broader community on these types of offences. There are no quick solutions to the alarming increase of child pornography and child sex offences, but I believe there needs to be greater cooperation between the executive and the judiciary to apply community expectations when sentencing and dealing with this important issue.

I commend the minister for the strong position that he has taken with regard to this issue and indeed other issues such as the greater punishment regime put in place to protect police officers from assaults from criminals. I also commend the minister for his previous bill to introduce boot camps. That is a great initiative. There were many issues in relation to the criteria in implementing these boot camps, and one that was brought up on the weekend in the *Townsville Bulletin* was Youfla, which is a camp that already teaches skills in relation to preparing young kids who offend in terms of getting them ready for the workforce. I know that the member for Townsville is very supportive of that. I commend the minister for the position that he has taken on this bill and his position on crime. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.07 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to debate on the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012. Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. We want to stick up for the families of Queensland and we want Queensland to be the safest place to raise a child. That is why in the short 12 months since this government came to office we have moved quickly to set up the toughest sex offender laws in the country in terms of the two-strikes policy. We are not only introducing the laws that we have today but also dealing with another important issue in society—that is, synthetic drugs and trying to get on top of the culture that is developing right around not only Queensland but also Australia with respect to these analogue drugs.

The Queensland government in its six-month action plan pledged to amend the laws to address the penalties for child pornography and child sex offences, create a new offence of grooming a child and address the issue of synthetic drugs. This bill gives effect to all of those commitments. The bill

amends the Criminal Code to strengthen penalties for child sex related offences, in particular by aligning the maximum penalties with those for corresponding Commonwealth offences and similar offences in other Australian jurisdictions. Sections 228A and 228C of the Criminal Code provide for the offences of involving a child in the making of child exploitation material, making child exploitation material and distributing child exploitation material. These offences carry a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment. Section 228D prohibits possessing child exploitation material and carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment. The bill will increase the maximum penalties for all offences to 14 years imprisonment. Such an increase will bring Queensland's penalties more in line with the penalties for the equivalent Commonwealth offences, which carry 15 years imprisonment. A maximum of 14 years imprisonment is necessary in Queensland to maintain the present hierarchy of offences.

The penalty increase will also remove the current distinction in penalties between possessing child exploitation material and the other child exploitation material offences. Generally, criminal law offences relating to contraband distribution are regarded as objectively more serious than mere possession. However, in the case of child exploitation material offences the commodity in question is a child, who is often subject to appalling physical and sexual abuse. Therefore, it is vital that the market for such material is targeted.

Additionally, this bill will amend the definition of child exploitation material in the Criminal Code to provide certainty in respect to animated images. The interpretation of a recent Court of Appeal decision in *R v MBM* has resulted in uncertainty as to whether animated images fall within the definition of child exploitation material. This amendment will ensure that animated images are captured. In many instances, predators use cartoons to desensitise and groom children. This amendment will ensure that these images cannot be used by paedophiles to further their abhorrent behaviour.

A procedural amendment will allow the prosecution of such offences to occur more concisely and accurately so that less serious aspects of an offender's conduct are still acknowledged. Section 568 of the Criminal Code provides an exception to the basic rule that, where an indictment contains more than one offence, each offence charged must be set out in a separate count. Section 568 of the code allows a single count to combine several instances of offending, as long as they are all of the same legal offence. The bill amends section 568 to extend the provision to the child exploitation offence, for which an offender may possess thousands of images, which will allow an indictment to more accurately reflect the extent of the offending.

The bill creates a new Criminal Code offence of grooming—that is, behaviour that is designed to facilitate the procurement of a child for sexual activity. The new offence of grooming will adopt a maximum penalty currently available for the section 218A code offence of procuring a child to engage in a sexual act using electronic communication. The maximum penalty for procuring will be increased from five to 10 years imprisonment, or from 10 to 14 years if the child is under 12 years of age. Further, a new circumstance of aggravation will be created in circumstances where the procuring conduct involves the offender meeting with the child or travelling with the intention of meeting the child.

The Criminal Code offences of unlawful sodomy and carnal knowledge carry maximum penalties of 14 years imprisonment or life imprisonment where the child is less than 12 years of age or under the guardianship or the care of the offender. The offence of indecent treatment of a child under 16 years carries a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment, or 20 years where the child is under 12 years of age or under the guardianship or the care of the offender. The bill amends each of these offence provisions by inserting a new circumstance of aggravation where the child has an impairment of the mind. The offences of unlawful sodomy and carnal knowledge will carry maximum penalties of life imprisonment where the child has an impairment of the mind. The offence of indecent treatment will carry a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment in such a case. The amendment provides appropriate sanctions for those who prey on this particularly vulnerable group.

The bill removes a loophole in the offence of incest in cases where an adult engages in consensual sex with their de facto partner's child who is over the age of consent—aged 16 or 17 years—but has not reached adulthood, or 18 years. The offence of incest in the Criminal Code includes a complete defence where the parties were lawfully married at the time the sexual intercourse took place or if the parties were entitled to be lawfully married. In a recent case the Queensland Court of Appeal set aside convictions on six counts of incest on the basis that the offender was lawfully entitled to be married to his long-term de facto wife's 17-year-old daughter when

he commenced a sexual relationship with her. That is because the marriageable age in Australia is 18 unless the marriage has been consented to. But because the person is entitled to marry that particular person, who in this case was the victim, the law does not provide that protection.

I want to thank Beryl Spencer, who has been an avid advocate of this amendment. I met with Beryl on a number of occasions about her concerns. I am pleased to have her support on this particular issue. Beryl saw me early in my term as Attorney-General and raised this concern with me. She was quite surprised when I said, 'Absolutely—more than happy to look at this,' and then I received the support of my colleagues, whom I thank, to get this amendment through the cabinet process and into this bill.

Although in this particular case in Queensland there were convictions on six counts of incest, the Queensland Court of Appeal looked at the law—and from time to time the Court of Appeal does this—to ascertain whether there are loopholes that exist. This certainly is a loophole that this government is determined to close today, because we do not want situations where, just because people are either married or lawfully entitled to be married, the offence of incest does not extend to the de facto partner's child. We have to fix that, we ought fix that and I am very pleased that we are doing that today. Again, I thank Beryl Spencer for her advocacy and the distance that she travelled from out west to come to see me on a couple of occasions about this particular issue.

The bill also amends the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 to create a new offence of trafficking in precursor substances that are used to manufacture synthetic drugs. In this bill the definition of dangerous drug is broadened to better address synthetic drugs and to overcome certain evidential issues.

I also wish to bring to the attention of the House my intention to move an unrelated amendment during the consideration in detail of this bill. The unrelated amendment will amend section 364A(2) of the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001. Honourable members would recall that on 8 March 2013 the parliament passed in the early hours of the morning an amendment to the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 inserting a new section 346A as an urgent measure to provide temporary protection to certain Fitzgerald commission inquiry documents that had been released under the Public Records Act 2002. The protection provided by section 346A operates up to 8 May 2013. The Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee has finalised its inquiry into how the Fitzgerald inquiry documents came to be released and its report No. 90 was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 5 April 2013.

The report included recommendations in relation to these publicly released documents and what should be done to afford protection to those people who are affected by the release of those documents. These recommendations need to be considered further and I understand that we will be noting the report on Thursday. The proposed amendment will provide sufficient time for the government to fully and carefully consider its responses to the recommendations. So although the date 8 May is fast approaching, the amendment that I will move will extend that period by six months. The only consequence of that amendment is that it provides protection for matters in the domain of those individuals who obtained this information from publicly or reproducing that information. This amendment has been tacked on to this bill, because parliament needs to address the issue and deal with it this week.

I will address some of the issues raised by honourable members during the course of this debate. As I understand from her contribution at the last sitting, the Leader of the Opposition—unless something has changed in the past few weeks—supports the bill, which I am very pleased about. I am not sure if it is the first time in 12 months that I have had the support of the Leader of the Opposition, but I am more than happy. I thank the opposition for supporting these vitally important amendments. If the Leader of the Opposition has any concerns about the amendment that I will move with respect to the CMC, then I would encourage her to have a discussion about it in the consideration of detail where I would be happy to elaborate further.

The opposition leader raised some issues with respect to the submission from the Queensland Law Society about constitutional validity and whether advice had been sought. Advice has been sought and I am confident that we will not have any issues. Suffice it to say, the Leader of the Opposition raised other issues in relation to which, essentially, she said to keep an eye on. We will do that. We will keep a watching brief on those issues as the government considers better ways in the future to protect our children in this state. As I have said on many occasions, children are some of the most vulnerable in our community and we have to do everything that we can to protect them. I thank the opposition for the bipartisan way in which it has supported this bill.

The member for Ipswich could not comprehend how we could not find cartoon images of child exploitation so abhorrent. That is exactly right. That is why we are moving these necessary amendments. The member for Ipswich also said that he did not necessarily agree with the Council for Civil Liberties on this issue. That is pleasing. I note that the member for Ipswich has just walked into the chamber. I will repeat my comment. The member does not necessarily agree with the Council for Civil Liberties on this issue. I say to the member for Ipswich: welcome to my world.

The Council for Civil Liberties has had a lot to say about the government's law reform issues in the past 12 months. We had a clear commitment and a clear mandate to get on with the job and make Queensland the safest place to raise a child in this country. At times when government needs these strong measures that act as deterrents you do have to trample on the perceived civil liberties of individuals. It is always the case, as I have said in this place before, that if people are worried about these tough measures, if people are worried that the government is going too tough on these sorts of matters, then they have nothing to fear if they do not commit these particular offences: they have nothing to fear if they are not marketing the precursor to synthetic drugs; they have nothing to fear if they do not have child exploitation material on their computers. The world will go on. We would love to live in a society where no-one gets convicted or accused of any of these types of offences. The reality is that we do not live in that society so we as parliamentarians have an obligation to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and they are our children.

The member for Nanango reminded everyone that she used to be a lawyer. That was nice for everyone. Most people try to forget their legal days. Her comments referred to her practice of the law, as did the comments of the member for Ipswich. I think what she was saying is that they have seen firsthand in their law practices the types of people that commit these types of offences. I completely agree. The member for Nanango is also a strong advocate for the removal of the ambiguity of the incest provisions. I understand that she met with Beryl Spencer and talked about the issues, as I did. Beryl Spencer has also indicated that she is particularly pleased with the new offence of grooming. She said that this provision is so important given the exposure of children to the internet in modern times.

The member for Mount Ommaney spoke about the government not apologising for delivering the toughest law in Australia for child exploitation acts. I agree. I have said on many occasions that this government is unapologetic. We are not sympathetic to the offenders here; we are sympathetic to the victims. The victims here are children who could be my children, my children's children in the future, or people's grandchildren right around Queensland.

The member for Southport reminded honourable members that Queensland should be the safest place to raise a child. That is this government's goal. Quite frankly, if that means having tougher laws than our counterparts in other jurisdictions then, so be it, we will. The member for Broadwater said it was extremely important that, as members of parliament and people who are seen as leaders in the community, we stand up for the most vulnerable in our community. The vulnerability of children was one of the elements that came out of the contributions of many members. Who is to protect the children? We know that many child sex offenders are, in fact, in the family home and that the victim knows the perpetrator, so as a government we have to step in to ensure that if families cannot protect these vulnerable children then we do.

I thank the member for Mundingburra, Minister Crisafulli, for his contribution. He talked about the issue of synthetic drugs. I travelled to Townsville with the Premier on a couple of occasions. All honourable members in the North and Far North Queensland area understand the issues and that is why we are tackling it.

The member for Toowoomba North talked about protecting our children from being exploited and significantly strengthening our Criminal Code. That is what we are here for. The member for Caloundra, the honourable minister, commented on the fact that as a government we are doing this but asked where we go from here and whether we are doing enough. This is the start. The child sex offender two-strikes policy was a start. We are now tackling these important issues, and there is more to come throughout the year in this term of government.

The member for Stretton talked about Destiny Rescue. I compliment the member for raising that. I have young Jordyn Archer in my electorate. Jordyn is a part of Destiny Rescue and holds a fundraiser event every year. Destiny Rescue gets children out of child sex slavery overseas. They take children out of those environments. It is a fantastic organisation. As legislators we must look to and use examples of the plight of children overseas because unfortunately that is happening around our world. I thank Jordyn Archer and the team from Destiny Rescue for the great work they do.

The member for Coomera talked about social media in terms of technological advances. Attorneys-General around the country are battling social media. We had our Standing Council on Law and Justice in Darwin two weeks ago and again the topic came up. In fact, when we were at Government House the administrator in her opening remarks talked about Paul Everingham welcoming Attorneys-General to the first Standing Committee of Attorneys-General back in the seventies or eighties or whenever it was. The administrator pulled out the agenda for that meeting and it was about how to keep pace with technology and the law. Nothing has changed in all those years, although where they might have been debating typewriters and the law we are now dealing with Twitter, Facebook and social media and how we can try to protect the most vulnerable in our community.

To reiterate my comments in conclusion, this government is serious about tackling issues around child sex offenders in Queensland. We have the toughest two-strike laws. I hope other states and jurisdictions follow those two-strike laws. I hope other states and jurisdictions copy what we are doing today because we are making history in terms of the toughest sex offender laws to protect the most vulnerable. This government will stick up for families in this state. This is a great state with great opportunity. Let us work together so our children and our children's children can have the same great opportunities that have been afforded to us.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr BLEIJIE (3.28 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr BLEIJIE: I move the following amendment and table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

1 After clause 11

Page 45, after line 10—

insert—

'Part 2A Amendment of Crime and Misconduct Act 2001

'11A Act amended

'This part amends the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001.

'11B Amendment of s 346A (Protection of particular documents)

'Section 346A(2), '8 May'—

omit, insert—

'8 November'.

Tabled paper: Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes (replacement) for Hon. Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [\[2436\]](#).

As I explained in my speech, amendment No. 1 amends the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, which is outside the scope of the current long title of the bill. Therefore, I have sought the leave of the House to move this amendment. The long title will need to be amended to include the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001. Amendment No. 1 will extend the day up to which the protection afforded under section 346A of the Crime and Misconduct Act for certain Fitzgerald inquiry documents will be provided from 8 May 2013 to 8 November 2013. On 8 March this year the parliament passed an amendment to the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 inserting a new section 346A as an urgent measure to provide temporary protection to 8 May 2013 of Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry documents that had been released under the Public Records Act 2002 during the period 1 February 2012 to 5 March 2013.

The extension of the day up to which the protection in the section will operate will allow the government time to carefully consider its response to the recommendations in the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee's report No. 90 of its inquiry into the release and destruction of the Fitzgerald inquiry documents and how the released Fitzgerald documents should be further protected. Although the parliamentary committee recommended that the protection in section 346A be made permanent, the government's preference is to extend the temporary protection in this way to allow time to properly consider its response and also, at the appropriate time, liaise with the PCMC.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I rise to make a brief contribution in relation to the amendment moved by the Attorney. I place on record that the opposition will be supporting this amendment. I note that a motion was moved that this is actually outside the long title of the bill that we have been discussing for a number of weeks. However, we accept that this has been one of the issues raised in detail in the PCMC report. I do not want to pre-empt any debate on that PCMC report, but I understand that was one of the recommendations. The opposition will be supporting the extra six months and, hopefully, the Attorney will also give an undertaking to brief the opposition about its proposed course of action into the future.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 54—



Mr BLEIJIE (3.31 pm): I seek leave to move the amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr BLEIJIE: I move the following amendments—

2 Clause 27 (Insertion of new ch 91)

Page 52, line 15, 'section 17'—

omit, insert—

'section 26'.

3 Clause 40 (Amendment of s 4 (Definitions))

Page 87, lines 21 and 22, "and that has"—

omit, insert—

'from 'that has a chemical structure'.

4 Clause 40 (Amendment of s 4 (Definitions))

Page 87, line 24, "or that has'—

omit, insert—

"that—

- (i) has a chemical structure that is substantially similar to the chemical structure of a thing referred to in paragraph (a) or (b); or
- (ii) has a pharmacological effect that is substantially similar to the pharmacological effect of a thing referred to in paragraph (a) or (b); or
- (iii) is intended to have a pharmacological effect that is substantially similar to the pharmacological effect of a thing referred to in paragraph (a) or (b);'.'

5 Clause 40 (Amendment of s 4 (Definitions))

Page 87, after line 24—

insert—

'(3) Section 4, definition *dangerous drug*—

insert—

'Note—

See also section 4BA for when a thing is intended to have a pharmacological effect that is substantially similar to the pharmacological effect of a thing referred to in paragraph (a) or (b);'.'

6 Before clause 41

Page 88, before line 1—

insert—

'40A Insertion of new s 4BA

After section 4B—

insert—

'4BA Provision about s 4, definition *dangerous drug*, paragraph (c)(iii)

- '(1) This section applies if, in a proceeding for an offence against this or another Act, it is relevant to prove that a thing is a dangerous drug under section 4, definition *dangerous drug*, paragraph(c)(iii).
- '(2) The thing is a dangerous drug if it is intended, by the accused person, to have a pharmacological effect that is substantially similar to the pharmacological effect of a thing referred to in section 4, definition *dangerous drug*, paragraph (a) or (b);'.'

I will deal briefly with the amendments. Amendment No. 2 corrects a drafting anomaly in the transitional provision inserted by new chapter 91 into the Criminal Code. Section 730 in new chapter 91 erroneously refers to section 17 of the Criminal Law (Child Exploitation and Dangerous Drugs) Amendment Act 2012. This is an amendment to refer to the correct provision of the act, section 26.

Amendment No. 3 amends the definition of 'dangerous drug' in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 by omitting the phrase 'that has a chemical structure' in order to accommodate amendment No. 4. Amendment No. 4 amends the definition of 'dangerous drug' in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act. Paragraph (c) of the definition is amended to provide that a dangerous drug is a thing that 'has a chemical structure that is substantially similar to the chemical structure of a thing referred to in

paragraph (a) and (b)' or has a substantially similar pharmacological effect, meaning that only one of the two limbs needs to be satisfied to come within the paragraph (c) definition. The paragraph (c) definition is further amended to extend the definition to the circumstance where the substance is intended to have a substantially similar pharmacological effect to the pharmacological effect of an already scheduled substance. This new limb is inserted at paragraph (c)(iii) of the new section 4 definition.

Amendment No. 5 amends the definition of 'dangerous drug' in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act by the insertion of an editor's note to refer to new section 4BA. Amendment No. 6 inserts into the Drugs Misuse Act new section 4BA, which is an evidentiary provision that clarifies the application of the new limb of the dangerous drug definition in section 4(c)(iii). Under new section 4BA, a thing is proved to be a dangerous drug if the accused person intended the thing to have a substantially similar pharmacological effect to the pharmacological effect of a scheduled drug. It is strengthening the provisions. No longer will the police have to satisfy one or both limbs of this; they will satisfy one or the other. That means that more will be captured, as some evidentiary issues were hard to capture under both limbs. Now it allows the police to, hopefully, prosecute more people in terms of those particular limbs.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 54, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.35 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

7 Long title

Long title, 'the Criminal Code'—

omit, insert—

'the *Crime and Misconduct Act 2001*, the Criminal Code'.

I move that the long title of the bill be amended so that the title reads—

A bill for an Act to amend the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, the Criminal Code, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Drugs Misuse Regulation 1987 and the Evidence Act 1977, and to make minor and consequential amendments of other Acts as stated in the schedule, for particular purposes.

Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MOTOR VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 27 November 2012 (see p. 2763).

Second Reading

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (3.36 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The committee tabled its report on 12 March and made four recommendations. The government supports all four recommendations made by the committee. I take this opportunity to address each of those recommendations.

Firstly, the committee recommended that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support for the bill. This government is serious about addressing hooning and other illegal driving behaviour on our roads because that type of behaviour has a direct impact on the safety of all road users. The committee recognises, as does this government, the importance of addressing the tremendous human and financial cost caused by road trauma. We are unapologetic for our election commitment to introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the country and the community overwhelmingly supported that stance at the polls last year. I also thank the committee for its support in delivering on that commitment.

Secondly, the committee has recommended that I give consideration to delaying the commencement of the PPRA amendments to ensure sufficient time to address logistical and administrative changes associated with the bill and to educate the community about the nature of these changes. The government acknowledges the committee's recommendation. I can advise the House that the need to delay commencement of the bill was something that was specifically considered in the course of drafting. This bill introduces significant changes to the type 1 and 2 vehicle impoundment schemes. Therefore, time will be needed to educate the public about these changes through a public awareness campaign, effectively engage with service providers in the towing industry, and ensure that appropriate policies and training are in place so that the Queensland Police Service can smoothly implement these amendments. It is for these reasons that a period of at least six months has been set aside to ensure the necessary work can be done prior to the commencement of the bill.

The third recommendation of the committee was that I inform the House about any potential constitutional implications associated with this bill in the context of the recent South Australian case of *Bell v Police*. The committee's recommendation relates to a decision of the Supreme Court of South Australia about the impoundment legislation in that jurisdiction. In that case, the finding was that aspects of the South Australian legislation were invalid on constitutional grounds. South Australian forfeiture legislation required their courts to impose forfeiture of a motor vehicle after a defendant was convicted of a confiscation offence. The court found that this transgressed the *Kable* principle. The *Kable* principle establishes that a state legislature cannot impose onto a state court a function that impairs its integrity.

It is worth pointing out that legislation in that jurisdiction is materially different to this bill. The aspects of the South Australian legislation that were found to raise constitutional issues are not replicated in this bill. However, I can inform the House that advice has also been sought from crown law on the issue raised by the committee. I am confident, on the basis of the advice provided, that the constitutional issues associated with the South Australian legislation do not apply to the bill before the House.

The fourth recommendation of the committee was that I consider publishing guidelines on compensation provided for under section 121A. Proposed new section 121A of the act provides the capacity for compensation to be provided to a driver whose vehicle is sold or disposed of in circumstances where they are later acquitted of the offence giving rise to the forfeiture or where that offence is discontinued. It essentially operates as a safety net to ensure compensation can be provided in appropriate cases.

Where a person is dissatisfied with the amount of compensation awarded, provision is made under the proposed amendments for that decision to be appealed. The Queensland Police Service has undertaken to provide guidelines to members of the public about how an application may be made for compensation. However, the determination of an appropriate quantum of compensation is something that must necessarily be determined with reference to the facts and circumstances of an individual case. It is not an assessment that lends itself to prescriptive guidelines.

Once again, I thank the committee for their consideration of the bill and their recommendations. I also want to focus on an important point made by the committee in its report. The committee pointed out that this bill is not all about crushing cars but 'about improving road safety across the board for all Queensland drivers and passengers on Queensland roads'.

It is worth taking a moment to put this bill in its proper context by considering the magnitude of the consequences associated with the dangerous and reckless driving behaviour that this bill aims to address. Between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2012, 1,129 people lost their lives on Queensland roads. Behind those statistics is real human tragedy. That is 1,129 families who have lost a loved one—parents who have lost a child and children who have suddenly found themselves without a mother or a father. During the same period there were 20,531 crashes involving the hospitalisation of one or more people. Likewise, behind those statistics there is significant suffering.

We know that many crashes are preventable. We know that we can do more to ensure that future crashes are prevented and that this community is spared the human and social costs of road trauma. For example, we know that between January 2009 and December 2012, 208 fatal traffic crashes occurred in circumstances where a speeding driver or rider was a contributing factor. During the same period, 102 fatal crashes occurred in circumstances where a driver was disqualified or otherwise unlicensed.

Crashes like that are preventable tragedies. This bill directly addresses those and other causal factors by ensuring sufficient deterrents are in place and taking people off the road who have demonstrated that they are a danger to all road users. Dangerous conduct on our roads is a serious problem. It is a problem that Queenslanders take seriously because they realise that such conduct can and does have serious and tragic consequences. As this bill clearly shows, it is an issue that this government takes seriously and is determined to address. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.43 pm): I rise to speak on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Firstly, I would acknowledge that people who drive dangerously and recklessly on our roads are a major problem in my electorate as well as in electorates all across Queensland. During the last election campaign I recall this issue being repeatedly raised with me. I have no sympathy for those who cause havoc on our roads and put the lives of our friends and family and our constituents in danger.

For the benefit of the House, I would like to quote from the *Morning Bulletin*, the local newspaper in Rockhampton, of last Saturday. Under the headline of burnouts cost \$2,350, the article read—

A QUIET suburban street in Rockhampton was transformed into a scene from the *Fast and Furious* on Thursday night.

I will paraphrase the rest of the article. It appears that a Mr Carroll was doing burnouts and fishtails in the suburb of Norman Gardens one evening. He had a blood alcohol reading of 0.214 per cent. He is 31 years of age. He pleaded guilty in the Magistrates Court to dangerous driving, obstructing police, wilful damage, driving under the influence, driving disqualified and driving an unregistered vehicle. It is like the royal flush of stupidity.

The police prosecutor suggested that the police had to pull over at the end of the street involved as they were fearful for their safety. Mr Carroll was arrested after a short struggle and taken to the watch-house where he told police, 'I was just doing a couple of burnouts and it was all going all right until the police showed up.' He received 12 months probation, a \$2,350 fine and was disqualified from driving for one year and eight months.

I could use a number of expletives to describe this dipstick. This sort of behaviour is what the previous Labor bill and these amendments are all about. There is no viable argument that could be presented to me that would argue a denial of some form of natural justice or a lack of appeal processes associated with the consequences of such behaviours.

This is not an unusual example of things that are occurring in our communities. Last Friday while driving in my electorate I witnessed on two separate occasions two high-performance Commodore utes doing burnouts and attempting drifting within one kilometre of Rockhampton CBD. I happen to drive a Commodore ute so I am not blaming Australian manufactured motor vehicles. The opposition agrees with the government that this sort of behaviour must be stopped. That is why we are not opposing these amendments.

I will, however, remember this bill because I have learnt a little about how to develop a piece of legislation. I also picked up a little on the difference between spinning it and actually engaging with concerned stakeholders. The development and presentation of these amendments is an example of how sound bite politics and stunts applied in isolation can come back to bite you. The words 'The toughest anti-hooning laws in the country' and 'We're'—being the government—'going to crush the cars of hoons' sounds fantastic in terms of picking up media attention, but how that use of language translates to the legislation we are discussing here today is another matter.

My concerns do not relate to the core aims of the bill as I personally cannot stand these dipsticks on our roads that put my family and community at risk. After all it was a Labor government that introduced the first legislation dealing with this sort of issue back in 2002.

My concerns relate to the development of the bill. Poor outcomes are likely when highly paid and very experienced public servants, whose job it is to provide frank and fearless advice, inform the committee tasked with scrutinising the legislation that they are simply implementing government policy. This is actually quite unsatisfactory from my perspective as a committee member. I can accept that an election commitment can trump other advice in terms of supporting the development of the budget. I do not accept that logic being extended to the committee process. I have to take those sorts of replies to mean that there is little evidence to support the measures that were being discussed in the committee.

My concerns are: where is the research, where is the real rigour, where are the statistics and what is the evidence now and what is projected in the future? The police who appeared before the committee seemed to me to be very experienced, very competent and very professional. I thank them for attending the committee hearing and attempting to explain the basis of the legislation because there has been a lot of inaccurate information spread through our communities about this bill. I think most of us would be aware of that.

I understand only too well the position that some of those giving evidence must have been in. The history of this bill is that it derives from the work of previous Labor governments and the Queensland Police Service, or at least in part. The majority of the administrative efficiencies and some of the new offences were in fact developed via the research and development of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) Amendment 2011 which was introduced by the previous Labor government. This bill lapsed at the end of the previous parliament.

The former police minister said in his introductory speech that 'the changes to the vehicle impoundment schemes outlined in this bill will achieve significant savings in police and court time and send a strong message of deterrence to those drivers who would contemplate committing a vehicle impoundment offence'. So what can I say? It is not as though the Labor opposition and the government are on grossly different trajectories here. I hope those who are about to speak about this bill's intentions in relation to red-tape reduction consider who initiated the work, although I doubt that that is necessarily a prospect.

These LNP amendments present a harsher punishment regime. The rationale for this is not because of expert advice received but because it makes a great sound bite for an election. There is a little bit of 'Houston, we have a problem, so let's get a bigger hammer' about this bill. The cat was really let out of the bag when the reasons for the harshness of the bill were provided to the committee. The harshness was achieved by simply cherry picking the penalties from the other states to ensure that the legislation was in fact the toughest in the country. If I could see some evidence that this would produce superior results, I would be much happier to support the tougher penalties without any reservation at all. But I am left none the wiser from the committee process. If I wanted to pick cherries, I would be up in Stanthorpe at the moment.

I was surprised when during the committee public briefing the chief superintendent indicated that approximately 10,000 cars a year are seized by the Queensland Police Service. That is a big number in anyone's terms. So I ask again: what is the aim of the vehicle body count from this legislation? The government, after all, has made much of the statistics. For example, of the vehicle impoundments to date since these sorts of bills have been in place, 92 per cent of the vehicles ended up back on the road. I want to know exactly how this is going to impact in the real world.

Perhaps the most important measure of this bill's success will be to see if it survives, as the minister has mentioned, the potential constitutional challenge. Recommendation 3 of the committee report states—

The Committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Community Safety outline to the House, in his response to this Report, whether he is confident that the Bill is constitutionally valid having regard to the South Australian case of *Bell v Police*.

I have read the material tabled today and listened intently to the minister's earlier statements. I am not convinced that his interpretation on the constitutional validity is necessarily correct, although, as I say, I can only rely on that. I would be more satisfied if the minister would stand up in the House and say that he used the same lawyers to provide that advice as the Labor government used when they requested advice on the criminal association laws. These are the only such laws in Australia that

have been found to be constitutionally valid under the circumstances of a High Court appeal. So I would accept that simple explanation from the minister that those lawyers were involved in the advice on the validity of this legislation. Those lawyers have recent experience in these matters and were proved right despite, I might add, the LNP when they were in opposition doing everything to trash those criminal association laws. That law has also been proven to be sound—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr BYRNE: I take that interjection—apparently I have been here for a thousand years! That law was also proved to be sound when the bikies decided to test that in the High Court. Where is the LNP action to strike down that bill today, after all the criticism that was levelled against it when members of this government were in opposition? Members should be reminded that the criminal association laws were also drafted after an unfavourable South Australian High Court decision, so it seems that there are some similarities between these two situations.

I would like the minister to let the people of Queensland know what he intends to do now that the Western Australian LNP government has indicated that they intend to trump the Queensland laws and introduce tougher anti-hooning laws than these Queensland laws. Is this government going to seek to keep up with the Western Australian Joneses? Are we going to be back here in six to 12 months debating harsher laws in some kind of state of origin law and order penalties auction?

One of my concerns at the hearing was that I could not get a sense of what would be a measure of success from the legislation. During the public hearing I asked for some sort of concrete performance matrix that would indicate success. I asked was success to be measured in more vehicles being confiscated or fewer, and I was informed—

I could not give you a measure that would say, 'This is our terminal measure of success,' because for us the terminal measure of success is what we are doing to improve road safety.

I have been informed that a number of police did not confiscate vehicles every time they were entitled to under the current legislation. This was due to workload or other uses of police discretion. I suspect that the time saving achieved under the legislation may cause more vehicles to be towed, but this was unable to be explained during the hearing, and I will follow future statistics on this matter with interest.

I, like other MPs, have received numerous letters, emails and phone calls from car enthusiasts all over Queensland. I would like to congratulate some of the opponents to this bill who have participated in this great democracy by taking an interest in ensuring fairness for their community and interests. I will quickly bring to the attention of the House some examples of this democracy in action.

Cartel Australia was a finalist in the Quest Business Achiever Awards for the category of specialised retailer. This company, selling vehicle modification parts and accessories, posted a comment on the Premier's Facebook page. As you can imagine, this business and the car enthusiasts who are customers of this business are against the legislation, presumably because the effect that this bill may have on the aftermarket vehicle industry and a general, and I hope unfounded, feeling that car enthusiasts will be targeted unnecessarily. In 24 hours that complaint on the Premier's Facebook page generated something like 1,413 likes and 260 comments.

The government will say—and I have already heard the Attorney-General use this term—if you are not breaking the law then you have nothing to worry about. Well I am hopeful, as this business, vehicle manufacturers and other vehicle parts businesses should be, that the minister can assure them that they have nothing to worry about. It is reasonable to suggest that the communication and consultation effort of the government has not been a great success, at least to this point, in support of this bill.

I congratulate the team at the Grunt Files and the Australian Confederation of Motor Clubs. They have engaged in this debate in a responsible way and I can honestly say we have more in common than we have differences. The commitment to road safety by the Grunt Files and their attempts to pull in the heads of those who step out of line is what this debate needs. I note that since the introduction of this bill the Grunt Files supporters have risen from around 10,000 to over 19,000 people.

The LNP often talk about bills being controversial when people disagree with them, and this is one of those controversial bills. This could have been avoided, or at least the implications minimised, with a considered community engagement and consultation process applied in support of it. Admittedly, this style of approach has not been one of this government's great fortes. The truth of this

bill is that much of this opposition could have been avoided through proper consultation and communication. After all, the government has the opposition and most of the crossbenches supporting the bill and yet it still managed to create a community storm about the matter. It takes special skills to be able to do that.

Many misleading statements have been made by some opponents of this bill. The government has whipped up some of that fear in the community by crushing cars at media events. So I can understand that someone who has worked very hard to build a car from the ground up would have some concerns about this legislation. These passionate opposing statements are not made because of ill will or malice on behalf of those people but because the communication about the bill was so poor. Again, people just want the details explained to them of how the government might be going to impact on their lives. A sound bite is not going to satisfy the community when they think their lifestyles and recreational hobbies are under attack. It is the responsibility of the police minister to explain these changes, and I am not confident the community is satisfied with the material presently available in the public domain.

The police have concerns about their ability to quickly implement the changes proposed and have requested six months from the time of assent to develop policies and procedures as well as to train staff in relation to the changes in the legislation. I trust that the minister will accept the advice—and I hear that he will—from the chief superintendent regarding this request and the request of the committee.

The chief superintendent also states that the Queensland Police Service will require six months to develop a public information campaign to explain the changes to the public. One of the key changes to the legislation which could cause a lot of controversy surrounds the retrospective nature of some of the provisions. The committee recommended—and the police have obviously acknowledged this issue—that the public needs to be informed because of the significant disadvantage that may potentially flow to a person simply by not being aware that their vehicle could be seized. I will watch with interest how this plays out and note this may cause the Queensland Police Service a significant unforecast cost to inform the community at the level necessary.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of this bill surrounds the issue of vehicle modifications. The police indicate that very few vehicles are likely to be impacted by this provision in the law given the statistics of recent years. I think the core of these issues relates to the use of police resources at some of these car enthusiast events. These vehicles do stand out and I admit that I see a great variety of these sorts of vehicles that would fit the enthusiast category. I would have thought that the police have ample opportunities to find people committing offences on our roads and that the actions of drivers would be the focus, rather than potentially targeting enthusiast gatherings. I note car enthusiasts' concerns that many other unroadworthy vehicles are on the road and that they may be far less safe than the vehicles that they look after so well.

I commend the efforts of police in ensuring that all vehicles with defects are removed from our roads. Many complaints about the legislation relate to removing the courts' ability to deal with these matters. I make the observation that drivers can elect to have infringement notices heard in a Magistrates Court, and I support this measure because I am aware that many people have had to face the embarrassment of going to court for unlicensed driving or unregistered driving because of a letter not reaching the right address or because they thought their spouse or partner had paid the registration. I consider that a ticket is sufficient punishment for those offences and a court appearance only causes additional hardship to some people who have led otherwise blameless lives. I think the balance is about right with this aspect of the bill, but I expect police to fully warn a driver of the serious consequence of committing further offences which could lead to their vehicles being sold by the government.

Finally, the last concern of the committee relates to compensation that may flow from the legislation. The consequences of getting it wrong could mean substantial penalties for the government. I support recommendation 4 that suggests the Minister for Police and Community Safety consider issuing public guidelines on the process to be adopted to determine compensation under the new section 121A of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, and I note that the minister has already committed to that.

The opposition is concerned about the changes to the Corrective Services Act 2006 that is contemplated as part of this bill. Little explanation has been provided about the potential consequences of this part of the bill. I am concerned that magistrates and judges who are deciding between refusing bail and granting bail may be more likely to approve bail to offenders because they

no longer have the option of remanding prisoners in low-security facilities. This bill may have the effect of weakening bail laws in Queensland by some form of stealth because magistrates and judges may well be less likely to place offenders on remand, which may in the short term have an impact on crime in our community.

It is worth considering who low-security prisoners are. They are likely to be young, non-violent property offenders. For them to warrant being placed on remand, they are likely to be repeat high-volume property offenders committing lots of offences. This means break and enter merchants and car thieves. I know what kind of damage a prolific property offender can do in my community, which is why I am worried about this part of the bill. I will be very interested to see what support some of the other regional members give in relation to this aspect of the bill. I know that Rockhampton has similar property crime problems to places like Cairns, so the consequences of this aspect of the bill will be of interest to those communities. How will the local members explain any potential consequences for their communities which continue to be targeted by repeat property offenders who steal their cars and break into their houses? They will blame the magistrates, but the truth is there may be something slightly different.

This is somewhat more about smoke and mirrors. The government has hidden this amendment in a bill that deals with a totally different set of matters. The public needs to ask what possible motivation there is for approaching it in this fashion. One explanation could be that the LNP is doing this to sweeten any sort of arrangement for a private prison operator when the rumoured sale of prisons is ultimately negotiated. How far away is a contestability unit within Corrections? I hope the minister can rule out any such prospect in this House today. I invite him during his speech to reassure the House of what the status of privatisation may be. I would also like the minister to explain what he thinks are the practical, on-the-ground implications and consequences of this aspect of the amendment.

As I mentioned, the hoon laws were one of the few things this government actually explained before the election that it was going to do. This government does have a mandate, at least in respect of the amendments that comprise the majority of this bill. This bill is about an election commitment implementation. For this reason, despite our peripheral concerns the opposition will not be opposing this legislation.

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (4.06 pm): I rise to join the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which was introduced into this House by the Minister for Police and Community Safety, the honourable member for Bundaberg, on 27 November 2012. I begin my speech by congratulating the minister and his department for introducing this long overdue legislation that those opposite did not have either the grit or determination to do for years.

This bill amends the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Corrective Services Act 2006. Specifically, the bill amends chapter 4 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, which provides two schemes for the impoundment and forfeiture of motor vehicles used to commit certain offences—namely, the type 1 and type 2 vehicle impoundment schemes. The type 1 vehicle impoundment scheme applies to a range of traffic offences commonly associated with hooning. The type 2 vehicle impoundment scheme applies to offences such as unlicensed and unregistered driving.

This bill will see evade police offences included as a type 1 offence and high-end speeding as type 2. In addition, the impoundment sanctions will be increased to 90 days for the first type 1 offence, and for the second or subsequent offence within five years the penalty will now be forfeiture of the vehicle. For the second type 2 offence the impoundment will now be seven days, and for the third type 2 offence it will be 90 days. Any further offences will result in forfeiture of the vehicle.

Both impoundment and forfeiture processes will now operate administratively rather than through a court process—a practical approach that will see valuable time savings for both the police and the court. It is estimated that it takes an experienced police officer approximately eight hours to complete an impoundment application to go to court. This new administration approach further reinforces the LNP's commitment to get more police on the beat and not be tied up in unnecessary, burdensome paperwork that generates no tangible benefit for our community.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mrs STUCKEY: Definitely not the Labor way! New measures will also be introduced as an alternative to impounding vehicles and these include clamping, removal of numberplates and vehicle production notices. The bill also gives the commissioner the ability to release vehicles upon application by the owner or usual driver in certain circumstances. On the Gold Coast in 2012 alone 509 vehicles were impounded and 3,771 high-end speeding, or type 2, offences were reported.

The LNP went to the 2012 election on a platform of introducing tough new legislation in the area of law and order, and part of that commitment was to introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. The Putting the Brakes on Hoons policy is part of the Newman government's Safer Streets Crime Action Plan. This is a plan that has real, achievable and much warranted initiatives that will ensure our communities are a safe place to live.

I dispute the comments of the honourable member for Rockhampton. On the one hand he was relating to poor consultation, stunts and minimal research and yet at the end of his speech he acknowledged that we had a mandate from the election. I think the gentleman got somewhat confused in what was probably a very long speech. However, Labor's record, or lack thereof, speaks for itself.

In 2008 I launched the Hoon Watch initiative in response to frequent complaints of hooning in our local streets and extensive consultation with the community and local police officers. More than two-thirds of the 3,000 plus respondents to my electorate-wide survey cited law and order issues as their No. 1 concern, with hooning highly represented. In 2008 we had a government too interested in playing politics rather than supporting its constituents. In my electorate of Currumbin I was constantly witnessing firsthand absolutely unacceptable behaviour and I definitely was not alone. Residents were frequently contacting my office to express their anguish over this situation and their frustration in seeing no changes from the Labor government. It was off the back of this overwhelming community consultation that I decided to launch Hoon Watch, an initiative that allowed concerned residents to actively participate in the process and assist in determining those who are disobeying the law. For my efforts I was mocked by several Labor ministers in this House for supposedly creating more work for the police. I ask honourable members: what could be simpler than providing information on a tailor-made form to our police?

In the four years following the launch I generated 11 local media releases, spoke in parliament many times, held regular discussions with our local officers and continually engaged with locals. Hoon Watch was adopted as LNP policy. We also saw an unwavering dedication from local officers to catch offenders, and I wish to place on record my thanks for promptly and efficiently responding to all Hoon Watch forms that I forwarded to officers in my electorate.

In spite of all of this, there simply was not the legislative backing needed to get the message across to offenders. Labor was soft on crime and hoons were proud of their behaviour and confident that, when caught by our ever diligent officers, they would get off with small or no penalties. This was unacceptable on every count but it really was a trait that we unfortunately came to accept from a limp-wristed Labor administration which time and time again demonstrated its incapacity to govern the way Queenslanders rightfully expected and deserved.

I note that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee put forward four recommendations, all supported by the government. With the passage of this legislation, the police finally have the backing to adequately penalise offenders. It is important that we all work to get the message out to the community to be our eyes and ears on the roads. Police officers are undoubtedly thorough in their efforts to protect our community, but they simply cannot be everywhere all the time, and with initiatives such as Hoon Watch we ensure that the residents are in a position to contribute to the process.

The LNP is serious about protecting our officers, we are serious about protecting our children, we are serious about increasing penalties for offenders and we are absolutely serious about cleaning up our streets. I have been relentless in my commitment to the good people of Currumbin to stamp out hooning on the streets. Now we finally have the full force of the law to throw at those who continue to engage in this deplorable behaviour that Queenslanders should not have to tolerate. I have said before in this House and I will say it again today: criminals should be afraid of this government. They should clean up their act or get out of Queensland.

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (4.14 pm): It is certainly an honour and a privilege for me to speak on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I have a couple of anecdotal experiences to which everybody in this chamber will probably attest in some form or another.

The first experience took place during the campaign before 24 March 2012. When delegating for the then shadow police minister, the shadow Attorney-General came to Ipswich. Besides holding a press conference outside the courthouse we visited Bundamba. I was with my good friend Mr Michael Kitzelmann, the candidate for Bundamba, who lost that election by 500 votes or so. It could have been historic if he was able to get over the line. In an industrial estate at Bundamba we saw a right-angled road encompassing a number of industrial buildings and there they were. There were doughnuts and skid marks. It was not only that that concerned me; it was the fact that a fence of an industrial complex was knocked down. It was clear that this was a precinct for hooning. That is the first measure. Clearly, it was a case that these matters were happening within the streets of not only my electorate of Ipswich but also Bundamba. The concern is that this sort of behaviour, unfortunately, leads to bad habits and, at its worst, injury and death. It is a real concern and we need to curb it.

The Newman LNP government places a very high priority and a high prevalence on young people living to a fruitful age and being productive to our economy not to mention the loved ones who will miss them if they die or kill others. I refer to the member for Rockhampton and I make this particular point. Not every piece of legislation has set in stone a piece of research which says, 'This is the way we go.' Effectively, what governments do is work on deterrents and we say, 'Is there a problem?' If there is a problem then we set about making a set of rules. As the member for Rockhampton indicated, it was around 2000 or 2002 when this legislation was first proffered. The difficulty is, as the minister and member for Currumbin has indicated to us, these figures are rising. The net result is that previous legislation has not made an indent on the rise of the figures. If the figure is not falling, the purpose of legislation is to make sure that the community is aware of the problem and that the government of the day takes the steps necessary to reduce the problem.

Firstly, as is part of policy, it is to be implemented, and we are doing it now. Secondly, there is the evidence. I mention the second aspect of what we experience when we drive around our city. When I drive up Limestone Street I see a monument next to a concrete pole. This is a road I travel on when I leave Ipswich and go towards Brisbane. It has a 60 kilometres per hour speed limit, but somehow two young people died. It always concerns me—particularly in relation to that monument where flowers are changed every month and a cross stands with two names on it—that in a 60 kilometre per hour zone with the use of a motor vehicle two young people have died. I feel quite passionate about this legislation because whatever existed before did not work to the degree to which we expected it. The purpose of this legislation is to make an important impact on the lives of young people by saying, 'If you conduct yourself in a way that is antisocial then there will be consequences'—nothing more, nothing less. Is this legislation out of kilter with the rest of Australia? The committee's report indicates that it is harsher but not that much harsher than other states. It is still in proportion. What we are attempting to do is to save young people's lives. Why? Let me indicate the profile of hooning.

Hooning is not defined in this legislation, but it seems to involve people aged 18 to 30 years, generally males, generally in a peer group. Sometimes alcohol is involved; sometimes it is not. Certainly hotted-up motor vehicles are involved in terms of people wanting to show their prowess in being able to take off and reach a speed of 60 kilometres an hour in two to three seconds. That is the sort of behaviour we really have to curtail.

Part of this legislation is to look at hooning behaviour. Many people who drive motor vehicles in my electorate of Ipswich are lappers. I make a distinction between lappers and hoons. They are not in the same category. Certainly hoons can be lappers—I cannot get around that—but the reality of life is that some people enjoy their motor vehicle and enjoy the social aspect of driving around the streets—of Ipswich and other provincial towns—and meeting friends. But hooning goes that one step further in that people use their motor vehicle, in terms of the way it is manoeuvred, to do things like street racing, skidding, doughnuts, drifting, speed trials and unreasonable speed in travelling to 60 kilometres an hour in two seconds rather than in seven or eight seconds, as everyone else seems to do.

I was well informed by my good friend the member for Lockyer, because in the very early days of this legislation I had no idea what drifting was. Apparently, drifting is the ability to have—the member for Murrumba smiles at me and I suspect that he knows what drifting is; I will get some lessons from him at some stage—all four wheels move around the corner—

A government member interjected.

Mr BERRY: Hopefully within the nature strip. To a professional or experienced driver it might be a stunt. The essence of hooning is that it occurs in public places. Public places, as we know from the legislation, involve not only roads but also car parks and anywhere else the public has access to. On many occasions we see young children left for a moment unsupervised in a car park, yet when you think of a burst of speed up to 30 or 40 kilometres an hour you realise that it does not take much to take the life of another.

We really do not think enough about other road users. As we grow older we do, and at the age of 61 or so I think I am reasonably proficient and probably too slow for most drivers. But the reality of life is that when we are young we all think we are impervious and invulnerable and we can do a lot of things and not worry about death.

The problem is that hooning has increased. That is the reason the LNP brought in the policy. Not only has it increased; it is the perception of the public that it has increased. Whether that is because of the number of crosses we see on the roadside or whether the number of articles in the *Courier-Mail* has increased I do not know. But constituents clearly say that it is a matter of concern to them. As a result of this perception we need to look at the balance between the problem and the deterrent. Unfortunately, this parliament really does not have an ability to do anything other than provide a deterrent for somebody to curtail their wrongful behaviour. So it is deterrence that we need to keep in balance. So what is the deterrent? Quite clearly, we have increased the penalties. The type 1 and type 2 offences exist; however, the penalties have become more tough. I will speak about that in just a moment.

Hooning behaviour needs to be curtailed and we need to ensure that not only is it curtailed but also, through the passage of time, people understand and realise the penalties that are involved. If the penalty is in balance, it will dissuade people from undertaking that behaviour. The member for Currumbin quoted some of the data which has been relied upon to indicate that this legislation is proportionate. She mentioned that for type 1 offences there have been 624 motor vehicle impoundments and for type 2 offences there have been 7,773 motor vehicle impoundments. Of the 8,397 vehicle impoundments, 184 vehicles were forfeited.

The member for Rockhampton indicated that crushing cars was probably being done for publicity. If it is, great. If the message gets out to people in the street that this offensive behaviour is something this government will eradicate, then certainly the message is not lost. In fact, during the election campaign I had people ring me and say, 'Don't crush the cars. Why don't you give them to charity?' At a very early stage, before this legislation was introduced, the notion of crushing hit the ground, at least with some people. People are thinking, 'We could use that car.'

The point is that the message needs to get out. It is an important message because we are dealing with young people. The message does not always filter through to young people as quickly as we would like, but that is the world in which we live. So we need to take advantage of any way to get this message out so that people curtail their behaviour and hopefully do not develop bad driving habits. I refer to the habit such that where you see an amber light you go through. We would love to stop that. That is an issue for another day and relates more to police enforcement.

I relate a very interesting statistic in relation to modifications. Impoundments in relation to modifications are, in the scheme of things, negligible. I think only eight out of 8,000 or 9,000 vehicles were forfeited under the modification provisions.

Mr Watts: Twenty-three.

Mr BERRY: Twenty-three vehicles out of 8,000 or 9,000. I do not know what the percentages are, but it would be 0.5 or 0.05 per cent—infinitesimal. But as the Attorney-General said in respect of a previous speech, 'if you don't do the crime, you won't do the time'. In other words, if you have a modified vehicle and you are driving down the street in a very lawful and safe way, you will not come to the notice of the police. Nine times out of 10 it does not happen. That in itself causes people who have modified their vehicles to be less concerned.

There is other data that perhaps anecdotally indicates to us why this legislation is important. The Queensland Police Service states that the rate of evading police has risen since 2007. I am not suggesting for one moment that TV news broadcasts about people having smashed a car and evading police seem to be more prevalent. But even if they are not, it is the attitude of the public that it is becoming far too prevalent, and it is the people who are the barometer to indicate that something needs to be done. And that is what they are saying quite clearly. The CMC has reported, perhaps a little more statistically, that there have been 19 deaths and 737 injuries in relation to evading police. Part of the reason for bringing in this legislation is to try to stop people attempting to evade police.

Is the penalty out of proportion? I said before that it is not. As I said, there are two types of offences—type 1 and type 2, type 1 of course being the more serious of the two involving dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, careless driving, participating in speed trials or racing motor vehicles, having unnecessary noise or smoke. I would put the last one in a separate category, but those other offences are all fairly serious. Failing to give way at a T-intersection, which may amount to careless driving and not necessarily dangerous driving, can cause injury if one does not pay attention. There needs to be a deterrence effect for that, and of course dangerous operation of a motor vehicle speaks for itself, as does participating in speed trials. Offences such as driving uninsured and unregistered motor vehicles, unlicensed driving or disqualified driving are given the lesser category of type 2 offences. Effectively, that means that they have an implication. If you drive an uninsured motor vehicle, our economy does suffer. A Nominal Defendant pays out for injuries that are suffered and, as a result, there needs to be some course taken to prevent that from happening.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr BERRY: I take the interjection from my friend from Beaudesert: we all pay for it. Is that fair? No, it is not. What are the penalties? Again, the penalties are proportionate. A type 1 offence means that your motor vehicle is impounded, a second type 2 offence within five years means that the vehicle is going to be impounded and then one offence combined with two others means forfeiture, and that could be sale or destruction. I do not know how many chances a person really needs to have to understand the implications of what happens if you do something three times. You would have to be pretty thick not to get the message that something is going to happen to your vehicle if you are caught engaging in antisocial driving behaviour on at least three occasions.

Type 2 offences really involve a trigger offence—that is, it sets off the five-year period and it is only after that for the second offence you get a seven-day impoundment and the third offence a 90-day impoundment. I say ‘impoundment’ loosely in that you can simply have your numberplates taken off or you can have your wheels locked. There are many options, because there is one thing that we have in this state that no other state has—that is, we are very decentralised. Police officers have to operate on a system that exists in their part of the world. What happens in Brisbane might well be substantially different to what happens in Charleville, Winton or Longreach, and of course I understand that it is a discretion. There are circumstances which warrant it, but there are mechanisms built into this in that there are provisions. In terms of impoundment there is a hardship provision, and the wording is not much different in terms of extreme hardship than what is used in current legislation. There is a definition about that—that is, within seven days that decision will be made. That is far more substantially fair than the court system, which sometimes can take up to two or three months, depending on where you are.

In the two minutes I have left I want to again summarise the main points of my speech, and that is that hooning is a community concern—a real concern—and one which the community has asked us to deal with. I would respectfully suggest that the result on 24 March 2012 was a mandate for this legislation. It was made very clear in policy. In terms of crushing cars, yes, it does bring publicity to the issue. It is important for this message to get out as quickly as it can so that young people fully understand what the implications are in displaying antisocial driving behaviour. Is it cherry picking from other legislation? I take some issue with that. The reality of life is there are myriad different penalties over different states. I would respectfully submit that these penalties are not disproportionate to the offending behaviour. The problem for us is that far too many young people are dying on roads or being injured. We see the footage on the television news where a vehicle is wrapped around a pole and one wonders, ‘How the heck did that happen? How did it happen?’ How could somebody travel at such a speed to cause a vehicle to disintegrate where you cannot even tell the manufacturer? These measures are quite well measured.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.34 pm): I rise to support the introduction of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. First of all, what is the purpose of the bill? In a nutshell, it is simply to stop antisocial behaviour. That is it in a nutshell. There is an expectation over time that introducing these more substantive penalties will result in a reduction in these types of offences, and that is the important thing. If we were to look at this legislation in isolation and assume that the number of people committing these offences continued to be the same, then the reality is that the legislation is not working. It is the desire of the minister to stop antisocial behaviour and bring about a change in behaviour, as has been alluded to by others here, in order to reduce the number of offences of this type over time. That is a very important point. The chapter 4 amendments of the bill include evade police offences, which are type 1 offences, and high-end speeding and other types of offences such as that which are regarded

as type 2 offences. Other members have mentioned the actual penalties and discussed the length of time the vehicles will be off the road for and so forth, but tougher laws are essential. They are an essential part of the whole process that we as a society need to go through to change attitudes. The tougher penalties are needed and the penalties that are outlined are absolutely imperative.

However, we also need education, and that is an incredibly important part of the whole way of addressing these problems in our society. Education is absolutely imperative. I spoke here a few weeks ago about an organisation called QTOP and very briefly mentioned a young fellow by the name of Rhys, whom I spoke to just about an hour ago on the phone. I finally got a mobile telephone number for him from QTOP and he was happy to talk to me. I do not know whether he was happy to talk to me, but he agreed to talk to me. I asked him a little bit about his background. Rhys told me that under the old rules he was hit with a failure-to-stop fine and he copped a \$300 fine and a suspension. Do members reckon that changed Rhys's attitude? Not at all, because guess what? Unbeknownst to him, we changed the rules and brought in a \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension and poor old Rhys copped the new fine not too long after the last one. So poor old Rhys now has a \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension and—listen to this; this is very important stuff, extremely important stuff—he was driving his mate's car. You know what that means and he thinks—this is how close a mate it was—it was impounded for 'a while'. I do not think they are real close mates anymore. He told me that he was just generally mucking around. He was not involved in any of this hooning activity where 50 cars meet up and do what they do and then bolt from the police; he was just generally mucking around in his mate's car and he copped this \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension.

But you have to hand it to the young fellow, because he went through and completed QTOP, and I will talk about that in a moment. I asked him if he has ever been involved in those hooning events where you have 50 cars turn up at an industrial estate. He said, 'Oh, yeah, but only as an observer.' Members could probably take that with a pinch of salt. He was an observer only in those events; he never actually got into it. That was probably because he did not have a car. I asked him, 'What was the effect on you?' He said, 'I lost my licence and it's going to take a lot to pay off the fine.' I asked him how it affects his mates. He said that he was telling anyone and everyone who will listen to him. He is not pulling any punches. He is letting them all know. So the message is getting out there. That brings me back to the point that I made earlier when I said there is an expectation of a reduction in these types of offences over time. Certainly, we are not going to see Rhys doing a similar thing again and I reckon a few of Rhys's mates might rethink their way of going about what they do and whether they are going to evade police. At the end of the conversation I asked Rhys, 'Mate, what did QTOP do for you then, because you copped a two-year suspension and the \$5,000 fine? What is the point in going to QTOP?' He said that he thought that QTOP probably saved him from jail time. So that is the importance of the education side. Yes, he was sent along to the program. He had to pay \$165 to go through QTOP, but he thinks it probably saved him some jail time. In my view, a combination of stiff penalties and education will work.

I have the statistics for the whole of Queensland. There are quite a few offences listed in the whole of Queensland, but I take note that in what is regarded as the south-east region—Coomera, Gold Coast and Logan, soon to be Gold Coast and Logan—the combined number of offences under type 1 were 158 and there were 124 vehicle impoundments. So in those two areas—or three areas currently and two after 1 July—20 per cent of all offences throughout Queensland occurred. That is an amazing figure. The figures show that, for type 2 offences, there were 9,915 of which 1,888 vehicles were impounded. Once again, that is an astounding figure when we consider that that area is just one small part of Queensland. That is 20 per cent of the total offences, but 25 per cent of the vehicle impoundments occurred in that area. That rings true to me, because the statistical data that I have been collecting from my constituents over all of the years that I have been in this place tells me that more than 80 per cent of my constituents regard policing as the most important thing for us to do as legislators. We have to get on top of the policing issues. My constituents talk about all types of things—safety in their homes, hooning, speeding; all of those things. Policing in general is what it is all about.

We have to impose these tougher penalties on these young people—and older people as well—who are out there in the marketplace causing fear among our constituents, causing fear among the people of Queensland, because that in itself will change their attitude and reduce the number of offences of this sort. We also have to educate people as well. I again refer to QTOP, which is for people who have already offended. I also mention the BRAKE program. Many members may have heard of it. It is a program that targets year 11 students in our schools. The BRAKE program in the Jimboomba area is absolutely fantastic. I suggest that all members take a look at the BRAKE

program. I know the member for Beaudesert would be able to tell members a little bit about it. It should be a program that is conducted in all of our high schools. Certainly, year 11 students would benefit greatly from it. The final thing is that I think we should facilitate the—

(Time expired)

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.44 pm): I will start by thanking the member for Coomera, for he promised to keep his contribution brief. I note that the member for Coomera did a fantastic job in taking about an extra 10 seconds. So I thank the member for keeping his promise to me!

It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 or, as it is more commonly known, the anti-hooning bill. Can I start by saying that this bill fulfils our government's commitment to introduce the toughest anti-hooning legislation in Australia. I note the comments of the member for Rockhampton with regard to Western Australia and his suggestion that perhaps there could be a State of Origin contest. I would never wish to pre-empt what the honourable minister might wish to do, but I suggest, on the basis of the rugby league State of Origin matches, that Queensland has a very good chance of success.

I would also particularly like to acknowledge and thank my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and, of course, acknowledge the secretariat for the great work that they do. If members had not noticed, I point out that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee appears to be one of the busiest committees in this House. Certainly, that is no complaint of any of the members, but it makes us very acutely aware of the support that the secretariat offers us and I thank them for that. I would also like to thank those who made written submissions to this bill and in particular also acknowledge and thank those very hardworking Queensland Police Service officers who found time in their very busy schedules to come to offer us a public briefing on this bill.

There are a number of objectives to this bill. I will quickly summarise them and highlight a few, if I may. Through this bill we are increasing the sanctions for the type 1 vehicle impoundment scheme to 90 days impoundment for a first offence and, where there is a second offence, the vehicle will be forfeited. We have said that anyone who evades police will have that noted as a type 1 vehicle related offence and high-end speeding—that is, a person driving more than 40 kilometres an hour above the speed limit—will now become a type 2 vehicle related offence. With regard to type 2 vehicle related offences, we have announced that we will increase the impoundment sanctions to seven days for a second offence, to 90 days for a third offence and, on a fourth offence and subsequent offences, forfeiture. We have also said that we will increase the relevant period for impoundment offences from three to five years. Importantly, this bill amends the definition of what a burnout is. It removes the requirement that repeat offences under the type 2 vehicle impoundment scheme must be the same type as the pre-impoundment offence. We will allow people to apply to the commissioner within five days, where practical, for the release of an impounded vehicle. If people are not particularly happy with the commissioner's decision, there is also an avenue for appeal. Where specific penalties have resulted in impoundment—for example, someone has not paid SPER fines and has lost their licence or has not paid their licence renewal fees or their vehicle registration—there is also room, where the person has remedied that breach, for the early return of that vehicle.

There are many positive outcomes from this bill. First and foremost, to my mind the automatic forfeiture penalty will see a reduction in the time that police have to take to deal with these matters in terms of preparing court applications and then, of course, there is the reduced court time in considering the applications. We all know how hard working our QPS officers are and anything that we can do to make the burdens of their job a little bit easier and a little bit less are, in my opinion, a good thing. I certainly commend the minister for that amendment. I am sure, as a former police officer himself and a great senior sergeant who was very involved in the PCYC in Bundaberg with Gold Coast City councillor Margaret Grummitt, who was at the time a senior sergeant herself, he appreciates the day-in, day-out burden that our police officers bear.

It is great that the minister is doing everything in his power to make their jobs a little bit easier. We have also made sure there are a number of options when it comes to impounding vehicles. That can include clamping, removing numberplates or the issue of vehicle production notices. It is particularly important that we have said that the ideal time frame for the Commissioner where practicable to respond to someone's request for an early release of a vehicle is five days. One of the things that I think that this does is send a message to people that if something has happened unfairly we want to be able to quickly and swiftly resolve that. We do not want to take any more of your time, we do not want to take any more of the valuable police officer's time and I think it is also important

that we have an avenue for appeal if someone is not particularly happy with the Commissioner's decision. That we have an avenue for appeal is, as I have said, particularly important. It ensures that there is a sense of natural justice and procedural fairness, if you like.

I mentioned earlier when I was talking about the objectives of the bill that one of the things that we will be doing is expanding the definition of a burnout. Previously what we found was that there was a loophole that was created particularly when people were driving on wet or gravel roads. People were able to escape punishment for hooning behaviour if their car lost traction but no smoke was produced. I am not very much of a car person other than to the extent that I know how to drive a manual car—which is more than some of my friends.

A government member interjected.

Miss BARTON: If they can only drive an automatic car and that is their wish I am more than happy to rib them that I can drive a manual car. What I think that we have done is, in my mind, ensure that no-one is able to fall through the net. We have made sure that there are no loopholes and I think that this can only be a good thing.

The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee had four recommendations, all of which the minister has acknowledged and accepted. First and foremost there is the recommendation that the bill should be passed. I would have been very surprised had the minister not accepted that recommendation. The second one encourages the minister to consider a delay in the commencement of the amendments so that the Queensland Police Service might be able to ensure that its officers are fully abreast of all the changes in this particular legislation but also make sure that they are able to engage in a community education program. The third recommendation has asked the minister to take into account the decision in the South Australian case of *Bell v Police* and provide advice as to the constitutionality of this particular legislation. The fourth recommendation is in regard to the public guidelines for compensation under the new section 121A of the PPRA.

With regard to recommendation 2 the minister has outlined, not only in his response but also in his second reading speech, that a six-month period has been set aside to ensure that QPS staff are adequately trained and that there is an appropriate public awareness campaign. I think that this is a very solid and sound decision of the minister. What we need to do is ensure that QPS officers, when they are out on the front line doing hard work for Queenslanders, are making the right decisions and that they have all the tools and knowledge at their disposal to be able to make the right decisions in the interests of all Queenslanders. An important component of this six-month time frame will also be, as I said, a public awareness campaign. We are making significant changes to this legislation, particularly in terms of the penalties. I think it would be remiss of us to not make sure that people are aware of those. The member for Coomera outlined in his long contribution to this debate that he knew of someone in his electorate who had had problems where legislation had changed and he was not aware that changes had been made. Perhaps had he been aware of the significant penalties that person may not have perpetrated the actions that he did and he might not have lost his friendship and he certainly may not have lost \$5,000 and two years of his licence. This was also in line with the comments that were made by Chief Superintendent Andy Morrow of the State Traffic Support Branch during the public briefing on this particular piece of legislation in response to a question that I had asked of him.

With regard to recommendation 3 both Chief Superintendent Morrow in his public briefing and the minister in his response have indicated that they have taken advice and the minister in particular has taken advice from the Crown Solicitor with regard to any implications of the decision in *Bell v Police* which is the South Australian case which, for those in this House who are not aware, effectively said that similar anti-hooning legislation in South Australia was not constitutionally valid. Both Chief Superintendent Morrow and the minister have clearly outlined that they have no concerns about the validity of the legislation, particularly on the basis of the advice that they have taken.

I do just want to address, if I may, some concerns that some people in the community have had, particularly those in the car enthusiast community. We all know that that community runs the length and breadth of Queensland. In particular, some of the queries have been in regard to the modification of vehicles. Some of them are concerned that they might be targeted and particularly more so under this legislation. This was an issue that all of my colleagues were certainly very conscious of and we were acutely aware of during the public briefing that we received from Chief Superintendent Morrow and his colleagues. In his introductory statement the chief superintendent outlined that during 2012 there had been about 10,000 cars that had been impounded right across Queensland. We had the opportunity to eke out a little bit more detail as to what offences had led to

the impoundment of those particular cars. I do not seek to steal his thunder in this debate, but my colleague the member for Toowoomba North has been a particularly strong advocate in this area and has made sure that he is a strong advocate for the enthusiasts so that they can feel comfortable about the legislation that we are introducing. The questioning that was led by my colleague, the member for Toowoomba North, ensured that we found out that of those 10,000 cars only 23 had been seized because they were, in the police officer's view, illegally modified. That is 0.23 per cent. To use the words of Superintendent Morrow, it is a tiny, tiny proportion.

Hooning is a problem right across Queensland. There are many communities that are incredibly frustrated with it. The Minister for Tourism, Small Business, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games highlighted that many years ago she had kick-started what is the Hoon Watch campaign and that has been adopted by many of my colleagues very successfully, including the member for Lytton who I know is particularly proud of the achievements he has made in the Wynnum area with regard to this anti-hooning push. There have been people in my community who have expressed extreme discontent with the hooning issues that we have had particularly through Labrador and some parts of Runaway Bay. I know that I have been able to work very closely with the local police stations to ensure that we respond adequately to people's concerns and that we do everything that we can to make our streets safer.

I will never apologise for being part of a government that has tougher penalties when it comes to people driving dangerously on our roads. At the end of the day it is not just about people being idiots and hurting themselves, it is about people being idiots and hurting other people's families. It could be your son, your daughter, your partner, your mother or your father. At the end of the day everyone who is on the road is someone who loves and who is loved. As a government we have an obligation to do everything that we can to send a message that people driving recklessly and dangerously will not be tolerated. We will severely punish those who put not only their lives at risk but importantly the lives of other Queenslanders and other Queenslanders' families at risk. As I said, I will not apologise for being part of a government that is taking a tough stance when it comes to this. I commend the minister and I commend the government for wanting to have the toughest anti-hooning legislation in the country. As I said, it is an important step in sending a message to the community that it will not be tolerated. We need to do everything in our power to make sure that people are aware of this and that people drive much more safely on the roads.

I referred earlier to some of the issues that I have had in the electorate of Broadwater with regard to the Runaway Bay and Labrador areas. I just thought, seeing as I had had the opportunity earlier in the day to quickly get some figures, I would talk about some of the vehicle impoundment figures that we have seen in the Gold Coast district. In 2012, for type 1 vehicle related offences, there were 34 recorded offences and 27 cars were impounded. For type 2 vehicle related offences, there were 3,771 offences and 509 cars were impounded. We are not necessarily seeking to target anyone except those who drive dangerously and break the law. Quite frankly, as far as I am concerned, that is a good thing because those people need to be very aware of the danger that they are putting themselves and others in. If my memory serves me correctly, it was towards the end of last year when we saw a horrific example of a young girl driving incredibly dangerously on a road in southern Brisbane. She had a friend in the car. She did not have the requisite skills to know how to control the car. She was not driving to the conditions. It was a very tragic example of just how much lives can be changed by someone not slowing down, by someone driving like a bloody idiot.

At the end of the day, this government is committed to making sure that we send a strong message to our communities, which is exactly what this legislation is doing. We made a commitment to the people of Queensland that, when we won government, we would introduce the toughest anti-hooning legislation in the country. Today, we all stand here to remind our communities about that promise and to follow through on the commitment that we made to our communities. I am very pleased to be a member of the Newman government. I am very pleased that, either later tonight or tomorrow, I will be able to vote on this legislation so that I can go out into my community and say, 'I followed through on my promise. I followed through on my commitment and I did it for you. I did it for your families and I did it for your friends, because it was the right thing to do. When you wanted the government to do something, we stumped up and we did it.' I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (5.01 pm): I rise also to contribute to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and a member of this government, I am very pleased to do so. This evening I will deliberately focus my contribution on hooning aspects of the legislation.

In my community of Ipswich West, hooning is perhaps one of the most common of nuisance crimes reported. I continue to receive phone calls, letters and emails from residents about their frustrations in having to put up with the reckless behaviour of hoons resulting in distress and serious concern about the risks to life as well as the damage to public and private property that often result. Cracking down on hoons was certainly a promise I made to residents and it is most definitely an LNP platform for community safety through its Safer Streets Crime Action Plan. In the past, Ipswich and surrounding districts was unfairly tagged as a haven for hoons. Certainly, that has changed in recent times. I know that the vast majority of young drivers in my electorate and surrounds do the right thing. They take care of their vehicles and they do take care on the roads. Sadly, though, there is most definitely an element that is hellbent on doing the wrong thing. They turn our suburban streets into racetracks and quiet intersections and roundabouts into skid pans.

As my colleague the member for Broadwater and fellow member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee referred to, this past summer there was a tragedy wherein two young ladies, aged 16 and 17 years, lost their lives. Those two young girls were known to my family. My nephews went to school with them. It was very interesting, and I am sure that most members will remember the story. One of the girls in particular had a problem with reckless behaviour, including taking the family car, hooning and all sorts of things. Her father was desperate. He took his daughter along to the local police so that they could have a serious discussion with her about the ramifications of her actions. Sadly, that was to no avail. As a result of high speed, the car in which she was travelling was virtually torn apart. Very sadly, she was killed. That certainly is a very sad loss to the community in terms of the potential future of those two young ladies. I wonder whether she may have thought twice about sneaking out and taking her parents' car on the many occasions that she did so, if there had been the possibility that she could be caught and the car taken away so that the family had to do without it. That is something that we will never know. Certainly, that is just one of the many thousands of stories from across Queensland where hooning has resulted in the loss of life or, as I referred to earlier, people being maimed.

In my maiden speech I mentioned that we need to clean up our streets in every sense of the phrase. Hooning is dangerous, hooning is destructive and it has to be stopped. Hoons are a serious threat to the safety of every person on the road. We hear regularly of drivers losing control of their vehicles and the carnage that results, with people being maimed, lives lost and families torn apart. It is no secret that the vast majority of hooning incidents involve young people, particularly young men. As a father of teenage and younger children, I feel a strong sense of personal responsibility to see something done to stamp out hooning.

Later this year our own daughter, Charlotte, will come of age and will begin the process of learning to drive. Some of her friends have already reached that milestone. I am sure every one of them understands the responsibilities associated with gaining a driver's licence. I take every opportunity to talk to them about that when they visit or when I am dropping Charlotte off at the various parties and other things she goes to. Nevertheless, like all parents, Nicky and I worry about the prospect of our children being on the road, not so much because of things that they might do but because there is every chance that they could get into a car with someone who wants to show off or, through a lack of judgement, does something silly. They could find themselves in a collision with someone who is doing the wrong thing. Personally, I want to take every step possible to ensure our roads are as safe as they can be, for my own children and also for those many families with children approaching that age in my community.

Hooning does not have to be a part of our modern society. We must do whatever is possible to prevent these offences and punish those convicted with sentences and sanctions that, indeed, meet community expectations. On the many occasions in this parliament, we have spoken about people being fed up with a soft approach on crime, the slap on the wrist or however you want to put it. The primary role of the bill is to address hooning by introducing the nation's toughest anti-hooning laws, appropriately punishing those responsible through both practical and meaningful sanctions and, most importantly, giving our police the powers they need to effectively combat and deal with these crimes where they occur, which is on our streets.

Important aspects of the bill include increasing the penalties for a type 1 vehicle impoundment to 90 days for a first offence and forfeiture for a subsequent offence. It includes evade police offences and high-end speeding where the speed involved is in excess of 40 kilometres per hour above the speed limit as type 1 and type 2 offences respectively. The bill increases type 2 impoundment penalties to seven days for the second offence, 90 days for the third offence and forfeiture of the

vehicle for any subsequent type 2 offence. As one of our members so aptly put it, you would have to be pretty thick to forfeit your vehicle, having already committed three offences, and have that vehicle impounded. I really hope that the message gets through because, as I said earlier, it is not always the hoon who suffers. It can be innocent people, and most certainly their families and the wider community.

A number of changes will streamline the process by which impoundments are applied and the methods by which impoundments occur. Importantly, there are provisions under which certain people may apply for the release of an impounded vehicle and to allow such applications to be appealable. I am pleased by the bill and its potential application in my community. I firmly believe it will go a long way in dealing with hoons and deterring such behaviour.

I take a moment now to talk about car enthusiasts, as did the member for Broadwater. The member for Toowoomba North is as passionate as I am about defending people who do the right thing. The car enthusiast group represents a large number of Queenslanders who are passionate about and take pride in their vehicles. They participate in shows and competitions, they are organised and they do so with pride. When I was young and my wife and I were first courting, we used to go to the Wintersun Festival at Coolangatta. It was a great way to celebrate the Queen's Birthday long weekend.

Mr Berry interjected.

Mr CHOAT: No, and we did not use the back seat. People get such enjoyment out of those cars—the gleaming enamel and restoring old vehicles. I used to look in wonder at the work that these people did and their painstaking effort to get their cars into such shape. They must love that work. These are the people we mean when we talk about car enthusiasts. Car enthusiasts and hoons are often mistaken as being the one group. That is really sad. I think we really have to appreciate that we all have different passions and interests in life. Some people just love their cars.

At my local shows we often have ute shows. I am looking forward to this year's shows, particularly the Lowood show. I think they had the most spectacular ute show last year.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr CHOAT: I take the interjection from the member for Beaudesert. The Marburg show will certainly feature some very classy utes. We will see them in the main arena. I look forward to having a look at those cars and their flags and seeing the interest they generate, particularly among the younger generation.

Many of these people are members of groups such as ACMC Queensland who work hard as part of the wider motor industry. I have had the pleasure of meeting with ACMC representatives and was very impressed by their positive attitude and goodwill. The members of ACMC want to do the right thing. I know that this is the feeling of the vast majority of enthusiasts.

We must support these responsible citizens with their pastime and their passion for the industry. They play an important part in the wider motor vehicle industry and contribute much to related small businesses in terms of work on vehicles, custom modifications to vehicles and the purchase of accessories.

Growing up my two older brothers were both car enthusiasts. My middle brother used to drive an SLR 5000 Torana with the flair kit and all the trims. I remember travelling out to Texas with him one weekend. My family is from Texas out on the Downs. It was quite an interesting trip. He loved his car. He really respected it. He would clean it and polish it up every week. It looked fantastic. My other brother is a member of the Monaro club.

I was a bit of a black sheep in that respect. I was not particularly worried about what the car I drove looked like. As long as it was a Hilux ute, everything was fine. I must admit that I still drive a Hilux ute today, which does cause a few looks when I go out. People say, 'Is that your electorate car?' I have to explain that we do not actually have an electorate car per se but that is my ute and I love it. It suits my purposes very well. Certainly and quite seriously, I understand—

Mr Cripps: Is it a four-wheel drive?

Mr CHOAT: No, it is not a four-wheel drive. It is just a little two-wheel drive, a dual cab.

Mr Cripps: A tray back?

Mr CHOAT: A tray back—most definitely. Style side does not suit my purposes. I thank the honourable member for his interjections and his interest in my Hilux.

Quite seriously, growing up and seeing how car enthusiasts, whether they are in a recognised group or not, look after their vehicles, I know that they do not want to waste money on replacing their tyres or risk damaging their paint work. They want to go out and drive them. Even if they have a loud engine most people really take care where they rev them up. I would have to say that they do not want to attract undue attention to themselves other than show their mates.

In the Ipswich region we are very lucky to have Willowbank. There is a lot of opportunity for enthusiasts out there at the higher end of interest. I am hopeful that in the future we can support even more opportunities for car enthusiasts to go along and participate. Most importantly, I would like to see an opportunity for wider stakeholder groups such as residents and police to be involved in that in order to bring those groups together.

To reassure our great car enthusiasts out there, the bill makes it plain and it is quite simple. It is not so much what a person's car looks like; it is what they do with it that matters. I am mindful that sometimes there may be instances where an officer passes a car and says, 'That looks to me like it may not be an appropriate modification and may be illegal.' I think any reasonable person who was stopped and had a police officer look at their vehicle would be fine with that. Everything being well, the officer would say, 'Thank you, sir, or thank you, madam, on your way.' I am sure that reasonable people would not mind police taking a look at their car because, at the end of the day, there are people who do whatever the hell they want and their modifications bring a bad name to car enthusiasts and to that part of the motor vehicle industry.

I am very keen to work in my community on some opportunities that could be presented in terms of road safety and driver education to bring about an understanding for residents, law enforcement people, drivers and enthusiasts alike. Based on discussions I have had with ACMC, there is a will and drive for them to get involved in other aspects of driver education and safety. I am pleased to say that when I met with them they were very open to some of the ideas that I mentioned. I talked about strategies we might talk about implementing to assist with the discharging of powers and responsibilities by the relevant authorities. I look forward to discussing those with a wider group, including the police.

Most importantly—and I think the thing that we really have to focus on here—the bill will ensure tough and, I believe, appropriate penalties for those who are misusing vehicles, terrorising local communities and misusing our roads. Roads are intended for us to get safely from point A to point B, to get to and from work, to go out or to go for a Sunday drive. We certainly do not want the aftermath of hooning.

I applaud the Minister for Police and Community Safety and his department for the work done in this important area. I am grateful to the minister as I understand how he feels about this. I know that he understands my electorate and the great Ipswich region. I know that I speak on behalf of the Ipswich West community when I say, 'Thank you so much for bringing this forward because it is legislation that is going to make a difference in terms of safety in our community.' I look forward to the benefits the legislation will bring. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (5.16 pm): I rise today to provide a short contribution to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I congratulate the Minister for Police and Community Safety on the introduction of this bill that honours the Newman government's election promise to Queenslanders to deliver the toughest anti-hooning legislation in the country. I acknowledge the work of my colleagues and the research team on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in the examination process and thank all the individuals and bodies who made submissions.

This bill addresses the concerning issue of hooning in our local communities—the antisocial and high-risk driving behaviour that is occurring on our streets that endangers not only the offenders but puts communities, businesses and property in jeopardy. The Bulimba electorate is certainly not immune to this type of behaviour and a number of local streets see this type of antisocial activity occurring on a too regular basis. In fact, across the South Brisbane district in 2012 we saw 21 type 1 offences with 15 vehicles impounded and 2,991 type 2 offences with 451 vehicles impounded. Unfortunately, that is over 3,000 offences too many.

Road safety is an aspect of Australian society that affects each and every one of us. We all in this chamber can relate to the experiences of hearing the latest story of a tragic car accident involving a Queensland—young or old. That familiar sick feeling surfaces as we think of their families and

friends—that feeling of their pain yet feeling so distant from the trauma, trapped by a perception that something like that would never happen to us or one of our family members or friends. However, it still serves as an important reminder of how easily cars can become weapons and how we can never be too cautious on the roads.

This is why we as a government are committed to delivering on road safety initiatives to reduce the road toll. The challenge is improving safety in difficult traffic situations that can be caused by intersections, tough conditions, congestion, blind spots and inexperienced drivers. My heart really goes out to people whose lives have been affected by car accidents. Often they are not their fault; they were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

So it really is a kick in the guts and a rude slap in the face when I travel across the Bulimba electorate and talk to constituents who report incidents of hooning—individuals who brazenly get in their car, drive recklessly, intentionally endangering their lives and especially others. They take for granted their life and fail to consider the potentially fatal consequences for the innocent bystanders and their property—all for the thrill, the adrenaline rush, the deceptive feeling of power behind the steering wheel.

Our government has committed through the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan to introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. This bill does just that through amending the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Corrective Services Act 2006. The amendments included in this bill will see offenders off our roads at least temporarily, with repeat offenders off our roads permanently. It introduces a two-strike penalty for serious offenders, demonstrating our government's zero tolerance for recklessness. This behaviour will no longer be taken lightly or tolerated. I can vouch for the citizens of the Bulimba electorate who are all too tired of the slap on the wrist the current system gives perpetrators. By the former government's own admission, hooning laws were too weak. It did not improve the situation and hooners were not deterred.

The current type 1 vehicle related offences in the vehicle impoundment process include any of the following that involves a speed trial, race or burn out: dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, careless driving of a motor vehicle, racing and speed trials on roads, wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke. Type 2 offences include driving an uninsured motor vehicle, driving of a motor vehicle without a driver's licence, driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle while over the high alcohol limit, failing to supply specimen of breath or blood and driving while on a 24-hour suspension and driving a non-conforming vehicle.

Previously the first type 1 offence would result in a standard 48-hour impoundment and the second would receive an additional three months impoundment. However, that could only be determined via an application to the court. On the third strike the vehicle would be forfeited but only when the courts ruled it to be so. However, these cats with nine lives will receive a rude shock when they realise that they have run out of chances with our two-strike system implementation. The proposed changes in this bill are a lot less forgiving, with the first type 1 offence seeing a 90-day impoundment period with proceedings beginning simply from a traffic infringement notice. The second offence in the space of five years would result in the forfeiture of the vehicle. We are not stuffing around. Hooning is an illegal activity and there is no excuse. Driving is a privilege, not a right.

This bill also amends the act to include 'evade police' and 'high-end speeding' as type 1 and type 2 vehicle related offences respectively. It also sees the introduction of additional measures as an alternative to impounding vehicles, such as clamping, removal of numberplates and vehicle production notices.

Two particular amendments are worth noting. Firstly, the previous vehicle impoundment scheme dictated that repeat offences must have been offences of the same kind for type 2 vehicle related offences. The amendments remove this requirement and repeat type 2 offences will not have to be the same offence to entail impoundment or forfeiture of the vehicle. This change recognises that repeat offences in this category demonstrate a driver's careless and irresponsible behaviour regardless of whether it is the same offence or not. The change will give offenders less room to move, improving safety on our roads.

Secondly, the bill allows police to take action against offending drivers by infringement notice rather than by arrest or a notice to appear. Currently, after charging a driver with an impounding offence, the police have 48 hours to apply to the Magistrates Court to have the vehicle become the subject of an impounding or forfeiture order. Under the new scheme, vehicles will be impounded or forfeited automatically upon an offender being charged. This shifts the impoundment regime from

being part of a court process to an administrative process as the police may proceed to actual impoundment and forfeiture without any supervision by a court. As the committee noted, it is expected that the QPS will develop appropriate internal policies to assist its members in the operation of the new provisions to avoid inconsistencies from occurring and ensuring officers are all on the same page when enforcing these provisions.

I would also like to draw to the attention of the House that it takes an average of eight hours for an officer to currently complete an application to the court for an impoundment or forfeiture order. Multiply that by 10,000 impoundments over 2012 and that is a huge cost to the state. It would be much better served to have those fine police officers out on the beat being more proactive and undertaking other crime-fighting activities and prevention initiatives. Just in the South Brisbane district based on the 2012 numbers that equates to 466 eight-hour shifts taken up by red tape or just under an extra 1½ officers on the beat per year.

I would also like to discuss a number of submissions received by the committee which were from car enthusiasts. They were particularly concerned that they will be targeted under these new laws, especially the type 2 offences of driving a non-conforming vehicle. I believe it is worth noting that at our public hearing the QPS indicated that over the course of 2012, of the 49,000-plus tickets that were issued, there were 10,000 impoundments and only 23 of those were for illegal modifications or non-conforming vehicles. That is just 0.2 per cent.

The bill, however, does have protections available and provides for the commissioner to release impounded or immobilised motor vehicles upon application by the owner or usual driver in certain circumstances including if the impoundment offence occurred without the owner's consent; if the impoundment will cause severe financial or physical hardship; or if the impoundment offence has been remedied or the commissioner considers the impoundment or the immobilising of the motor vehicle to be unreasonable.

This amendment strikes the appropriate balance between reducing red tape and maintaining citizens' rights to have their matters appropriately reviewed if they consider that they have not been dealt with appropriately. We are burning out the burnouts, we are straightening out the doughnuts and we are putting the brakes on hoons. I congratulate the Minister for Police and Community Safety once again for the delivery of this election commitment. The Newman government is a government that does deliver. I also commend the Minister for Police and Community Safety for supporting all four of the recommendations made by the committee in our report No. 24. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (5.26 pm): This legislation is much desired by many residents of my electorate of Gaven whose lives have been almost irreversibly changed forever by drivers who have little concern for others. This legislation is a proportionate response to what most feel is totally unacceptable behaviour by some drivers who misunderstand repeatedly what a carriageway or a shared road is and how to behave according to the rules, including fairness to others. The legislation is critically addressing vehicle impoundment leading to forfeiture. There are some weaknesses and I might even suggest to the minister that this legislation might be seen as one of a series of steps.

The details of the legislation are quite intricate as one might imagine they would have to be for dealing with the property of some whose life's investment is now their car, at a time when gen Y are not buying houses and objects are a greater part of how they express themselves. I will discuss the details of the legislation a little more closely, but in the light of the problems some of my constituents have faced over many years, particularly one group over 20 years, it might be easier to understand that.

One constituent has assisted police by videoing offenders and obtaining convictions in over 500 cases—some trivial, many in between and some serious. He is a severely disabled man who has a young family. He lives very close to a well-known thoroughfare near a primary school of all things. It has four roundabouts interspaced along its length. The roadway was primarily driven by the now Leader of the House when he was one of the councillors; he would know the road well. This gentleman has everything from drifters, and an organised group of drifters—these are people who go around roundabouts—to a variety of people doing burnouts, doughnuts and car races. The offenders range from young to extremely older people of all things, and a few of them are women. His house has been fire bombed. He has been threatened personally and also in person and by mail. He has been told that he would be dealt with if he stayed. Despite a huge effort from our local police, led by Senior Sergeant Peter Gordon and at differing times also by Senior Sergeant Steve St George and a variety of others, we have had varying success.

These people use scanners. They use dark web things on the internet to share their information. They use advanced radio communications to try to defeat any attempts to convict them. In other words, to get them you have to go to so much trouble. Anyway, it is worth it and I think this sort of legislation can assist the police once they have got them.

We have been trying for many years to get sufficient evidence to convict these people. Largely, they are recidivist offenders, as has been mentioned. In many cases they are not necessarily recidivists because you cannot always catch them at the time. That is the most critical step: you have to get the evidence and that is not easy. Very few people trying to catch these offenders are willing to videotape the offenders. When it rains smoke is not produced, and 'smoke' is contained in this critical provision that we need to change. We need to remove the provision that says that when they spin their wheels and they do not smoke that means there is no offence as opposed to when they smoke there is an offence. As I say, you have to be very quick to catch them because they run at high speed.

These people tend to offend at all times of the day. Most offenders tend to offend in the middle of the night when residents are asleep or literally eating dinner. They are driving these people crazy. Unfortunately, the dumber ones tend to commit the offences at the same time every day.

Debate, on motion of Dr Douglas, adjourned.

MOTION

Commission of Audit



Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (5.30 pm): I move—

That this House:

- notes it is now 47 days since the secret Costello audit report was presented to the government;
- notes the Premier committed to finally reading the secret report at Easter; and
- calls on the Premier to outline to the House the report's 155 secret recommendations and the impact they will have on jobs and services.

It has been 305 days since the government released the interim Costello report and 137 days since the government received the second instalment of the final Costello report in November last year. That is 137 days now that this government has sat on the interim report—interim recommendations that were devised before the full report was completed, according to this government. It is not often that recommendations predate a report being written. It is like reaching a conclusion before you have undertaken a thorough analysis. The words 'made to order' certainly do spring to mind. However, it is not surprising coming from Peter Costello, whose lobbying firm was representing companies interested in finding government outsourcing work. It is also not surprising how little interest has been shown by members of this government in reading the final report, because they already know what is in it.

It also helps to explain the clear bias in the interim Costello report towards privatisation and outsourcing, a report that stated that the only way to lower debt—as promised by the LNP before the election—was to privatise \$25 billion to \$30 billion worth of assets. Before the election the LNP promised that this Commission of Audit would find ways to pay down debt, but did not mention asset sales.

It has now been 47 days since the final Costello report has been provided to the government and yet it still refuses to share it with Queenslanders. Instead, we have had a media managed process with the release of an executive summary. I have heard of oppositions being accused of playing 'small target', but for a government this really is bordering on the absurd.

The Premier came out pretending to be opposed to asset sales and privatisation, attempting to play the good cop while the Treasurer plays the pro-privatisation bad cop. This comes from the same Premier who when in opposition told the *Weekend Australian* in March 2011, 'Just because you own the power grid doesn't mean that you can't have a private sector firm maintaining the power grid for you.' What else did the Premier say? The Premier said, 'And there is no need for a government port authority to own a coal terminal.' I will be watching closely for recommendations on the privatisation of Gladstone Ports Corporation. This was an interview where we saw some rare honesty from this Premier. In the same interview the Premier said he planned to cut the Public Service. It is a pity that this flash of honesty was then later retracted by the Premier. As Queenslanders went to the polls in March the following year he was promising no forced redundancies and no asset sales—promises that the LNP never intended to keep. The Premier is so sure of the findings of the final Costello report that he has failed to read it, even on his own undertakings. He set himself until 11 March to read the

report and then told us just prior to Easter that he would sit down and read it over the break. The Premier has been procrastinating because he already knows the predetermined conclusions for privatisation, asset sales and outsourcing.

While the LNP could not make the effort to be honest about their intentions prior to the election, they were busy scheming up an explanation to be given after the election as to why they misled Queenslanders. In November 2011 the Treasurer held an LNP fundraising event with none other than Peter Costello, one of several LNP fundraising events with the former federal Treasurer prior to the election in both Melbourne in November 2011 and again in Brisbane in March 2012. The event in Brisbane was even reported in the *Courier-Mail* on 3 March 2012. I suppose that once again the Premier's defence will be to attack the media, just as he did in defence of the member for Redcliffe, in his attempt to deny any responsibility for his actions. Then, surprise, surprise, just four days after the March 2012 election, the Treasurer appointed his fundraising mate to head up his so-called 'independent' Commission of Audit—a Liberal Party activist with a track record on asset sales, having overseen the privatisation of \$72 billion in assets under the Howard government. How independent! Imagine the reaction from those opposite if the Labor Party in Queensland had appointed Paul Keating to a similar task. We would never hear the end of it. But apparently that is okay when you are the LNP.

Just as this government is refusing to release the final Costello report, it also refuses to release the list of donors who attended those fundraising events. This is a genuine issue of openness and accountability which this government has failed with a capital F. How can Queenslanders have any confidence in the recommendations of the final Costello report when they have no knowledge of who attended LNP fundraisers with Mr Costello prior to the election? Thanks to the Australian government register of lobbyists, we have at least been made aware of the names of companies being represented by Peter Costello's lobbying firm. It is worth noting here that the claims by Mr Costello's firm that they had not represented these companies since November 2012 placed them under the attention of staff overseeing the register of lobbyists for not having updated their register accordingly. Let me make it clear for the Treasurer about the findings of the CMC in relation to Mr Costello: a matter falling outside an organisation's jurisdiction does not mean that no conflict of interest exists or that no wrongdoing has occurred. The clear bias towards asset sales and privatisation in the final Costello report is already evident in the wording of the executive summary that has been released so far. The summary makes the alarmist claim that a one per cent fiscal surplus would take 50 years to repay \$25 billion of debt. This calculation is made by making the assumption that there will be no growth in revenue or inflation and that Queensland's economy and population will not grow over the next 50 years. While we have seen state final demand contract by 0.8 per cent from the June to December quarter last year under the LNP, I hope that it is not LNP policy to have flatlining economic growth. This is a key assumption used to justify the claim that debt can only be paid down through asset sales.

The report goes on to make the claim that there has been a disturbing decline in Queensland's and Australia's multifactor productivity since 2007-08 and that this will contribute to lower per capita economic growth over the next 40 years. What the report selectively fails to mention—and it is outlined in Queensland Treasury's *Queensland productivity update: 2011-12*—is that this fall in multifactor productivity reflects a period of strong infrastructure investment in the water grid, in the electricity grid and also in mining as resources became more challenging to extract. That is investment that coincided with the onset of the worst global financial crisis since the Great Depression—investment that assisted to keep Queensland's unemployment rate under six per cent, not at levels of six per cent and over as seen under this LNP government, investment that will lift Queensland's multifactor productivity over the next decade.

The selective inclusion of information and the assumptions used in the executive summary indicate a continuation of the inherent bias from the interim report which dreamed up fictional debt scenarios. Another concerning aspect of the executive summary is the claims that the government should not impose any policy requirements on government owned corporations. Policy requirements currently include the uniform tariff policy, which ensures that regional electricity users do not pay more and lowers costs for the public transport network. The executive summary of the Costello report discusses privatising and outsourcing social services, including our healthcare and education systems, which will disadvantage those who cannot afford to pay. These proposals are contrary to our core Labor values of fairness and equality of opportunity. Nobody voted for privatising health and

education services and nobody voted for a Costello document aimed at selling off our way of life and driving up our cost of living. Just as nobody voted to sack more than 14,000 government workers in this state because—ding, ding, ding—the Premier said before the election that public servants had ‘nothing to fear’ from the LNP.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr PITT: I will say that again for the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition. Nobody voted to sack more than 14,000 government workers in this state before the election. The Premier did not say that before the election. He did say that public servants had ‘nothing to fear’ under the LNP. This was the first of many times that the LNP has breached the trust of Queenslanders and I do not believe it is going to be the last.

The motion today is all about making sure that this government does what it should do, and that is release the final Costello report for all to read, to be undertaking some independent analysis to ensure that people have a really clear view. It is time that they were honest with Queenslanders and released the report in full so that Queenslanders can look through all 155 recommendations, line by line, to see what it may mean for them. It is time that Queenslanders see this report for what it truly is: a made-to-order, taxpayer funded ‘set them up, knock them down’ diversion straight from the tory play book.

It is interesting to note that the Premier is not participating in this debate. I hope that he does make an appearance, because this motion is aimed fairly and squarely at him. The decisions that he made before the election and the promises that he made to Queenslanders before the election are at the heart of this debate and so it is disappointing to see that he may not be speaking in this debate.

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the shadow Treasurer. I note with interest that today the Premier launched his annual reading challenge, encouraging children across the state to read as much as they can, to learn from what they read and to enjoy literature. I remember as a child, probably like many other members, the joy of immersing myself in a story and the wonder of discovering that the written word was something to be valued. A love of books is a gift to be instilled in a child. How ironic that the Premier should be encouraging reading. How insincere that today he quoted a book he read with the Minister for Education—a book called *Library Lily*. He said—

The trouble was, once Lily started to read, she couldn't stop.

The Premier should practise what he preaches. Once he got the Costello report in his hands he should have kept reading until the end. For the past 47 days this Premier has kept a document that almost every Queenslander would be interested in reading under wraps in his bottom drawer. I find it incredible that the Premier, despite being asked on numerous occasions, has admitted that he took his good time reading the Costello report. It took days. It took weeks. He did not practise what he preached. I find it incredible that it would not have been his top priority for reading, that it was not at the top of his list of books to read. In fact, almost seven weeks after receiving it, he has apparently only just got around to finishing it.

We do not know what is in this secret report, but I can only assume from the Premier's effort that the Costello report does not make very compelling reading at all. It cannot be much of a page turner. If the Premier has been working his way through it for a total of 47 days, it must not do much to hold the reader's attention.

What we do know is that this is the document that the Premier and the Treasurer will use to chart Queensland's economic future. That is a future that we can be assured will involve a wholesale sell-off of our state assets, a program of widespread sackings and job losses and a wholesale axing of essential services that Queenslanders hold so dear. It is a future that will take this government's slash-and-burn program to a new level of calamity.

We do not know the full extent to which this government intends to further plunder and pillage Queensland in any great detail because the Premier continues to refuse to tell Queenslanders what is in the report. He refuses to show them what is contained in the report prepared by Peter Costello, a man who can in no way be described, as the government describes him, as independent. He himself has declined to read it.

Why the lack of interest? Why the secrecy? What they have to hide is a report that will in all likelihood set out in explicit detail their long held and long planned for desire for mass privatisation and outsourcing of public services. It will put Queensland up for sale. We know that, because the person who wrote it has a track record of privatising \$72 billion in assets under the Howard government.

Mr Krause interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: If backbench members want to interject, perhaps they can interject on the Premier and Treasurer and ask them to release the report so that they can read it. The lot of them are being kept in the dark about this as well. They do not trust them enough to show them what is in the report. They are keeping silent.

We know that the same person who helped the LNP to fundraise with cash-for-access events prior to the 24 March election was suddenly hired to go through the state's books. And we know that the Premier has played a cruel waiting game with the people who elected him on the hollow promise to be open and accountable. It is not being very open or accountable if you are hiding a secret report. Forty-seven days have elapsed. Still we have not seen the secret Costello report. He is still hiding. I say to the Treasurer: this is a bad strategy. Whoever advised him to keep this report hidden from Queenslanders has given him the wrong advice.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (5.44 pm): I do not know where to start! First we had that enthralling eight minutes from the shadow Treasurer. The member could have spoken for 10 minutes but could only make it to eight on his own motion. So that is two minutes that he is already in deficit. And then the Leader of the Opposition had the hide to say that Peter Costello sold \$72 billion worth of assets. How much did the Labor Party sell without telling anyone they were going to sell assets? \$15 billion. We remember 15 May 2009, when we asked the then transport minister, 'What about the sale of Queensland Rail?' and she said it would not be sold. It is a field so rich in pickings that I wish there were 14 members opposite. I move—

That all words after 'House' be deleted and the following words inserted:

- notes it is 388 days since the 2012 election and Labor has failed to promote or suggest one policy since promising to do so at the Queensland Council of Unions' Labour Day dinner 347 days ago;
- notes that Labor planned to incur \$85 billion in debt by 30 June 2015 and debt was heading to \$100 billion;
- notes the independent commission of audit's first report was released in full and a briefing provided to all opposition members;
- notes the executive summary of the final report was released on the day of delivery;
- notes the final report will be released together with the government's response within two months of receipt as stated by the Premier and Treasurer; and
- endorses the Newman government's fiscal strategy, initiatives to lower the cost of living and actions to ensure that Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.

In a speech to the Queensland Council of Unions' Labour Day dinner on 4 May 2012 the opposition leader, Anastacia Palaszczuk, announced that the TJ Ryan Foundation was being established to support the policy development of the decimated Queensland Labor Party. You can imagine my surprise when 347 days later I discovered that neither the opposition nor the much lauded TJ Ryan Foundation has made any substantive policy announcement. Earlier today I did a little further digging. I thought, 'I will see what the TJ Ryan Foundation has been up to.' What has it been doing in almost a year since it was announced?

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: I appreciate the enthusiasm with the interjections across the chamber, but I ask the House to come to order. I call the Treasurer.

Mr NICHOLLS: A simple search of the ALP's website for the TJ Ryan Foundation reveals—wait for it—absolutely nothing. What has happened to the great policy think tank? I table a report from one o'clock today on the great work of the TJ Ryan Foundation in the 347 days since it was established.

Tabled paper: Printout of www.queenslandlabor.org webpage, dated 16 April 2013, regarding search for 'TJ Ryan Foundation' [2437].

For the past 388 days the Newman government has embarked on a reform process to rebuild the state's finances and to turn the Queensland Public Service into the most efficient Public Service in the nation. Madam Speaker, you would think any credible Queensland based think tank would be involved in the public debate around those important reforms. But where is the TJ Ryan Foundation? It is nowhere to be heard.

I recall that they were going to fund it themselves. They were going to get \$15,000 from the Labor Party, they were going to get \$5,000 from the Queensland Council of Unions and they were all going to cough up \$5,000 amongst themselves to support it, to give it a base to start from. It sounds

eerily reminiscent of Mr Scott and the \$100,000 he was going to spend on push polling throughout the state. It has got about the same result—nothing so far! Once again, the ALP confuses spending money with actually getting something done. They have not done a thing.

This is the most well funded, laziest opposition that Queensland has ever seen. I thought I would have a look at the service delivery statement relating to the opposition. There are budgeted positions for 22 staff for seven opposition members. How much money do they have to spend in a full year? They have \$3.44 million. That is \$200,000 more than the previous opposition. That is nearly \$500,000 each. What have they produced? Not a zap. There is nothing to show for it—no questions, no policy, no plan for future.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: The challenge for those opposite is to say what they would do, and they do not know because they do not have a plan.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: The TJ Ryan Foundation is about as effective as their policy work. There is a lot of talk but no outcome.

Madam SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, there are members shouting and screeching to my left and I am warning members on my left to give the opportunity to members on their feet the chance to be heard appropriately.

Mr GULLEY (Murrumba—LNP) (5.49 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Before referring to my notes, I want to expand on the interjection made by the member for Chatsworth, who referred to the story *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. May I comment on the seven economic dwarfs to my right and nominate my good friend the member for Mulgrave as Dopey. Before I explore the amendment as moved by the Treasurer, I want to point out a matter of fact of the motion moved by the shadow Treasurer where he called the Costello audit report a secret report. I went to the *Macquarie Dictionary* and found what the word ‘secret’ means—made or conducted without the knowledge of others, kept from knowledge, designed to escape observation. Goodness gracious me! If the member for Mulgrave has only just stumbled across the biggest secret in Queensland politics, he should find another job!

Returning to the Treasurer’s amendment, I remind the House that it is 388 days since the 2012 election and the member for Mulgrave and Labor have failed to utter a single comment or policy to address the debt burden that they planned to thrust upon the Queensland public of \$85 billion by 2015, with the debt hurtling towards \$100 billion if left unchanged. Continuing on with my secret comments from before, the Costello report is hardly secret, with the independent commission’s audit first report being published in its entirety and a full briefing given to the opposition. The executive summary of the final report was published on the day for members and the final report will be issued with the government’s response within two months.

I support the Treasurer’s fiscal strategy initiatives to lower the cost of living and actions to ensure that Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. I remind the chamber of Labor’s DNA which created a debt-ridden state. Contrast this to the Newman government, which believes in living within our means and its plan to pay down the debt and, importantly, regain a AAA credit rating. I remind the chamber that the 2014-15 gross borrowings will be \$80.6 billion rather than the \$85.46 billion as forecast by the ALP, nor will the state reach the \$100 billion as forecast by the COA if we had remained business as usual. I am assuming to hear howls of protest—we have already had that—from members on my right, but note that I am sitting in the space that the shadow cabinet usually occupies. Unlike the opposition, which, for a number of reasons, is incapable of making hard decisions—a party intent on burdening today’s children with debt and reduced services—the LNP makes hard decisions which will benefit our society.

I compliment the Minister for Education for *Great teachers = great results: a direct action plan for Queensland schools* and note that this will cost the Treasurer some \$525 million over four years to ensure all Queensland children are given an opportunity for quality education. I also want to compliment the Minister for Sport and Treasurer for the Get in the Game initiative that will cost some \$48 million and provide some great grassroots sporting opportunities for young Queensland and Murrumba children. Without hard decisions, the Newman government could not have responsibly provided those valuable and life-changing benefits. I support the revised motion of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade.

 **Mr MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.54 pm): It has been 47 days since the Newman government received the final Costello report and the people of Queensland who paid \$2 million for the report have been denied the right to read it. Today we called on the Premier to explain what is contained in the Costello report, as he refuses to release it publicly and also refuses to release it to his own backbenchers. This shows how little trust the LNP leadership of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer have in their own backbench. They will not even let their colleagues read a report supposedly written by one of their own mates, Peter Costello. This is assuming, of course, that the Premier has read the final Costello 1,000-page report containing 155 recommendations. I note that on 5 March the Premier said he would read the Costello report in the next five days, so unless he was misleading the public when he made this statement the Premier should have finished reading the report more than a month ago and so he and his cabinet colleagues are in a perfect position to brief us on the Costello report contents.

I note that most of the speakers tonight are backbenchers despite them not having access to the report. How can they enlighten us of its contents if they have not read it? Their participation in this debate is preposterous. Instead of the Premier or any of the ministers who have read the report, speaking, what do they have to hide? Why is the Premier keeping the final Costello report secret for so long? Could it be to fit in with his Mackay summit and Queensland Plan time frame? Despite an assertion from the government that the Mackay summit will be apolitical, the LNP's ulterior motive is to sell its Costello report of privatisation to the 400 attendees of the Mackay summit as its future vision for Queensland.

The Premier has already flagged that he plans to finally publicly release the Costello report by the end of this month. This is just days before the Mackay summit of the Queensland Plan. The Premier will use the event to promote and sell the politically motivated recommendations. What we do know is that the final Costello report will be a made-to-order excuse for mass privatisation of our public assets and we know the LNP government has already begun this process by privatising services such as health through outsourcing. The Costello report executive summary flags privatising all of Queensland utilities including electricity assets, water and sewerage services and transport infrastructure including rail, roads and ports and the government owned corporations. The executive summary also proposes privatising vital front-line services including health, education, prisons, police and courts.

The LNP government is basically flogging off Queensland to the highest bidder. The privatisation of our front-line services means that Queenslanders will have to pay to access health and education in this state. We all know that privatisation, particularly of our front-line services, will lead to higher costs for the community and more job cuts. Despite the fact that the LNP government has already started privatising our health system through outsourcing, the Premier has ruled out privatisation without an electoral mandate. So what can the Premier do? He will have a \$2 million taxpayer funded Costello report recommending mass privatisation in the public domain. His only choice will be to go to an early election to attempt to get a mandate to sell off Queensland assets.

The time frame fits nicely with the LNP Queensland Plan time line: end of April, release the Costello report; 10 May, the Mackay summit where the LNP starts the public promotion of the Costello report, including politically motivated justification for mass privatisation; June, July and August, LNP MPs engage with their communities on the Queensland Plan—that is, LNP MPs attempt to sell the Costello report to their electorates; October, the Brisbane summit for the Queensland Plan where the LNP reports back on its promotion of the Costello report; late 2013, the Queensland Plan is released proposing the recommendations contained in the Queensland Plan; cue to 2014, an early election where the Premier will attempt to get a mandate from the people of Queensland to flog off all our assets and privatise our services. The whole sham of the Queensland Plan is purely a ruse to soften Queenslanders to the ideas of mass privatisation. Be warned Queenslanders: the LNP will flog off everything. Be warned LNP government: Queenslanders do not like asset sales. Every LNP backbencher should be worried about this transparent plan by the LNP leadership team of the Premier, Deputy Premier and Treasurer and every LNP backbencher should be demanding to see the final Costello report.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.59 pm): I do not often say this, but I am absolutely lost for words.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I am going to do my best. We have just heard from the member opposite about the Queensland Plan. This was the member who did not want the Queensland Plan to be kicked off in his own electorate of Mackay. This is the member who has done nothing but bucket this plan all the way through to the extent that he did not want this parliament to invest some funds in his very own electorate. That is unbelievable.

I also find it difficult to believe the member for Mulgrave. I think he might have become confused, because he started to talk about reading things before they are released, or not reading things until after they are released, or something like that. He was having a go at the Treasurer and the Premier for not wanting to put something out in the marketplace without fully reading the document and understanding the document and coming to some conclusions. I will point something out to the member for Mulgrave. I ask him to go to the ALP website. As one of my colleagues has noted, the ALP website states five reasons to join the ALP. But the catch 22 is that, in order to read the five reasons, you have to be a member of the ALP. I am sorry—

Mr Mander: Genius!

Mr CRANDON: Genius. I was expecting to receive that interjection from my right. I take that interjection from my left. A moment ago the member for Southport pinched one of my lines when he said, 'Pot, kettle, black.' I kicked him for it because I was about to use it to describe the way the Labor opposition has been going on for the past 388 days in telling us all of the things that we used to tell them that they were not doing right. Now, they are telling us that we are not doing them right. The difference is that, then, we were making sense in that when they came to office in 2009 Queensland had an \$85 billion debt. Two weeks after coming to office the ALP decided that it was going to sell \$17 billion worth of assets. After \$17 billion worth of assets were sold, where did we end up?

An opposition member interjected.

Mr CRANDON: The member was told to stop screeching earlier. Please continue to stop screeching. Where did we end up? We sold \$17 billion in assets and we ended up with \$85 billion worth of debt. Hang on. There is something wrong here. It is obvious that the members opposite cannot count. They are saying that it has been 47 days since the Costello report was released. They were told 47 days ago that the Premier and the Treasurer are going to release the report in two months. Two months is around about 60 or 62 days, depending on when we started and when we finished. At the moment, the member for Mulgrave is trying to work that out. That is 13 or 14 days away. That is another two weeks away. It is nothing like the 10 May that they carry on about.

I now get to the bit where I have something to say—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I had nothing to say a minute ago. I was just pointing out all the errors that the members opposite were making. I make this very clear point: \$85 billion—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr CRANDON: The member for South Brisbane should stop screeching. Under her government, \$85 billion worth of debt was forecast. In the same period, under our government the forecast is \$80 billion of debt. We are going to reduce the debt by \$5 billion in that same time line. How? By simply making the tough decisions that we have to make to move Queensland forward and the Queensland Plan is an important part of that. I say to the member for Mackay that we look forward to being in Mackay talking to his constituents in a few weeks time.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.04 pm): Waiting, waiting! The people of Queensland are still waiting! We have had the 28-page entree, but we are still waiting for the 1,000-page main course. It is now 47 days since the secret Costello audit report was presented to this government. And like Manuel from *Fawlty Towers*, the Treasurer has served up an odious entree, leaving the people of Queensland waiting with trepidation for the main course. Has the Premier met his commitment over Easter to digest this weighty \$2 million report? Was it a satisfying meal? Or were some of the 155 recommendations even too unpalatable for him? Come to think of it, he has looked a bit dyspeptic recently. I can only think that the Costello report is so bad that he has wind coming out both ends.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, that is unparliamentary and I ask that you withdraw it

Mrs MILLER: I withdraw it. This government, proud of budgeting for \$5.5 billion in cuts and closures over the next three years, has announced through the executive summary of the supposed audit that it intends to sell \$30 billion of public infrastructure and other assets and privatise as many

government services as it can get away with. These assets include our schools, our hospitals, our ports and our power generators. The pretence of public sector debt reduction and achieving a AAA credit rating is just a cover story for the radical ideology of Maggie Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. I ask members to remember the quotes—‘No such thing as society’ and ‘The market knows best’. What rot! This is just failed ideology, clung to by the extra-dry fringe of the Liberal Party and the Institute of Public Affairs fan club.

The Minister for Health’s so-called *Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland* read like a menu for a free marketeer’s feast. No wonder corporate vultures are circling the Queensland public health system. Who has the minister been dining with? Not just Ramsay Health Care but also Healthscope. Healthscope is listed on the Australian stock exchange. It was purchased in 2010 by two of the three largest private equity firms in the world, TPG and the Carlyle Group. The Carlyle Group has the dubious reputation of being a corporate raider and a US defence contractor linked to the Bush family and the bin Laden family.

So this is the nice company that our health minister keeps. Now, with the control of hundreds of billions of dollars in private funds, why would these venture capitalists be interested in health planning on the Gold Coast? I will go into this matter further in the week. But let us have a look—

Government members interjected.

Mrs MILLER: I will tell members why—because the minister wants to outsource the Gold Coast University Hospital. That is what it is about. These venture capitalists are interested only because they are going to make a profit out of it. So we have health planning for the Gold Coast and the rest of Queensland. That is what it is about. It is about profit before people.

In today’s *Courier-Mail* we read the news that Scott Driscoll MP turns 38 today. Manuel was going to deliver him a birthday cake right here at the parliament, but he could not be here.

Mr KRAUSE: I rise to a point of order. How are the comments of the member for Bundamba relevant to the motion at all?

Madam SPEAKER: I call the member for Bundamba to stay relevant to the motion before the House.

Mrs MILLER: Yes. What happened was that the LNP gave him a happy birthday cut of \$8,200 a year. The LNP should stop messing around. They should sack him and not suspend him. So there is no cake today; maybe porridge tomorrow.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.09 pm): I rise to offer my two cents tonight to this debate and to support the amendments moved by the Treasurer. One would have to say that to bring a bit of sense to this debate would be a good thing because those opposite clearly have no sense in bringing anything to this debate at all. Unlike the Labor Party we actually have a plan to pay down the debt and restore this state’s AAA rating. The only plan that the Labor Party had was \$85.4 billion worth of debt in 2014-15. We have made a significant change to that. We have brought it down to \$80.6 billion, which is a saving of \$1.38 billion in interest. One only has to ask how many extra police officers, ambulance officers and firemen can that employ? As we know, this government is all about front-line staff. This government has made the tough decisions, otherwise we would be looking at \$5.3 billion in interest annually because we were, as we have heard before, heading very swiftly for \$100 billion worth of debt had we not made the changes that this government has had the strength to make. We know it was business as usual for the Labor Party. They were heading very fast towards that \$100 billion worth of debt. They continue to bury their heads in the sand while the Newman government makes the tough decisions.

This government has moved to lower taxes. We have abolished the waste levy. We have increased the payroll tax threshold. We are working to reduce the cost of living. In my electorate of Burleigh cost of living is one of the major issues that people are concerned about. Their electricity prices, water prices and their rates have been going through the roof, brought about by the previous terrible Labor government. They were incompetent and we all know they were. We are also moving to reduce red tape, which is helping small businesses in my electorate, and we are fighting against stupid things like the carbon tax—that tax that our Prime Minister promised us we would never have. ‘Not under a government that I lead will there be a carbon tax.’, she said.

We promised during the 2012 election to turn this state around. That is exactly what we intend to do. We intend to take action against cost of living. In a previous life I ran a small business. I employed 50 to 60 people at a time. You can laugh all you like, member for South Brisbane, but I ran a small business. Did you? I employed people. I gave those people a wage to take home to feed their families. Unlike those opposite I know how to read a balance sheet. I know how to read a profit and loss statement. I would suggest to those opposite that they go and take some lessons because it is pretty simple when you do read a balance sheet to read what sort of state this state is in. It is no good being the best basket case in the world, is it? We need to be the best state in the world. It is no good being the best of a bad bunch, as those opposite would have people believe.

My mind goes back to a debate on the NDIS. When the member for Woodridge was asked where the money would come from for the NDIS she replied, 'It doesn't matter where the money comes from.' The previous Labor government did not seem to care where the money came from. Did they care where the money came from for the failed Traveston Dam? Did they care where the money came from for the \$9 billion water grid? Did they care where the money came from for the \$1.36 billion desalination plant on the Gold Coast? No, they did not care because it came from the bank. They never had a plan to pay that money back. Members opposite have stood up here tonight. Have any of them offered a plan in any fashion? We have not heard any plan whatsoever from those opposite. I understand that the member for South Brisbane will be next on the speaking list. She might know these words: 'Take your best shot.'

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (6.14 pm): When we are talking about the member for Burleigh, I do not need to pull out my best shot for that one. I join with my colleagues on this side of the House to rise in support of the motion of the Manager of Opposition Business presented here tonight. I also join in the comments made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in terms of how preposterous it has been here tonight to listen to one LNP backbencher after another get up and defend a report that they actually do not have access to, that they have not read. Mark Twain famously said, 'To succeed in life you need ignorance and confidence.' Quite clearly, what we have here in the LNP is both ignorance and confidence in spades.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I know the debate has been boisterous tonight, but I ask members to take it down a notch in regard to their interjections.

Ms TRAD: No wonder the member for Murrumba had to go to the *Macquarie Dictionary* to research his speech. He could not actually go to the report. It has not been released. This report has been a fix from the start and those opposite know it. It is a report where the first cut received such a bad response the next iteration, which contained all the recommendations, was handed over in private and it still remains private. This is a report where the recommendations, where the riding orders, were given to the government. They knew exactly what they would contain. Three months later the conclusions and finalisation of the report and the analysis has yet to be concluded. No wonder the Minister for Transport is moving as fast as a bullet train towards restructuring QR into a statutory authority under his total control. It is about fulfilling the Costello prophecy. When one considers Peter Costello, as an active Liberal Party political operative, is in charge of this so-called report it is hard to take the government's claims of independence seriously. He is a Liberal Party operative who assisted the Premier and Treasurer with their fundraising activities before the last state election; a Liberal Party operative whose own lobbying firm has direct financial benefit in representing companies angling for contracts to deliver outsourced government services; a Liberal Party operative who the Treasurer has admitted he had handpicked prior to the election to do this very special job for him; and a Liberal Party operative who oversaw the privatisation—

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order. I am quite happy to listen to a fair debate, but when they actually say the wrong thing I insist that they tread quite finely.

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr NICHOLLS: I find the member's comments offensive. They are not true and I ask that she withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: I ask the member to follow the standing orders and withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I am happy to withdraw but I do not know what he is referring to—which comments in particular he is referring to.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, in accordance with standing orders you have a choice to withdraw or be in breach of standing orders. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw whatever the Treasurer finds offensive but I stand by everything else I have said.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, you have been asked to withdraw comments on the basis of them being offensive. The standing orders are applied where that has to be unqualified. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms TRAD: Madam Speaker, I respect your ruling and guidance, but I am unsure what exactly the Treasurer has found offensive.

Madam SPEAKER: I will proceed to warn you under the standing orders if you do not comply with the precedent that has been set in this chamber and withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. And a Liberal Party operative who oversaw the privatisation of \$72 billion worth of assets under the Howard and Costello government. After reading the executive summary of the final Costello report, of which we all must be grateful was released on the day that it was received, it is not hard to see what those instructions were from the Premier and the Treasurer to their Liberal Party colleague. Page 8 is a table which outlines that, when it comes to privatisation, everything is up for grabs—everything other than the core services within Police and Justice. It also states that there is no universal rule on what should be publicly or privately owned or managed. Mr Costello would have been told—in fact, he probably already knew—that there were plenty of associates out there ready and willing to turn a quid out of providing the services government does now, like health and education. Under his model taxpayers now have the luxury of paying twice—firstly through government contracting out their services with their own money, making sure that a private profit margin is included, and then taxpayers can pay again directly to private providers when they then purchase the services for themselves. This is straight out of the Santo Santoro play book—the Treasurer's old political mentor—and we all remember what he did with licences for aged-care homes under the Howard-Costello government.

At page 11, the executive summary goes further, saying that services that are not privatised should then be provided by the not-for-profit sector. Another instruction straight from the LNP handbook: give them the contracts that the for-profit providers do not want and you can leverage off their bleeding-heart low-paid workers to get an outcome that you want. The Costello Commission of Audit has been a farce and a fix from the start and Queenslanders know it. It is time that the LNP releases the final audit report that Queenslanders have paid for and reveals the long-held deal that predated March 2012 to privatise and outsource as much of Queensland as their mates wanted.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (6.19 pm): I rise to speak to the amended motion put forward by the honourable Treasurer. It gives me great pleasure to sum up some of the inconsistent statements that have come from the other side of the chamber.

An honourable member: You've only got five minutes.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I do have only five minutes, so I will have to be quite quick. To put it in simple terms for the benefit of the shadow Treasurer, the report needed to be commissioned in the first place to work out what we, as a government, could do reasonably with the debt they and their colleagues left the people of Queensland. The member for Mulgrave used the phrase 'fictional debt scenarios' from the first report. I remind the member for Mulgrave that it was his colleague, a fictional Treasurer, who did not seem to understand good economic policies that enable the people of Queensland to have the money to build hospitals and decent roads, instead leaving the people of Queensland with enormous debts.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about the 47 days since this report has been handed down, which will enable our cabinet ministers, the Premier and the Treasurer to actually contemplate—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, member for Bundamba!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am sorry, Madam Speaker. I thought that there was something in the rules about not commenting on people who are not in the chamber because there may be a good reason for that. I reiterate what my colleague just said about the pot calling the kettle black. It was the government of the member opposite that said there will be no asset sales, but straight after winning the election turned around and, I think within 16 days, directed the first asset sale.

I wonder why the member for Mackay is so anti the Queensland Plan summit being in his own electorate. The electorate of Nanango would have loved to have held the Queensland Plan summit, so that is really quite sad. However, we look forward to being in Mackay in a couple of weeks time.

I must touch on the comments of the member for Bundamba, although I apologise to those who were not here as she really had nothing to say. She had to be warned. I think she thought the debate was about health or international relations, although I am not quite sure.

A government member: A screechfest.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It was a bit of a screechfest. I take that interjection. I turn to the member for South Brisbane's comments about Mark Twain. Is she kidding? Ignorance and confidence? What we heard was five minutes of just ignorance—with a splash of confidence, I will give her that. The member talked about the first cut. Has the opposition asked even one question in relation to the Commission of Audit? There has not been one question and there is no interest in any aspect of the contents of that report at all. They have now been given the executive summary and still they do not ask decent questions or hold a decent debate about the contents of the executive summary. All they ask is why they have not received it after 47 days. We are comparing that with their 388 days of zip. They have no policies. They cannot give us anything to tell us why they would be better in government than us. That is right: because they had just about 20 years of that—save a little bit in the middle—and look what they did to the state of Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! I cannot hear the member for Nanango. There are too many interjections from my left.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The member for South Brisbane talked about Costello and the asset sales under the Howard/Costello government. What about the Labor Treasurer, Keating, and the sale of the Commonwealth Bank, the OTC, Qantas—

(Time expired)

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 64—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kempton, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Kaye, Menkens

NOES, 13—Byrne, Douglas, Hopper, Judge, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 65—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kempton, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Kaye, Menkens

NOES, 13—Byrne, Douglas, Hopper, Judge, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

- notes it is 388 days since the 2012 election and Labor has failed to promote or suggest one policy since promising to do so at the Queensland Council of Unions' Labour Day dinner 347 days ago;
- notes that Labor planned to incur \$85 billion in debt by 30 June 2015 and debt was heading to \$100 billion;
- notes the independent commission of audit's first report was released in full and a briefing provided to all opposition members;

- notes the executive summary of the final report was released on the day of delivery;
- notes the final report will be released together with the government's response within two months of receipt as stated by the Premier and Treasurer; and
- endorses the Newman government's fiscal strategy, initiatives to lower the cost of living and actions to ensure that Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (6.41 pm), by leave: I advise the House that the Committee of the Legislative Assembly has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136(2), the following reporting dates for bills referred to committees: the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to report on the Queensland Rail Transit Authority Bill by 26 April 2013 and the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 16 July 2013; and the Education and Innovation Committee to report on the Education Legislation Amendment Bill by 16 July 2013 and on the TAFE Queensland Bill by 16 May 2013.

Auditor-General's Report, Referral to Portfolio Committee

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (6.41 pm): I also advise that the Committee of the Legislative Assembly has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 10 for 2012-13 titled *Results of audits: local government entities 2011-12*, tabled on 16 April 2013, be referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee for consideration.

Sitting suspended from 6.41 pm to 7.40 pm.

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MOTOR VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 990, on motion of Mr Dempsey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (7.40 pm), continuing: This bill is focusing on the penalty aspect and the retrospective preventative aspects. I highlighted the weakness of this type of legislation. That is not to say that this type of legislation is poor, but I raised the issues of the nature of the offences to demonstrate how we must go in the future to alter the definitions of hooning type of offences, especially issues like smoke or no smoke, and I suspect we will need to move to on-the-spot fines if only to enable the reverse onus of proof. Within this bill of course is the interesting five-day rule, which is a really good aspect, where in fact the officers have to issue a ticket and it needs to be done at the time.

I have actually had a problem with stolen numberplates and there is a large trade in stolen numberplates on the Gold Coast. My own car has had its plates stolen from my office in Nerang and many people on the Gold Coast experience this problem. Unfortunately this leads to identification problems. Irrespective of that, combined with good car descriptions and maybe the continued use and wider use of registration stickers, we might be able to correctly identify the vehicles even if they do have stolen plates on them. I think that is an important step that needs to be made.

I think most members would have found that they have been contacted by all sorts of car enthusiasts; I am just one of many. I think the arguments that they have put forward in the preceding months leading up to this legislation being debated were really by and large fairly weak. Most of them are actually inaccurate. I am not going to say they are frankly untrue but I do not think that they really hold any water. The reality is that I cannot see any problem with this type of legislation. People have nothing to fear if they do not offend. In fact, if you do offend you probably do have a lot to fear. I do not think those points were made by these people who tended to write. I do not know whether it has been widely discussed by the members, but that is not to say they did not write very forcefully and say

that they were having their rights trampled upon. I did not actually think that that was the case. This is a majority rules argument. There are some other issues about making statements about what you can do for these sorts of people.

If you look at the overall numbers of cars impounded for type 1 offences as opposed to type 2 offences, for example, on the Gold Coast in the last year we had 27 type 1s and about 520, I think, type 2s. They are not really big numbers. Unfortunately though you can have all the best legislation in the world but impounding cars will not change a thing if the number of cars impounded is relatively so low because the test of the evidence, the lack of sufficient evidence and the availability of reasonable cause will severely limit the number of cars being impounded and proportionately the number of those which are subsequently forfeited.

Additionally what has occurred in other states with parallel or mirror legislation—although it has been said that Queensland has the toughest legislation, there is somewhat comparable legislation in other states—is that where these vehicles have been presented for forfeiture or otherwise they are being stripped and effectively bear no resemblance to the vehicle the driver committed the offence in. It is more common than people think. In many cases the engine is actually missing and nearly everything else but the frame—and I mean the bare steel frame—is actually presented because there is a delay in presenting the vehicles. The offenders merely transfer all the equipment to a new frame of vehicle and it starts all over again, because they basically transfer their debt to SPER or some similar type of strategy. So what you are trying to do is stop these offences but in fact the end result or the accumulative result is one where you end up with these people recycling their vehicles effectively.

The specifics of the bill are really very good. It is a well-drafted bill. I congratulate the department responsible for the technical and precise work to try to get it to work in a sensible fashion. There are reasonable escape clauses that allow for sensible relief options—that is, the harshness provisions—circumstances occurring outside metropolitan areas and issues such as clamping, removal of plates and the issue of vehicle production notices. Conversely, we have good automatic forfeiture options and reduction in court time to expedite the penalties.

I sense that the minister has also correctly addressed the issue where the vehicles belong to parents and relatives where there may be mitigating circumstances. I know that many feel that these could be abused, but if they track them over time and there are only minor aberrations rather than a normal variance then we might end up with a good result. We should be aware of the ingenuity and the determination of these offenders to escape the intention of the law. Literally on the Gold Coast we have seen many examples of their ingenuity.

Overwhelmingly, any legislation that addresses issues of recklessness, speed, youthful ignorance and maybe stupidity in equal measures in a rapid form may just have a chance of preventing unnecessary morbidity and mortality figures rising. This legislation is a two-type legislation and has a two-strike approach. It seems reasonable. This year we have had 18 more deaths than in a comparable year in numerical terms in Queensland, and that is not a good omen. Legislation targeted at a reduction of those elements that lead to road trauma must be supported by all. With further preventative steps, as suggested earlier, I think we might just see a more comprehensive solution. That is not to denigrate the step that the committee has taken—and I think that what they have done is excellent work—and its deliberations and certainly the work of the department, but I think we do need to take a few other steps. It may be that we change the conditioning of the public to these changes first and then we can slip through and close some of those gaps with later legislation that may well reduce the overall road trauma.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.47 pm): I rise to add to the debate and support the minister's motion on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. What is the bill about? It is about making our roads safer. Roads are there for people to be able to get from A to B, for families to be able to use, for people to go on holidays. They are not there for street racing. They are not there for abusing. They are not there for people's own pleasure at the expense of all the other road users. So I think it is important that we understand exactly who this bill is aimed at and why we are doing it. It is aimed at the people who are endangering themselves and others on our public highways. I will go through the definition of 'hooning' because that is the colloquialism that is used in this bill. This definition is issued by the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety—

"Hooning" refers to the act of using a vehicle in an irresponsible and dangerous manner in public places.

It is interesting that the member for Gaven has gone before me, as the first time I ever saw drifting was whilst I was setting up booths for a National Party candidate in Gaven. While I was standing there at one o'clock in the morning, I saw two cars come round a roundabout completely sideways and nearly hit each other. This went on for hour after hour as I was moving around the electorate setting up booths. I was just amazed that this kind of behaviour existed. That was many years ago and at that time I had not seen any evidence of that in Toowoomba. But clearly this recreation has grown and it has grown to a situation where it needs a legislative solution, and this bill is moving to that legislative solution and ensuring that we have penalties in accordance with what the community standards require.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr WATTS: There will be nobody hooning up the Toowoomba range at the moment. They will be going much slower. I will outline what we are talking about. There are two types of offences and it is important that a distinction be made. A type 1 offence is defined in section 69A(1). It is a hooning offence committed in circumstances involving speed trials, a race or a burnout—for example, the dangerous operation of a vehicle, careless driving, participation in speed trials, or starting or driving a vehicle making unnecessary noise or smoke. So that is a type 1 offence. In Toowoomba last year there were 41 type 1 offences and 32 cars were impounded. Ultimately, if people are participating in speed trials or making excessive noise or smoke on the public highway when other road users are trying to go about their business, they deserve to have their cars taken off them and certainly they deserve to be charged.

A type 2 offence includes driving uninsured or unregistered, certain unlicensed or disqualified driving, driving with a blood alcohol concentration above particular levels, failing to provide a specimen of breath and driving while suspended or driving an illegally modified car. In Toowoomba last year there were 2,071 of those types of offences and 433 cars were impounded. Just to put that in some perspective, if we take the total impoundments under the current legislation—and we know that it takes an officer about eight hours, on average, to process all that is involved—that is 3,720 hours of police time that was spent stopping these people from committing these offences by impounding their cars. In Toowoomba that represents an officer every day and a little bit over that. Everybody in Toowoomba wants more police on the beat—and I thank the minister for providing that and ensuring that those numbers grow—but the fact is that we do not want them sitting behind desks filling out paperwork for this sort of thing. Having the ability to issue tickets or a notice to appear in a much simpler process is a good move. It will certainly streamline the process. It will mean that it will be easier for the cars to be impounded and that has frightened some of the people involved in modifying cars and using cars for their recreational pleasure.

The Toowoomba Regional Inc. Car Klub has written several submissions on this bill. I have engaged with its membership a lot to try to explain that if their cars are not illegally modified, if they meet all of the standards and if they do not get involved in street racing, they will not have their cars impounded. Recently, I went to the High Altitude Hot Rod Run, which the Minister for Tourism asked me to attend. It is an event that we sponsor and promote. We are not against the modified car industry in any way, shape or form. We are against people who wish to use their cars illegally on the public highway and endanger themselves and the lives of other people.

Let us go to the type 1 offence and what is proposed under the bill. For a first offence there will be an automatic 90-day impoundment of the vehicle. That is one of the things that has particularly upset some of the car enthusiasts and people who like to modify their cars such as some of the hot-rodders and others in my electorate. They are concerned that someone who does not understand the modifications that have been made will stop their car on a Sunday afternoon and impound it for 90 days. I questioned Officer Morrow from the QPS extensively on this issue. He explained to me that out of approximately 10,000 cars that had been impounded and about 50,000 tickets that had been issued—and these were 2011 figures—just 23 had been for illegal modification. So I think their fears are unfounded. There is also protection in this legislation that is, to a certain extent, better than that which existed previously. One of their objections was that the car can be impounded and they cannot go to court. I put it to people that if the police officer spent eight hours going through the paperwork and then impounding the vehicle and then they had to go to court to get the vehicle back, that process could take a long time. Under this legislation, if someone feels that their car has been impounded incorrectly or if there is a legitimate reason that car should not be impounded, they can appeal to the Commissioner of Police and he has five days to respond. If the car has been taken incorrectly, if there has been any fault or if there is good reason the car should be returned, people's rights have not been trampled in any way, shape or form. They will get the car back much quicker than they would if they had to go through a court process because our courts are obviously very busy.

This provision will keep it out of the courts. I think it has some sensible safety measures in it. A first offence under type 1 will receive a 90-day impoundment. A second offence will result in automatic forfeiture of the car and third and subsequent offences will receive the same. If a person continues to offend, they will continue to lose their vehicles once they have had one impounded for 90 days. I think that is highly appropriate because we need to change this behaviour. I have four children and my first is going to start driving this year. I certainly do not want her on the road as someone is trying to do wheel spins, drifting or anything else. It is incredibly dangerous. If people want to engage in those types of offences, then they deserve to have their car impounded for 90 days. If they have not learnt after that, they deserve to have their car taken off them.

The type 2 offence is the much more common type of offence. Under the current legislation it needs to be the same kind of offence. So it is a specific type 2 offence and it has to be that same specific type 2 offence. You can have a situation where someone has had many type 2 offences but not specifically in the same category and, therefore, the penalty was much less. We have changed that. It now does not need to be the same kind of offence. For a first offence under type 2, there is no impoundment of the vehicle; it is a notification and people will have to deal with that. On a second offence it is an automatic seven-day impoundment. That should give them a little bit of understanding that they need to either get the car registered, get their insurance up to date or whatever other corrective action is needed to ensure their car does not get taken off them. For a third offence it is a 90-day impoundment. If someone has committed three of the same category of offence and they are not learning, then they deserve to have their car taken off them for 90 days in my opinion. For a fourth offence or a subsequent offence, there will be automatic forfeiture of the car, and I absolutely support that.

A number of submissions were made to the committee. Whilst talking about them, I should thank all of those people who have submitted to the committee. I certainly thank my colleagues on the committee and the secretariat which does a lot of work in preparing the reports. A number of submissions were made and one relates to burnouts. The bill seeks to change the definition. Previously there had to be smoke and a few other things. The bill states—

... burn out, for a motor vehicle, means wilfully drive the motor vehicle in a way that causes a sustained loss of traction of one or more of the wheels with the road surface.

Going back to my local car enthusiasts club, they have been very concerned. The Australian Street Machine Federation, Queensland division, submitted that a young, inexperienced P-plater might accidentally at a traffic light, while facing uphill, spin the wheels and technically a ticket could be issued to them or their car could be impounded. It is critical to read the definition carefully. It is not talking about a young P-plater who is learning how to drive, pulling away from a set of traffic lights. It says 'wilfully drive the motor vehicle in a way that causes a sustained loss of traction'. If it is not wilful, then it does not meet the requirements. Again, I put it to those clubs, those car enthusiasts and other groups that have contacted me, my office and other members' offices that if they are not wilfully trying to cause a burnout, then they are not breaking the law and, therefore, they should have nothing to fear from the law. I think it is important to understand that.

I refer to traffic infringement notices. The traffic infringement notice being introduced by this bill will make it much simpler and more efficient for the police to process these types of offences. It will allow a significant number of offences—high-end speeding, driving of an unregistered or uninsured vehicle, certain unlicensed driving and illegally modified vehicles—to be dealt with by way of a traffic infringement notice rather than a court appearance. That is actually more efficient for everybody. These are offences that would be obvious and that a lot of people may well just plead guilty to because they know when they get into court that they are in fact guilty. This will save the courts, the Queensland Police Service and the government a lot of time. It will also save the offender from appearing in court and dealing with the associated difficulties if all they are going to do is plead guilty. It is a very simple process. Obviously the notices are subject to the normal judicial process in terms of being challenged if people choose to do that.

I think a couple of other parts of the bill are worth mentioning. During the committee briefing I raised with the inspector the question of tickets being issued by overly enthusiastic officers. Chief Superintendent Morrow said—

A defect notice can be issued. In circumstances where an officer is uncertain—a vehicle has, for example, a supercharger through the bonnet and the officer is not certain if that is legal or not—there is an opportunity for the officer to issue an inspection notification. That vehicle then has to be inspected by an approved inspection agency. That is under the existing legislation. That happens every day. That happens now.

Again, the car enthusiasts who are concerned that an overly enthusiastic officer is going to pull them over as they are driving down the road and impound their car can be reassured that that will not be the case. Superintendent Morrow said further—

But I can tell you that our officers are very judicious in their application of this, particularly when we are talking about vehicle enthusiasts.

He then quoted the figures I quoted earlier: 10,000 total seizures, of which 23 were for illegal modifications. It is a tiny proportion of the tickets. I think it is something people are worried about when they do not need to be.

I think the legislation as written will make it much more efficient for the police to process these kinds of offences. It sends a very clear message to people who would commit these types of offences that the community is sick and tired of their behaviour.

Mr Costigan: They've had a gutful.

Mr WATTS: The community has absolutely had a gutful of it. I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday. The community has had it. I have been to several Neighbourhood Watch meetings in my electorate of Toowoomba North attended by many people, some of whom are retired and ageing. They are very uncomfortable and afraid when they hear cars hooning around. One constituent, whose house is situated on a bend in the road, has decided to sleep in a different bedroom because they are very concerned about the noise as these cars come flying by in the middle of the night.

The people we are targeting are those who are doing illegal things on the public highway—things any decent Queenslander is not willing to accept. We are certainly not targeting the car enthusiasts. I had a great time with the High Altitude Hot Rod Run and issuing some of the prizes for the various participants. I had a look at some fantastic cars. I myself would love to own a vehicle such as those owned by some of those people. They are absolutely their pride and joy. If they drive them sensibly and if their compliance is up to date, they have absolutely nothing to fear from this legislation. If they are endangering life on the public highway, if they are putting members of the public at risk, if they are illegally modifying their cars with nitro and superchargers and things that do not meet requirements then their cars will be taken from them—and I think appropriately.

I think this is a good piece of legislation. I am very pleased that it has been brought before the House. I think our side of politics is tackling the tough issues that Queenslanders are sick and tired of, dealing with them head-on and coming up with practical solutions that will not only save court processing time but also actually deal with the issue. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (8.04 pm): I rise with genuine pride to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It shows clearly the direction in which the minister and the government are heading. We went to the electorate seeking a very clear mandate for what we would do. This bill puts that into place.

Our police will have the powers and the legal backup to make Queenslanders safe in the streets and hoons will know that they will pay the price if they threaten their community. This bill means that police will take action from offence No. 1. That includes car impoundment for up to three months for the first serious hooning offence. A second hooning offence within the next five years will see the offender's car confiscated to be sold or crushed. The message is loud and clear: use our roads for dangerous races and pranks and you will be immediately taken off them.

I want to touch on something said earlier today by the Attorney-General. That is, if you do not do the wrong thing you have nothing to fear. Indeed, that is the case with this bill. More so, it is the case for genuine car enthusiasts. That is the message I want to give tonight. This is not about people who love their cars. It is not about people who spend a lot of money on their vehicles. It is not about the size of your exhaust or the size of your rims or whether or not you have a spoiler or whether it is a V8 or a little four-cylinder. It does not matter. In fact, I might go a step further: the genuine car enthusiast is not the idiot spinning his tyres in a suburban street. The genuine car enthusiast is too busy looking after his vehicle, going to the track and running a quarter mile in a confined area, where it is safe for him and his car. In the debate that has ensued we have lost sight of the fact that the majority of people who commit this offence are more likely to be in a Datsun 120Y than in an HSV Clubsport.

Mr McArdle: Not in 2013 they're not, mate!

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection. The 120Ys are still around—a few 180Bs as well! The genuine car enthusiast has nothing to fear. In fact, the genuine car enthusiast will have less chance of some idiot coming roaring around the corner and destroying their pride and joy. There is another message. That is, these will be the toughest anti-hooning laws in Australia. We should all be very proud of that fact.

In my own home of Mundingburra we had an incident whereby Vincent man Michael Williams was woken up at 4.30 am when a car slammed into his house. Police say that speed was a huge factor. Then there was the bright spark who launched through a fence, carved up the lawn and ended up hooked on a decorative anchor in front of the Townsville coastguard base. Apparently their car park is a regular hoon gathering place before people go speeding down Sir Leslie Thiess Drive in the electorate of Townsville. They have also decided to take over the busy Port Access Road linking the Flinders and Bruce highways. As the road is straight it gives them the opportunity to do things like drifting. South Townsville's Benwell Road is another area. Time and time again police say that these idiots do not care about the consequences for themselves or for others.

This bill gives these people a much better reason than they have had before to think about the consequences. Their cars will be impounded, sold or crushed. And that means something to these people. That means their freedom is curtailed in a way. If that stops them putting at risk the lives of my family and your family, Mr Deputy Speaker Berry, then we should be all for this. Let us not overcomplicate this: if you do the burnouts, the car goes. It is as simple as that.

Far be it for me to summarise the speeches of others—I know the minister will do a fine job—but I listened to the contribution of the member for Rockhampton this afternoon on a few matters and I have never heard so many conflicting logics in one sentence. He started by saying what a wonderful piece of legislation it was because somehow he had an attachment to it—being a member of the Labor Party, he said he had an attachment—but then he said that it simply went too far. He then said that there were some good changes but there was no consultation. He then made the comment that this was all about making the toughest laws in Australia and that that was somehow just a media grab. If that is a media grab, then I say guilty—guilty as charged. If that is what it takes to get the message to idiots so they do not go speeding in the streets of Rockhampton, we should be singing it from the rooftops, because people have had enough. They have had enough of this behaviour. They know that it is dangerous. They know that it puts people's lives at risk. We should all be looking to support this, not just with words but genuinely supporting it in all we do. This clamps down on the people who are doing the wrong thing and this takes another step to make sure that Queensland is a safe place for our families.

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (8.10 pm): I rise in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. In my time so far as the member for Pine Rivers, there have been few words that have been more controversial, emotive and guaranteed to spark a fiery debate than the word 'hooning'. Everyone seems to have an opinion on what hooning is, how it should be enforced and the impact that it has on our local communities. In my 2012 electorate-wide survey of residents, hooning ranked as one of the top 10 issues that residents wanted to see fixed. It also rated in the list of most concerning crimes amongst Pine Rivers residents. I asked a question on my Facebook page yesterday about hooning and today I printed off over 21 pages worth of responses to that question. It is an emotive and divisive issue. I know it is of similar concern in many communities across the state, and this was recognised by the LNP prior to last year's election when we announced our intention to introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. A fair summary of the need for tougher legislation was made in the minister's media statement of 12 October 2012 when he said that Queenslanders have had enough of hooners receiving a slap on the wrist for their dangerous and irresponsible behaviour. Hooning is not only annoying for decent people out there; it also puts the lives of innocent people who share the road with these troublemakers at risk.

This legislation provides a thorough and unambiguous set of consequences for dealing with those who choose to use our roads in an inappropriate and dangerous manner. However, I do have concerns on this issue in general, and they are concerns that cannot necessarily be dealt with in this legislation but need to be dealt with subsequent to this legislation and as part of an ongoing dialogue with local communities. The first issue is around the actual definition of a hooning act and the general lack of public awareness of what constitutes a hooning action. The legislation sets out the definition quite clearly of type 1 and type 2 hooning offences. The committee's report on the legislation quotes a Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety—Queensland fact sheet that explains that hooning covers a broad range of antisocial driving behaviours which include illegal street racing, burnouts,

doughnuts, drifting, speed trials and unnecessary speed or acceleration. When I asked the question again about the definition of hooning on Facebook, I received a variety of responses. Many people were concerned that the word 'hooning' has become a catch-all label that has lost all meaning from pure overuse. People mentioned all the behaviours that I have just outlined in the definition but also mentioned things such as car noise, modified cars and a number of other behaviours. It is important that our community have a clear understanding of what, under the legislation, constitutes a hooning act and what is simply poor driving. There is a need to educate our communities on this issue and it is a need that I take seriously and I am currently working on strategies to help educate Pine Rivers residents about what constitutes a hooning act.

The second issue that I have with hooning in general is the capacity of our Police Service to be able to catch hoons. As many in this place would know, to catch someone in the act of hooning is a very difficult thing. It is a difficult thing to effectively police and I am of the belief that our community needs to step up and take a more active role in assisting our police in identifying hooning actions and hooning hot spots. Just this morning I was speaking with a Bray Park resident and we were talking about this issue. He said that he just takes it for granted now that there will be hooning activity taking place in his neighbourhood at particular times of the week. In taking it for granted, he does not report it to the police anymore and consequently if a majority of residents take that same approach and just let it be then there is a strong chance that our police may not even be aware that there are issues in that neighbourhood if nobody is reporting it. This is one of the reasons why I will be launching a Pine Rivers hoon watch program as part of a week of crime prevention activities in late May. If residents and business owners do not report these hooning activities, then it hinders the ability of our hardworking police officers to do their job and to target their anti-hooning operations to the areas where most offences occur. Residents, businesses and our Police Service need to work closely together to catch those who are committing these hooning offences.

The third issue relates to ensuring that genuine car enthusiasts are not unfairly targeted under this or similar legislation purely because of the care and attention that they put into their vehicles which sometimes make them an obvious stand-out target whilst the perpetrators of hooning acts—the actual hoons—continue to fly under the radar. Anyone who knows me knows that my knowledge of the inner workings of a motor vehicle are similar to the Labor Party's ability to return a budget surplus: I can say the words, but no-one believes that I have a clue what I am talking about. I barely know the difference between a fanbelt and a muffler, so when I accepted the invitations of some local car enthusiasts to meet with them or to look over their cars and to talk about their passion for motor vehicles and talk about this issue, it is pretty fair to say that I was in well and truly over my head.

However, in spite of my ignorance of how cars work, what did not escape my attention was the level of care and passion that goes into restoring their vehicles. I have met enthusiasts who have spent tens of thousands of dollars on a single car to restore it to its original glory and beyond. When I see the care that they take with their vehicles and the money they spend and their obvious passion, I find it rather incongruous to think that they would then take those restored cars, pull over on to a lush grassy patch beside a main road in my region and proceed to drive in a way that rips the grass to shreds and leaves a trail of muddy tyre tracks for hundreds of metres along the side of the road. When you spend that much time and that much attention and care on your vehicle, you are just not going to do it. They have too much pride in their cars. These are not the people who are committing these hooning acts and they are not the ones who should be targeted.

In researching this issue and in looking at the types of cars that have generally been confiscated under anti-hooning legislation, it is more likely that hoons are driving a 10-year-old Commodore or a standard V8 ute that looks similar to many other cars on the road, possibly a car that they do not actually care for too much given the type of treatment they are giving it when they commit these hooning offences. These people are not car enthusiasts; they are just people who are inconsiderate, driving dangerously and need to be taken off our roads. So I think there is somewhat of a significant disconnect when I hear car enthusiasts talk to me about police setting up shop outside the exit of a car show to book drivers with defective vehicles and then somehow to talk about those enforcement actions as dealing with our hooning problems.

I am also concerned when I hear stories that some police officers undertaking this enforcement activity may not be fully aware of what actually constitutes a legal or illegal modification, so there may indeed be a genuine need for some further education of some of our police officers before they undertake such enforcement. But what has become clear to me is that we need to foster a better working relationship between car enthusiasts and local police to minimise the confrontational nature of this relationship that, as I see it, can develop all too easily. That is something that this legislation

cannot deal with but that we need to be dealing with on a community level. During May this year the member the Kallangur and I will be convening a round table discussion locally between car enthusiasts and the Pine Rivers police district as a means of opening up a positive two-way dialogue on issues of concern. I am also working on other ways to build this relationship and to ensure that car enthusiasts are not unfairly targeted whilst still ensuring that our anti-hooning laws are upheld and enforced.

This is important legislation for Queensland, because it sends a clear message that hooning behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. However, this legislation cannot be the end of the story on this issue. We need to ensure that our communities and our enforcement officers are continually educated, that our communities are assisting police to identify hooning behaviour in hot spots and that our Police Service and car enthusiasts are working together towards achieving positive outcomes.

As I work each day towards building a better Pine Rivers, I will continue to work closely with local residents, business owners, car enthusiasts and our hardworking local Police Service to ensure that we correctly target the antisocial, dangerous drivers who are disrespecting the Pine Rivers community through their actions. This legislation is a positive step in dealing with that antisocial minority. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (8.19 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I am proud to be part of a government that is unashamedly willing to listen to the community's concerns in relation to crime and is willing to act and introduce legislation that makes our communities safe places in which to live.

Over the past 12 months I have been a fierce advocate of cracking down on crime and I have spoken many times in this place about the tough legislation that this Newman government has implemented to deter criminals, protect our cops and make our communities safer places in which to live. I am here in this place to represent the people of Morayfield. They have made it very clear to me that they are sick and tired of legislation that allows crooks to get a slap on the wrist and laugh in the face of the law. This Newman government has introduced a number of laws that have already begun to make a significant difference to my electorate. Some of the initiatives that have made a difference to my Morayfield electorate and make it a safer place in which to live include the Newman government's election commitment to increase police numbers by 1,100 new officers on the beat and move another 200 desk officers back to the front line.

Since being elected in March 2012, my local area has received an additional 32 police officers, or an increase in police numbers of 16 per cent. Other initiatives of this Newman government include the introduction of the toughest child sex offender legislation to protect our kids by providing a new mandatory sentencing regime of life imprisonment for a repeat sex offender. We have doubled the maximum penalty for serious assaults on police officers from seven years to 14 years. We have introduced a new offence for the murder of a police officer, with a non-parole period of 25 years. We have increased the evade police penalty to a mandatory \$5,000 and two-year loss of licence. We have increased the non-parole period for murder from 15 years to 20 years imprisonment for a single murder and from 20 years to 30 years imprisonment for multiple murders. We have also reacted quickly to tackling gun crime. Our legislation introduced the toughest new laws within Australia, with minimum mandatory sentencing for anyone caught trafficking, supplying or possessing an illegal firearm. Coupled with the unexplained wealth laws, this legislation will strike at the heart of organised crime in Queensland.

In the space of technology, we have a vision of bringing Neighbourhood Watch online. We will also be introducing myPolice blogs around the state. Most recently, we introduced, and today we passed, legislation to address the issue of synthetic drugs, penalties for child pornography and some other child sex offences, including a new child grooming offence.

I will address more specifically this bill before the parliament. Our communities have told us that they have had enough of hoons turning our suburban roads into racetracks and disturbing the peace. That is why we have introduced into this House the nation's toughest anti-hooning laws, which will put the brakes on hoons and get them off our streets. Hooning is a big issue in my electorate. In fact, it is probably one of the biggest issues and most raised issues that I hear when I am out and about in my community. As I have said before, communities are sick and tired of hoons performing dangerous activities on our streets and laughing in the face of the law. I say to hoons tonight: when

this legislation has passed this parliament, the laughing will cease. As a first offence, your vehicle will be taken from you for three months and impounded. For a second offence if committed within five years, the car may be forfeited or crushed.

Since this legislation was introduced into parliament, I have undertaken considerable public consultation. I have engaged my local Neighbourhood Watch groups, which have been very supportive of this legislation. Many of these groups have been so passionate about this issue that they have offered to help deliver hoon watch flyers that we have developed that provides information on how residents can report hoons to the local police or through the hoon watch number 13HOON. I have also spoken about this program to many community groups, P&Cs and many mums and dads at community listening posts. The local media have also been engaged in this process and have run many stories highlighting hooning and the programs that I am running in my electorate.

I also undertook special hoon watch information stands at shopping centres in my local area where local police joined me in providing information on this legislation, seeking feedback, hearing residents' views and providing hoon watch flyers with details on how the community can partner with the police and help report these acts. During one of those shopping centre information sessions I was given an example of why these laws are necessary. A young driver drove into the car park at the Narangba Valley Shopping Centre just after 3 pm. This shopping centre is located between a high school and a primary school. If members could picture this, I was there with very large signs, corflutes and a big stand with a uniformed police officer with police cars in the car park. It is fair to say that we were extremely visible for all to see. There were a lot of kids around, of course, because school had just finished and at this time they were hanging around the shops. This young driver decided to stop at the crossing where a mother was walking across the car park with her young school-aged child and then decided to take off as fast as he could, screeching his car's wheels, barely missing the woman and child as they went across the zebra crossing. In this case, the police officer who was with me managed to go over to the car park where the young man parked not far from the police car that was parked in the car park and, obviously, detailed him on what we were doing there, issued him with a fine, and explained to him what the government was doing in relation to toughening up the laws for hoons. I am certain that this young driver was trying to impress his high school mates and in the process nearly changed not only his life but also the lives of many around him.

In the last 12 months the Caboolture Police District has reported over 27 type 1 offences, resulting in 19 vehicle impoundments, and has reported a whopping 1,533 type 2 offences, resulting in 237 vehicle impoundments. As members can see by these numbers, there is definitely a need to increase the deterrent for those who want to display antisocial behaviour on our public streets.

One of the benefits of this legislation that has not been spoken about very much in this debate is the time that our police officers are currently forced to take when impounding offenders' vehicles. Recently, I was talking to an officer who advised me that the process of impounding the vehicle under the current laws is so time consuming that, to be perfectly honest, most police officers do not even bother. The police officer advised that it can take up to eight hours per impoundment when you include time for application paperwork, attending court to lodge the paperwork, tracking down the offender to serve the application and attending court to lodge the final application. That is just outrageous and a waste of our police officers' time, who should be out there on the streets fighting crime. Another frustration that police officers have is that, when it comes to the court of law, the current legislation leads to the offender having all their eggs in one basket. Police are forced to spend hours convincing the courts as to why these offenders should have their vehicles impounded only to have many courts overrule those applications owing to personal circumstances where the offender has managed to convince the magistrate that they require their vehicle. Again, this is a waste of time for our cops, who should be on the streets catching criminals and making our communities safer. Under this legislation, the only time that the police would have to wait will be when the tow truck arrives to collect the offender's vehicle. The offender will still have the opportunity to apply for leniency and take the matter to court. It just means that the offender will have to spend time making the application and, in that regard, police hours will not be wasted.

Like many in this place, many car enthusiasts have contacted me. Those in this place who know me and those in my community who know me know that I am also a car enthusiast. I like going to drags. I even like a burnout. I like Indy. I like motor racing. That is what I like to do. But as was pointed out earlier, I can assure everyone in this place that a true car enthusiast who spends a lot of

money on his car—doing up his car, polishing his car, looking after it—is not the one who we are targeting. He is not the type of person in our communities who is driving down 50-kilometre-an-hour streets doing burnouts and ripping apart their car. True car enthusiasts are not hoons.

I will always support measures that make our communities safer, measures that protect our hardworking police officers and measures that will protect our kids. My goal in my electorate is to make my area a safe place in which to live, work and raise a family. It is with that in mind that I fully support this legislation. I ask honourable members to join me tonight in passing this important legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate and speak in favour of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. After this bill was tabled and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee I met with a number of constituents and members of the organisation known as Grunt Files who took time out to put forward a submission to the committee. During this meeting my long-term belief was confirmed that the term 'hoon' has been distorted by external sources and attitudes in the media. To me the term 'hoon' refers to any motorist of any age in any vehicle who illegally operates a vehicle and puts not only their personal safety at jeopardy but also the safety of the wider public at risk.

Sadly, many in today's society look at car enthusiasts as hoons. I must stress that the divide between hoons and car enthusiasts is greater than the Grand Canyon. Having many friends who are bona fide car enthusiasts, and myself being one in my youth, I know the hard work, pride and cost that is involved in finely tuning one's pride and joy. From this tireless labour—that is labour with a U—comes a healthy respect not only for the roads but also for other motorists as well. The first car I bought as a young 18-year-old marine was a circa 1970 Plymouth Fury Interceptor. As a former police vehicle, this vehicle had a 440 magnum engine, a four-barrel exhaust, heavy duty suspension and was as fast as the wind. I loved maintaining this vehicle—my pride and joy. Every weekend that I was able to I would drive it up and down the strip of Virginia Beach with my mates showing it off. And although this vehicle was fast and furious I always abided by the laws of the land and respected others on the road when operating it. I was an enthusiast, not a hoon. The fact is that hoons who would be subject to this legislation are those who have no respect for other motorists. They have no respect for their own vehicle and exhibit a total disregard for the rule of law.

Police in the south-east region have been very vigilant in addressing the issue of hooning, with over 10,000 hooning charges in 2012—more than any other region in our state. The Logan district makes up over 4,000 of those charges. In other words, 40 per cent of the hooning charges in the area with the largest number of hooning charges in the state came from Logan in 2012. With Logan having 83 type 1 offences with 70 impoundments and 3,963 type 2 offences with 1,017 impoundments, do not try telling me there is not a problem with hoons.

Also raised in my meetings was a responsibility that must be undertaken by police. My unwavering support for our members of the Queensland Police Service is well documented here in this chamber. My support and the support of our government can be seen in our commitment to maximising the resources of our Police Service and legislation we have implemented such as the Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2012. I must add that the Labor opposition—all seven of them—voted against the bill that provides protection to our police officers.

Working hand in hand, all stakeholders will maximise the opportunities for safer roads across Queensland. For too long our state has lagged behind our fellow states. Our Police Service and our legal system have been long hampered by the former government's failure to recognise that punishments are not punishments or effective deterrents unless the consequences fit the nature of the offence. As Tony Baretta from the seventies TV show *Baretta* said, 'Don't do the crime if you can't do the time.' A firm but fair approach must be taken, like that taken for other offences such as drink driving, but again like other crimes reasonable judgment by our police must be exercised. Although my electorate of Logan does not have any police stations within its boundaries, it is serviced by three police stations that are located in the electorates of Woodridge with the Crestmead station, Algester with the station in Hillcrest and Beaudesert with the Jimboomba station. The calibre of police officers in each of these police stations is a credit to the traditions, values and ethos of our Police Service. I have faith and confidence in our men and women in blue to perform their duties pertaining to this legislation with honour and integrity and to treat all members of the public with respect.

In many communities across Queensland, individuals who illegally use motor vehicles pose a significant risk to community safety. This amendment bill will not only bring our state's legislation into line with fellow states, as previously mentioned, but also make our great state the leading state in the Federation when tackling legislation on hoons. Our government went to the election and committed, through the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan, to introducing the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. Legislative amendments create the avenue for two schemes to be introduced for the impoundment and forfeiture of motor vehicles used to commit certain offences, namely the type 1 and type 2 vehicle impoundment scheme. This bill will include evading police offences and high-end speeding as type 1 and type 2 vehicle related offences respectively. This bill will also create increased sanctions of 90 days for a type 1 offence and forfeiture for a second or subsequent offence. For type 2 vehicle related offences, there will be seven-day impoundment for the second type 2 offence, 90 days for the third type 2 offence and forfeiture for any subsequent offence. This amendment bill will also introduce measures as an alternative to impounding vehicles, such as clamping, removal of numberplates and vehicle production notices. This amendment allows the commissioner to release the impounded or immobilised vehicle upon an application by the owner or usual driver in certain circumstances. These circumstances include where the impoundment offence occurred without the owner's consent—often the case when kids take their parents' car—the impoundment or immobilisation will cause severe financial or physical hardship; the impoundment offence has been remedied, for example they paid their fine or registered their vehicle if it was unregistered; or the impoundment or immobilisation was not based on reasonable grounds.

When meeting with the community members who had concerns over this legislative amendment, the most prevalent issue raised was the information and education available for police officers regarding the new charges. I was pleased to inform them that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee has made the recommendation that this bill, if passed after being debated by honourable members in this parliament, be delayed before implementation to ensure that our hardworking and tenacious police officers around the state are fully aware of their role in enforcing this legislation. This is important to ensure law-abiding car enthusiasts are not improperly targeted as hoons just because they may be driving a modified vehicle, as this would be an injustice if it were to happen. It is a good idea to monitor how many vehicles that are impounded are subsequently released due to the impoundment or immobilisation not being based on reasonable grounds. This will help in determining if the information and training pertaining to this legislation provided to the Police Service is appropriate and effective. We must, however, set a precedent that will demonstrate to would-be offenders that their dangerous actions will not be tolerated. To borrow and mix a quote from Liam Neeson's character Ducard in *Batman Begins*, 'Hoons thrive on the indulgence of society's understanding.'

This bill received varied feedback as part of the submission process. All were factored into the committee reports as a tribute to our democratic system. I have to say, though, that visiting many community group meetings throughout my electorate of Logan—indeed, throughout the state of Queensland in electorates where I have been honoured to visit and speak with community members, areas such as Kingaroy with the honourable member Deb Frecklington and Far North Queensland regions with the honourable member for Barron River, Michael Trout—the message was the same and the message was consistent: Queenslanders are tired of hoons and the irresponsible illegal activity that is involved in hooning.

Just the other day my wife and children's lives were put at risk by the illegal activity of a hoon who was doing doughnuts, spinning his wheels for a sustained period of time, kicking up dirt and dust along the nature strip of the park. This hoon created a dust screen that floated across the road and hindered the view of oncoming traffic. My wife was nearly hit head-on by oncoming traffic due to the driver not being able to see clearly and crossing the centre line on a curve. If she did not pull over and stop to wait for the dust to clear she and my children may very well not be here today. I support our car enthusiasts and car shows like Greenbank's annual car and bike show and swap and the Logan Village Charity Carnival's car show. Car enthusiasts are not hoons, people who break the law with their vehicles are hoons and they must be punished appropriately for this type of behaviour before lives are put at risk and lost.

I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, their chair, Mr Ian Berry, member for Ipswich; the committee support staff; the minister, the honourable Jack Dempsey, and his ministerial and departmental staff who have put in a strong effort towards making Queensland a safe state. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (8.39 pm): Tonight I rise to make a short contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I congratulate the minister for introducing this bill because it took an LNP government, not a Labor government, to finally put the brakes on hoons. I am very glad that my colleague the member for Currumbin is in the House tonight, because it was she who started the first Hoon Watch on the Gold Coast. I think I was still a candidate at the time. It would have been in about 2008. Obviously the member for Currumbin generated great success with that program, because she got right up Paul Lucas's nose. On radio he publicly ridiculed the member for Currumbin at that time, saying that Hoon Watch was a complete and utter waste of time, that it would increase the paperwork for police and that nobody wanted it. Obviously, Paul Lucas had not spoken to any of the police on the Gold Coast, because every one of them wanted it.

I took up the torch from the member for Currumbin and, with the Mudgeeraba Action Group, started our own Hoon Watch, which was very successful. In fact, it was so successful that *A Current Affair* did a segment on hooning with the Mudgeeraba Action Group. That story was aired nationwide and we took calls from Geelong to Gladstone about our Hoon Watch program. Following on from the success of the Hoon Watch campaign in Currumbin, we had postcards made up. Many new members in this place have spoken about the involvement of their Neighbourhood Watch groups and their Police Community Consultative Committees. The Hoon Watch forms are getting to where they need to be in the electorates. The police will always tell you that the residents are their eyes and ears and we need them to be as actively involved as they possibly can be.

My Hoon Watch forms go out to the entire electorate not only through my Neighbourhood Watch groups, which drop the forms themselves, but also they are electronically available on my website and have been since 2009. As I said, it was an LNP opposition and now an LNP government that has been tough on crime and hooning in particular. To date in Mudgeeraba, we have impounded 32 cars. Residents in Mudgeeraba have had enough and we would love to see those cars impounded. Indeed, most of my residents would like to see them crushed. Trail bike hooning in national parks is also a problem. The Hoon Watch forms are effectively used to catch trail bike riders in the national parks, particularly in the Gold Coast hinterland. Even if the bikes do not have registration plates, the riders have very clear helmet colours and leather colours. That sort of information, along with the date, time, place, make and model is what the police need to prosecute hoons.

In the lead-up to the last election, in a last-ditch effort the Labor government finally conceded defeat to the LNP and our Hoon Watch programs and brought in the 13HOON hotline. As I said, places such as Mudgeeraba and Currumbin were miles ahead. Our Hoon Watch programs were up and running and they were very successful. Hoon Watch forms can be filled in electronically. On my website, you can upload pictures and videos of hoons. Not only will I be notified but also it will be sent directly to Policelink. In my electorate, it will also go to the Mudgeeraba Police Station. Yesterday, I was driving to parliament when I pulled over and copied down the rego of a hoon at Reedy Creek. He slid sideways around my very busy roundabout. I pulled over and reported him to the local police. Every time it rains in my local area, I know the hoons will be out and about. In fact, they go down Golden Grove Boulevard, which is a great big dipper, and they drift all the way down. When you get up in the morning, you can see black rubber all down the road.

As I said, residents use the Hoon Watch form, which helps police to stamp out this wasteful and illegal activity. In my electorate some well-known hoon areas have been targeted very successfully. This is great legislation that will strike fear into the hearts of illegal hoons. For about five days in 2010, police stings at the corner of Beechmont Road and Nerang-Murwillumbah Road led to the impoundment of 13 cars. The police just backed up the driveway of somebody I knew and waited until the hoons came out at night-time and then picked them all up. The police did a great job. Obviously, the Nerang police cover the hinterland along the Nerang-Murwillumbah Road out to Advancetown and the New South Wales border. They have a very big area to cover, but they are pretty smart. They have used the police helicopter and its infrared camera to target hoons at night-time. They have caught a lot of them. In particular, the 'eye in the sky' has really helped to catch hoons in the act along Pine Creek Road in the Numinbah Valley. Hoons are organised. They have spotters and they drag race in the hinterland. On the M1, I travel from exit 73 to exit 87 and that is not much different, but at least now we have some temporary barriers on the upgrade of the M1 from exits 77 to 79 so we will slow them down. We will also be targeting a temporary speed camera for the duration of those roadworks.

I have a very active Police Community Consultative Committee. I have to brag and say it is probably one of the best and most effective PCCCs on the Gold Coast. All of the Neighbourhood Watch groups attend our meetings, which are held on the first Monday of every month at 5.30 at the Mudgeeraba Police Station. It is a really good way for elderly people in particular to report hooning, graffiti or whatever, but may be a bit scared of retribution. They can come to the safe environment of the PCCC to let the police know what is going on and then the police can take action.

I take this opportunity to recognise the hard work of my PCCC, particularly Earl Hinchey, the current chair for the Mudgeeraba PCCC. I thank him for his great work in reducing hooning in our area. I am pleased that Earl will be attending the Mackay summit for the Queensland Plan for Mudgeeraba. I take this opportunity to thank Senior Sergeant Mark Anderson, who is our fantastic local cop. He acts very quickly on any complaint in regard to hooning. I wish to thank some former police officers. I thank Doc from Coomera, who most people knew from the road traffic branch, and Ross Kouimanis. Ross Kouimanis was a local from Nerang. He was a senior constable who worked at Coomera with the traffic police for many years. He has since retired, but I believe that at the moment he is actively working somewhere else, doing something that he loves. Even during Labor's reign, Doc and Ross came with me to speak to the media about hooning and graffiti. Unfortunately, one of those men had to retire. I take my hat off to them both for the wonderful work that they did in my electorate.

Again, I congratulate Minister Dempsey. This is fantastic. It is what the police want to see. It is great that we have a Minister for Police who has been a policeman and knows exactly what he is doing. Again, I congratulate the minister. My electorate is very happy that this legislation has been introduced to the House.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (8.47 pm): Tonight I rise in the chamber to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I will never forget her. It was 1988, the year of Expo. She was sleek, had curves in all the right places and was low to the ground. She was my 1977 Mustang Celica. She was Monza red. The gearstick knob was a pool ball. She had twin BorgWarner carburetors and a Fujitsu Ten 800-watt amplifier in the back. She was my undoubted love, joy and passion at the time. Yes, like many colleagues here tonight, I was a passionate collector of cars. I was an enthusiast, but certainly I was not a hoon. I will always remember the sheen and the lustre. Every night in the garage, I would get that nappy and rub to bring up that beautiful Monza red lustre. Therefore, as much as the next person I appreciate people with a passion for cars. There is nothing at all wrong with that. However, as has been said in the House already, there is a big distinction between a passion for vehicles and hoons. They are a scourge and this bill will go a long way to ridding society of just those folk whom we do not need on the road. Therefore, I also take this opportunity to commend the Newman government and, in particular, the Minister for Police and Community Safety, the Hon. Jack Dempsey, for bringing this important bill to the House.

This amendment bill will ensure that we deliver on our commitment to Queenslanders to crack down on unsocial behaviour in our local communities. Secondly, I would also like to commend the Newman government and the minister for ensuring that Queensland is a state that has one of the toughest, if not the toughest, hooning laws in the whole of the country.

As the proud member for Chatsworth, I am pleased to rise here tonight to talk about what this government will be doing to clamp down on hoons in our local streets. Whilst this is not a widespread issue, the back streets of Gumdale and Wakerley do have problems with hooning from time to time. I note that the police district for my electorate in 2012 had 16 type 1 offences and 1,929 type 2 offences.

This amendment bill ensures that the government, as a part of the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan, will be able to send a very clear message to hoons. The message to hoons in our local areas will be that in the coming months we will have some of the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation—in fact, probably the toughest. This message will be sent loud and clear to any individual who engages in hooning or is even contemplating hooning on our local roads.

My constituents in the Chatsworth electorate can be assured that the Newman government does not tolerate individuals who engage in unsafe behaviour on our local roads. We are not just a government that says we will be tough on crime, we certainly mean business. This amendment bill will ensure individuals know there is a real price to pay for their unsafe and antisocial behaviour.

The Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 will ensure that the commitments of the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan can be achieved—commitments such as ensuring drivers of hooning cars have their wheels clamped and are unable to return to the wheel for three months. Occasionally, I have constituents in my Chatsworth electorate worrying about the impact of crime and antisocial behaviour in our local area.

I truly believe that this amendment bill is a step in the right direction in ensuring that residents feel safe in their streets once again. Let us not pull any punches here. Hooning in our local areas can and does cost lives. There is no rhyme or reason to drive at high speeds in local suburban streets in the Chatsworth electorate or any suburban streets throughout Queensland for that matter. We all know that speeding kills and this amendment bill will ensure my constituents do not fear travelling their local streets.

This amendment bill will address the administrative and operational inefficiencies that have previously existed with vehicle impoundment. It will ensure that evading police and high-end speeding offences, above 40 kilometres an hour, will be classified as type 1 and type 2 vehicle related offences respectively. Individuals who commit a second vehicle related offence will face five years of impoundment. Up until now it has been three years for impoundment.

This amendment bill will also seek to allow individuals to be penalised where appropriate through traffic infringement notices. Presently, proceedings were not able to occur until there was a notice to appear or arrest. This will ensure that individuals who engage in hooning will be punished quicker for their unsafe behaviour.

Police will automatically be able to start the motions of impounding a vehicle automatically, without waiting for the court applications to be processed. It will ensure that our processes within the criminal system are streamlined and efficient. No longer will a police officer have to spend copious amounts of time preparing an application for court. Presently, applications have to be made to the court to start the proceedings to impound or to engage in forfeiture of a vehicle.

It is also pleasing to note that this amendment bill amends the definition of a 'burnout'. Presently, individuals who engage in driving behaviour that includes a loss of a vehicle's traction but where there is no smoke produced avoid being penalised under the type 1 vehicle impoundment scheme. Police will also be given the opportunity to engage in other methods of impounding such as tow and store, immobilisation/clamping, crushing, removal of registration plates and use of vehicle production notices.

This amendment bill perfectly aligns with the commitments of the Newman government—a government that is about slashing unnecessary red tape and which again ensures that we are providing the best possible front-line services to the residents of Chatsworth and fellow Queenslanders throughout the state. I thoroughly support the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This sensible and pragmatic amendment bill will finally bring some much needed tougher measures against Queenslanders who decide to engage in these antisocial antics. Again, thank you to the Minister for Police and Community Safety, the Hon. Jack Dempsey, and also the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for their work to bring this amendment bill to the House today.

I would also like to place on the record in this House on behalf of the Chatsworth electorate our deep and sincere appreciation to the Queensland Police Service for the tireless work they do each and every day to make our lives safer. The Queensland Police Service strive to protect all Queenslanders and it is only fitting that we as a government ensure that they are able to get on with their job with a minimum of red tape and unnecessary paperwork. I thoroughly commend this amendment bill to the House.

 **Mr GULLEY** (Murrumba—LNP) (8.54 pm): I rise to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and the Hon. Jack Dempsey MP, Minister for Police and Community Safety. From the outset we need to identify that this bill is about redressing the actions of a small minority in our society who seek to break the law and deliberately set out to act in an antisocial manner and disregard the rights of others in society.

In my maiden speech I spoke about having long hair. I also spoke about driving a HQ panel van the day I met my future father-in-law.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr GULLEY: I was a responsible driver. It probably was not as well loved as the member for Chatsworth's car. I did not polish it each night, but it did have Holden written across the back and was lowered a little bit.

Mr Holswich: Because you spent more time on your hair.

Mr GULLEY: Yes, I probably spent more time combing my hair than the member for Chatsworth did. It did have a bench seat, but we will not go there.

Ms Millard: What's in the back, Reg?

Mr GULLEY: I will not tell you what is in the back. I was camping. I will tell the member for Maryborough that I learnt much of my driving on private property. I was a very responsible young man and stayed off public roads.

I will move on to the bill being debated tonight. Type 1 offences apply to a range of traffic offences commonly known as hooning. This bill is not aimed at enthusiasts and their vehicles. The bill is aimed at the minority. I compliment the minister for targeting the antisocial behaviour of this minority. This bill is designed to protect the good people who live on or near but not exclusively Discovery Drive in North Lakes or Bailey Road in Deception Bay or Nathan Road in Rothwell. This bill is about antisocial behaviour.

Other speakers have talked about evasion and speeding and sliding. I am glad the member for Ipswich now knows what sliding is. The bill we are debating tonight is about ensuring that the small minority in society who set out to disregard the law are hurt where it really matters—that is through the impoundment of their vehicles and real fines.

I will turn to type 2 offences and the impoundment scheme that applies—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Honourable members, I think we need to pay some respect to the speaker.

Mr GULLEY: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Murrumba, it was drifting, not sliding.

Mr GULLEY: Thank you for that correction, Mr Deputy Speaker. I now turn to type 2 offences and the impoundment scheme which applies to offences such as unlicensed and unregistered driving. As much as I respect the good work in the electorate of the former member for Murrumba, this is one example where his views could not differ anything more to mine. I quote from an article in the *Courier-Mail* of 10 September 2009 titled 'Fury as MP Dean Wells gets man off traffic charges'. It stated—

A state Labor parliamentarian moonlighting as a barrister has angered police prosecutors by helping a constituent beat multiple traffic charges.

Former Attorney-General Dean Wells ... appeared in the Redcliffe Magistrate's Court to defend a 21-year-old constituent.

The young man as named in the paper pleaded guilty to driving on a suspended licence but was discharged by the magistrate after Dean Wells represented him. Officers would have been rightly infuriated that a member of the then government would go to court to get a repeat traffic offender back onto the road and avoid traffic fines. The article goes on to state that the young man lost his licence on 24 May 2009 as a result of unpaid traffic fines for driving a defective vehicle.

Then when he was caught driving unlicensed he said he was not aware that his licence was suspended. The police warned him not to drive but yet 15 minutes later they picked him up. Can I now give an opinion in the chamber. If we have a member of parliament who goes soft on deliberate road offenders, what hope do we have? When we have a government that went soft on road offenders, what hope did we have? I commend the new police minister. I commend the new government for redressing that imbalance and protecting the majority of society. I support the police minister. I support the bill.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (8.59 pm): I rise today to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a bill that will introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in Australia. Mr Deputy Speaker, I have four sons—need I say more. Can I say as a dad that the changes proposed in this legislation are an important deterrent not just for my boys but for all young people in Queensland and for those who would choose to engage in such antisocial behaviour.

As much as I love my boys and as hard as Melinda and I have worked to teach them good values and act responsibly, the fact is that boys always want to push the boundaries. A police warning and the risk of impoundment put the wind up one of my boys a few years ago when a lapsed moment of judgement almost led to him losing his licence and the threat of impoundment of his vehicle.

Mr Johnson: It would still put the wind up me.

Mr MOLHOEK: It would put the wind up anyone. As a result of the threat of impoundment even back then, he drives like a nanna now. Also, one of my other boys—because boys always want to test the limits a little—learnt a costly lesson after a failed attempt at drifting in a shopping centre car park late one night around a roundabout.

Mrs Frecklington: What's drifting?

Mr MOLHOEK: That is when you go sideways and pull the handbrake on, member for Nanango. That was a fairly costly exercise because there was one car rim and a tyre that did not really bear up too well as they hit the side kerb. But they were lucky. Sadly, the son of a very close family friend tragically has permanent brain injury as a result of some poor choices he made in his late teens. He is now permanently consigned to a wheelchair and requires around-the-clock care as a result of brain acquired injury and other significant disability.

The bill before us today is important on so many levels. These new tougher penalties for hooning offences send the strongest possible message to our young people that we are serious about their safety and personal wellbeing. We are also serious about the rights of others in our communities and that is why it is important that we increase these penalties. These penalties will increase: for first offences, the offender's car will be clamped and then taken off our road for three months; and for subsequent offences, within five years of the first offence the offender's car will be forfeited or crushed. It is sad that we have to introduce such tough legislation, but unfortunately the level of antisocial behaviour that some within our community continue to inflict on our neighbourhoods has made this legislation very necessary. If these individuals cannot be responsible members of our community, they do not deserve the right to be driving on our community's roads. Enough is enough!

Some constituents from my electorate of Southport, particularly car enthusiasts, have contacted me regarding their concerns. They have suggested that these new sanctions will be a burden on them, that they are unfairly targeted towards a minority of road users and that they threaten their rights as citizens. I have told them and other constituents that if you respect the law and other community members then this legislation will not be a burden on you or your fellow car enthusiasts, provided you do the right thing. I believe this legislation is fair. It will only affect those who choose to flaunt the law, disregard police orders and disrupt communities with their bad hooning behaviour. There is a responsibility for all enthusiasts no matter what field they explore to respect the law and rights of their fellow members in our community.

Many Southport constituents have contacted me about ongoing hooning and antisocial behaviour that they have had to put up with for years. During my campaign, hooning was among one of the most common concerns raised in the electorate. As a former Gold Coast City councillor, I received complaints almost every week at my regular listening posts and mobile offices. I note that in the south-east region—those areas covering the Gold Coast, Coomera and Logan—we saw some 158 type 1 hooning offences and 124 type 1 vehicle impoundments just last year. For type 2 offences, hooning behaviours such as unlicensed driving and driving an unregistered vehicle, there were some 9,915 offences and 1,886 impoundments—with 509 of these were just on the Gold Coast. These statistics tell me that hoons are just not getting the message. They tell me that hoons do not consider the penalties for these offences serious enough to stop them hooning, to stop them offending.

I would like to share the contents of an email I received from a constituent some months ago. It clearly highlights his frustration with the current situation. It states—

Dear Rob,

I have phoned the Southport Police and reported this guy on approximately 20 occasions. He lives just down the road from me. He lives in a run-down fibro shack. You can't miss it. He hides the vehicle out the back of his property, out of sight. His property is fully fenced and he only takes the vehicle out for weekend joy-rides and, every time, he does a massive burnout up our road and screams past our place. He actually has THREE CARS. One is a high top van, (Silver). One is a Black Honda Prelude. The 3rd car is a DRAG CAR. This is the one he does the burnouts in.

Whenever he takes the drag-car out, he parks one of his other cars across his own driveway.

Rob, all I am asking is for the cops to go around to his house, politely knock on his door and have a quiet word with him and ask if he has seen anybody doing burnouts in this street. Maybe they could ask him to step outside and take a little stroll down the end of the road and show him where the skid marks are, just in case he ever sees anyone doing anything like this in future.

He says maybe they could ask for his help. They may even ask him to call them if he sees anyone doing burnouts in the future. Maybe the threat of police intervention would slow him down. I am advised by the Southport police that they have visited this gentleman on a few occasions in the past and it has not modified his behaviour. My constituent says that his request is pretty simple, that

of course while they are there they could always ask if they could have a quick look at his car and see what kind of reaction he gives. He says maybe they could have a look around the back and see if there is a methamphetamine lab out the back or bring a sniffer dog or two! This constituent is pretty angry. He has been putting up with these issues for quite a while. He goes on to say—

Rob his car is a DRAG CAR. It is TOTALLY BOMBED! It is so extreme that he 'hides it' in a special shed around the back of his house. He always locks his driveway fence gates whenever he takes it out for a spin, and he always leaves his 'other car' parked right across his own driveway, until he returns.

Please Rob, help us take this idiot off the road.

Why don't the Police just go and have a word to this guy????

Simple.

Thanks mate!

This constituent has asked a simple question. It is the same question that many in our communities ask. It is a very good question, one that we can hopefully address and answer by passing the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and introducing the toughest hooning laws in the nation. I should point out that since I raised this with my district officer at Southport they have been out and pretty much followed my constituent's advice and they have dealt with the offender—something my predecessor, the former Labor member for Southport, after 20 complaints failed to address.

Under our government's new rules, the inefficiencies in administering and operating the laws as well as the current lenient penalties will be adjusted to help police keep hooners, like the one I have just described, off our streets. Hooning is not the behaviour of an individual who respects the law or their neighbours or other community members. It saddens me that we have to take these steps today, to legislate for idiots, if you like, but it is necessary for the peace and safety of all constituents, not just in Southport but it is also important for the safety and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (9.09 pm): I rise to speak to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. Like other speakers, I believe that our roads need to be used safely. Like other speakers, I find it unacceptable that risky behaviours occur on our roads, whether that is in Southport, Brisbane or rural and regional Queensland. Other speakers have talked about the difference between a hoon and a car enthusiast, and I hope that there will be training to enable police officers make that difference. There are a lot of young people who do up their cars. They do it because that is their hobby or because, like half the blokes and some of the women in this chamber, young fellows are born as petrolheads and they cannot help themselves. The vehicle has to be lowered, they have to have what used to be extractors, they have to put lumpy cams in, it has to sound like a truck and it has to run like a mad pig. Having said that, if we are going to make it—and so we should—incredibly difficult for young people to do the wrong thing on the road, we need to give them places where they can let off steam.

On a previous occasion when we talked about the hooning legislation I talked about an area in Gladstone. It was a public space. Actually it was state government land, but it has now been built on so they cannot use it anymore. It was called the levels. The young blokes used to take their vehicles there on Friday and Saturday nights. It was pretty much a clay pit and they used to let off a bit of steam around there.

In my electorate the young people are lucky; they do have an alternative. The Central Queensland Drag Racing Association out at Benaraby Raceway has drag-racing nights for people to take their street cars and do the quarter mile. I commend the Central Queensland Drag Racing Association. They have a tremendous rapport in the community for allowing both modified and unmodified vehicles to go out. The young ones who drive—and it is mainly young ones—pay a very small fee to get on the quarter mile and to let it rip.

Whilst it is important that this risky behaviour does not occur on our streets, I do believe it is important that we give young people—young men and women as well as older men and women—somewhere that they can safely let off steam. In the litigious society in which we live many pursuits that I, my brothers and no doubt some of the members of this chamber used to do in our youth are no longer catered for. Things like riding bikes in public places are banned because if somebody falls off their bike the council or the government might be sued. Places where young people can take their first vehicle—and it might be a public place—is banned. It is not allowed because there is a risk of being sued. Again, I am not supporting risky behaviour on our public roads. I am not supporting

unacceptable behaviour in our suburban streets. However, I am saying that young people have not changed a lot since we were young—if we can remember that long ago—and they do need places to let off steam.

I commend the police officers in my electorate. They do a wonderful job and we do have our share of young men and women—and older men and women, dare I say it—who act inappropriately in the suburban streets, and the police do respond. Is the community happy 100 per cent with the response? No, but it is very difficult for police to receive a complaint, turn out and be there when an offence is being committed. There has to be proof. There has to be an opportunity for the accused person to be able to validly deny the behaviour of which they are accused. There has to be this balancing act. Again I say that we have to have places where particularly young people can safely get through this part of their life.

Included in this legislation is the type 2 vehicle impoundment scheme which will apply to offences such as unlicensed and unregistered driving. I ask the minister for a response to this concern. Driving without a licence is reprehensible and the implication of driving an unregistered vehicle, particularly in terms of third-party insurance and the impact on the community, is also unacceptable. Over the last couple of years it has become apparent that people are unwittingly being caught driving unlicensed because they have not received the paperwork from SPER. I know the response is that SPER sends the bluey out to the last formal address that that person is listed at. Can I ask the minister to consider sending those notifications, particularly a notification that a person's licence is to be cancelled, by registered mail which requires the recipient to sign for it? Otherwise there is no way for either the person who is about to lose their licence or indeed SPER to know that that person was not in receipt of the notification.

It is fine to say that it is up to the person to keep their particulars up to date. Yes, it is; I do not disagree, but it does not always happen. Sometimes there can be a hiatus between when a person moves and then registers their change of address. There could be genuine circumstances where the person has had so much on their mind that they have not thought to change their address. Registered mail would at least alert SPER to the fact that the person is not in receipt, particularly of such important correspondence as notification that their licence is about to be cancelled. The government is introducing quite strict penalties for driving unlicensed and unregistered. I would not defend people who drive in that way intentionally. But I would ask that, for the benefit of those people who genuinely are driving unlicensed because they do not realise that there has been an accumulation of points or more particularly an accumulation of unpaid penalties with the compounding effect of interest in relation to SPER fines, those notifications be sent out by registered mail.

There would not be a responsible person in my electorate who would support hooning on our suburban streets. I just hope that as we pass legislation in this place—and it is defensible and it is right—we also remember that young people are young people—some old people are young people—and that they need an opportunity to let off steam in a safe and controlled environment. In my electorate we have the Central Queensland Drag Racing Association, the speedway and a few others. However, not every electorate has that opportunity. I commend those concerns to the minister and I look forward to his response.

 **Mr KAYE** (Greenslopes—LNP) (9.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I start by apologising if I offend or upset anybody with a couple of comments I will make. When I started my police career I commenced picking up body parts off the road at fatal traffic accidents at the age of 19. Throughout my career, unfortunately, I cannot remember how many I attended. I also cannot remember how many people were killed in the accidents that I attended. I certainly cannot remember the number of relatives whom I had to inform that their loved ones had passed.

This bill makes numerous amendments to the current legislation which are long overdue. They provide vast benefits, particularly in the area of saving our police officers valuable time by streamlining processes for all involved. I do intend to keep this contribution short. As a recent former police officer, I wish to highlight a number of areas that will be of particular interest to our hardworking men and women of the Queensland Police Service. I am well placed to make this comment having been a serving officer when the original legislation was introduced as well as having feedback from my former colleagues.

The cost benefit in the adoption of this bill will increase the ability of the QPS to respond to calls for service and increase their coverage of the Queensland road network. The reduction in red tape and the increase of intelligence led and proactive policing can only be a good thing for the

Queensland community. The automatic nature of the sanctions is long overdue and there will be significant cost benefits to all parties involved: the QPS, the court system and the alleged offender. Defendants still have the right to elect a court hearing but are not forced to attend court if they simply wish to pay an infringement notice.

This bill will greatly increase the effectiveness of operational police to carry out their duties and the service strategic goals of enhancing community safety and security through conducting intelligence led traffic enforcement and road safety initiatives, as stated in the QPS Strategic Plan 2012-2016. This bill will only target those who continually flout the road rules and thereby show little or no regard for the majority of our law-abiding community. Hooning in itself is an extremely selfish offence and has no regard for anybody, whether it be other road users or other people in the offending motor vehicle.

These amendments highlight the way this legislation should have been formulated and enacted in the first place. The current practices are inefficient and involve such a convoluted process so as to discourage police from carrying out their sworn duty. I have seen general-duty crews off the road for an entire eight-hour shift after impounding a motor vehicle at the beginning of the shift. This was followed by numerous inquiries over numerous weeks following the impoundment. The current legislation, whilst looking good on its face, is in reality a nightmare and extremely frustrating for police. The legislation as it stands ties police up in a paperwork nightmare and literally starves Queensland communities of their police.

The amending of the definition of a burnout by removing the requirement for smoke to be produced when drive wheels lose traction also addresses the issue that currently exists. This is a common-sense approach that will enable police to act when no smoke is produced, for example when the road is wet. The only people who should have any concern in relation to this legislation are those who have no regard for the safety or rights of other members of our community. I have absolutely no sympathy for anyone committing offences captured by this legislation. The safeguards ensure that unsuspecting owners of vehicles are not adversely affected any more than absolutely necessary and that affected Queensland families are not placed in undue financial hardship due to the actions of one irresponsible person.

The ability for the commissioner or his delegate to return an impounded vehicle in a timely fashion, instead of the matter waiting for court, is effective and efficient. The options available to police, especially those in areas where towing is not an immediate option, will greatly assist police and prevent the continuation of offences where towing is not available. The inclusion of evading police as a type 1 offence is long overdue and assists in streamlining the process.

These amendments unashamedly ensure Queensland has the toughest anti-hooning legislation in the nation. I place on record my thanks and those of the committee—I also pass on the thanks of the men and women of the Queensland Police Service—to the minister for bringing this bill before the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (9.22 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. Despite current speed management strategies, speeding continues to be a main factor in road crashes and road fatalities. As at 7 April this year the number of fatalities on Queensland roads was 78—17 more than at the same time in 2012 and 78 more than necessary. Clearly, the message to drive responsibly is not getting through, and the current regulatory regime requires more teeth to be effective.

This bill will see the government get tough on reckless drivers by implementing the toughest anti-hooning laws in Australia. The new laws will see an offender's car taken off the road and impounded for 90 days following the first serious offence, also known as a type 1 vehicle offence. Evading police is an example of a type 1 vehicle offence, whilst high-end speeding—that is, driving in excess of 40 kilometres an hour above the speed limit—is an example of a type 2 vehicle related offence. A second serious offence committed within five years of the first will result in the car being sold or crushed.

Under the present regime there is no provision for immediate impoundment. Applications must be made to a court for a vehicle to be subject to an impounding or forfeiture order. This is a system which is cumbersome, inefficient and expensive. For too long hoons have had almost had right of passage on the community's roads. They know the law and they know how to get one up on the police. In fact, the incidence of people seeking to evade police has increased since 2007. A CMC study shows that there have been 19 deaths and some 700 injuries associated with accidents from vehicles seeking to evade police.

It is my belief, as well as the belief of many of my constituents and members of the Queensland Police Service, that a more flexible impoundment regime would reduce the occurrence of this type of offending and improve the safety of Queensland roads. Our government is committed—through the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan—to getting tough on crime in order to ensure that Queensland is a safe place to live, visit and work. The proposed anti-hooning laws will tackle hoons head-on and will go a long way to eradicating dangerous driver behaviour on our streets.

The local residents in the Sunnybank electorate have had enough of hoons receiving a slap on the wrist under the previous government's weak laws and penalties. During my pre-election campaign I spoke with the residents of Sunnybank and found hooning and other antisocial behaviours to be of major concern.

There are 17 schools in my electorate and I have been contacted on numerous occasions by principals, staff and P&Cs seeking assurances that speed limits around their schools will be enforced. This is a particular problem as three of these schools are on Lister Street, which is ranked as one of the areas in Queensland with the highest number of traffic infringements during school times.

I have been contacted by one member of the community with particular concerns relating to police targeting car enthusiasts. I have complete confidence in the police carrying out their duties in an honest and ethical manner. At this stage I advise the House that I myself have competed in amateur off-road racing. I have been fortunate enough to participate in the Variety Bash, from time to time we test the limits of our family four-wheel drive on beach and bush tracks and I sacrifice the skin on my knuckles to repair or rebuild a vehicle or lend a hand to a friend who wants that extra two inches of clearance so his family are able to visit Cape York. I ask you: does this make me a hoon? Will I be targeted by the police? No.

Law-abiding car enthusiasts with legal modifications are not the intended target for this bill. The hoons or car enthusiasts with illegal modifications are not stupid: they know when they install illegal modifications. They choose to push the boundaries and take a gamble. All I can say is: now the stakes have been raised. Whether they like it or not, if they choose to put lives at risk with antisocial behaviour or illegal modifications then they are all in.

As the local member for Sunnybank I welcome the changes on behalf of my local residents. I thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety for the bill's introduction. Whilst the police do a wonderful job, one concern I had was that an officer who does not have an in-depth knowledge of a vehicle and its modifications may inadvertently consider it to be illegally modified and issue a fine accordingly. As such, I am glad that the minister noted in his second reading speech that the reforms will be rolled out over time, allowing for our essential law enforcement officers to receive training and for an education campaign for the community to be carried out.

I echo the sentiments of the member for Gladstone and say that it is very important for the youth in our community to have somewhere to go and practise their driving, whether it be through amateur off-road racing, speedway tracks or drifting tracks. Many children grow up with go-cart racing and so on. It is so important to have those facilities available and accessible.

The Queensland government needs to continue to send a strong message that hooning and other disruptive community behaviour will not be tolerated on our roads. This bill will go a long way to achieving this objective. I believe that this bill is designed to address hoons' behaviour before they kill or injure themselves or, more importantly, an innocent bystander. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs RICE** (Mount Coot-tha—LNP) (9.28 pm): This evening I rise in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and am pleased to make a short contribution. As we have already heard throughout this debate, this bill is otherwise known as the anti-hooning bill and it does indeed introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in the nation. The bill implements the government's election commitment in this regard and is articulated through the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan for delivery in the government's six-month action plan. This commitment includes hooning cars being clamped and off the road for three months for the first offence and hooning cars being forfeited or crushed for any subsequent offence within the next five years.

The bill amends the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Corrective Services Act 2006 and not surprisingly, and like many of my colleagues, the particular part of the bill that I am keen to focus on is the amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. Currently the act provides two schemes for the impoundment and forfeiture of motor vehicles used to commit certain offences—namely, the type 1 and 2 vehicle impoundment scheme. In my community there are differing views on what hooning is and how it should be defined, but under the legislation it is

classified in two ways. Type 1 offences, which are considered a serious offence by the act and the Queensland Police Service, are the dangerous operation of a vehicle, careless driving, participation in speed trials or races and starting or driving a vehicle making unnecessary noise or smoke. Type 2 offences include driving an uninsured and unregistered vehicle, certain unlicensed or disqualified driving, driving under the influence of alcohol, failing to provide a breath specimen at a traffic stop and driving under suspension. Hooning offences apply equally to cars and motorbikes, but currently the penalty for a type 1 first offence is that a vehicle may be impounded for 48 hours.

The bill amends chapter 4 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act to include evade police offences as a type 1 offence and high-end speeding as a type 2 offence. It also importantly increases impoundment sanctions to 90 days for the first type 1 offence and forfeiture for the second or subsequent offence. For type 2 vehicle related offences, it is seven days for the second type 2 offence, 90 days for the third type 2 offence and forfeiture for any subsequent offence. It also introduces additional measures as an alternative to impounding vehicles such as clamping, removing of numberplates and vehicle production notices. Finally, it also allows the commissioner to release impounded or immobilised motor vehicles upon application by the owner or usual driver in certain circumstances.

I support the minister in his implementation of this policy because, as he said in his introductory comments to this bill, this government is serious about addressing hooning and other illegal driving behaviour on our roads because this type of behaviour has a direct impact on the safety of all road users. This is true for the residents in my electorate, particularly given the countless complaints made to my office about dangerous and careless driving on our local streets and also the complaints about unnecessary noise from vehicles which interrupt the local amenity of our suburbs.

In acknowledgement of the seriousness of these offences and the fact that the implementation of this policy is a significant change with serious penalties, I am pleased that the minister has supported the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's recommendation to delay the commencement of these provisions to ensure sufficient time to address logistical and administrative changes associated with the bill and to educate the community about the nature of these changes. A period of at least six months has been set aside to ensure the necessary work can be done prior to the commencement of the bill and time will be needed to educate the public about these changes through a public awareness campaign. This will also be needed to effectively engage with service providers in the towing industry and to ensure that appropriate policies and training are in place so that the Queensland Police Service can smoothly implement these amendments.

As the committee pointed out, this bill is not all about crushing cars but is about improving road safety across-the-board for all Queensland drivers and passengers on Queensland's roads. While the minister mentioned some striking statistics about human tragedy on our roads, it is also worth noting that in my local police district of Brisbane West there were around 720 offences across both type 1 and type 2 offences in 2012. Part of the electorate of Mount Coot-tha also falls into the Brisbane Central police district, but even still there were 945 offences in 2012. These are significant statistics in themselves, and with the greater deterrent provided by this bill I certainly look forward to seeing those statistics start to decline.

In Mt Coot-tha a substantial number of constituents have said to me that hooning is a problem and that they are concerned at both the noise and safety issues associated with the activity. In particular, streets in Bardon, Paddington and Auchenflower and specifically those areas off Milton Road, Coopers Camp Road and Fredrick Street have been hooning hot spots, and I would imagine a large number of the offences that I mentioned before have been committed in these areas. Road safety for drivers, passengers and all road users is of paramount importance to this government. In my electorate I am also particularly concerned for those cyclists who gather at Rosalie Village early every morning and those who use Sir Samuel Griffith Drive. I congratulate the Minister for Police and Community Safety on this bill and commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.34 pm): It gives me great pleasure in rising in the House tonight to make a very short contribution to the debate in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. It goes without saying that this bill follows through on the government's pre-election commitment in bringing in the toughest anti-hooning laws in the country. Before we go any further, I ponder the question: what is a hoon? The *Oxford Dictionary* says 'a lout or hooligan, especially a young man who drives recklessly'. I think almost everyone in this place has seen plenty of evidence of that in their days, not only necessarily working in their electorates but well before they came into this place.

Many people call them hoons; I simply refer to them as ratbags on our roads. In my own electorate I see it often. I see it in the northern suburbs of Mackay on Mackay-Bucasia Road at Rural View, Malcomson Street at Mount Pleasant, Eimeo Road and on it goes. There has been quite a bit of misinformation in relation to this debate as far as I am concerned. What I do know is that the number of modified vehicles that have been impounded has been minuscule in recent times. I understand that in 2011 of the last 10,000 vehicles impounded, less than 20 were impounded for modifications. What I want to say here is what other government members have already said here tonight—that is, car enthusiasts have absolutely nothing to fear. Therefore, it was disappointing on 2 March 2013 when reading the *Daily Mercury* to see a story in relation to this issue. It states—

Mackay resident and proud member of the Australian Confederation of Motorclubs, Russel Soper, said he supported any reform that took hoons off the road.

However, the headline in that day's edition for that story was 'Car enthusiasts fear new law will tar them with "hoon" brush'. Go figure! In the same story there was a quote attributed to the member for Mackay and Deputy Leader of the Opposition where he said—

This legislation will affect every driver in Queensland ...

I disagree. It will affect every driver who is a hoon in Queensland. There is one heck of a difference.

The car enthusiasts in the Mackay and Whitsundays—the region that I proudly represent in this place—are many in number, and on the second weekend of August every year since 2011 they gather in the picturesque coastal community of Seaforth for the annual car show. And guess who runs the car show at Seaforth? I will tell honourable members who runs the car show—Senior Constable Stuart Phillis from Seaforth police beat. I am sure that, if you talk to Senior Constable Phillis and his colleagues at various police stations in my electorate such as the northern beaches of Mackay, Farleigh and Calen, Proserpine and Cannonvale, they will tell you that the government needs to do more. And guess what? We are doing more.

It is what people wanted and it resonated with the people of Queensland in the lead-up to the 24 March election last year. I might add that that car show at Seaforth is a great fundraiser for my local community with a great tradition of funds going to that great worthwhile local organisation CQ Rescue, which does such a wonderful job in looking after not only locals but also visitors to the Mackay-Whitsunday region.

Earlier it was very interesting to hear a contribution from the member for Rockhampton, who referred to dipsticks and all sorts of incidents in his patch in Central Queensland and he said—

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: Not the good oil necessarily. I take that interjection from the member for Beaudesert. But the good oil is this line—

... I personally cannot stand these dipsticks on our roads that put my family and community at risk.

I agree wholeheartedly with what the member for Rockhampton has said. But the member for Rockhampton cannot have it both ways. If he wants an each-way bet, he should go—

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: He can shake his head as much as he wants, but if he wants to have an each-way bet he should go to Callaghan Park this Saturday.

Mr Cripps: Tomwaterhouse.com.

Mr COSTIGAN: There is another option. I will take that interjection from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines—absolutely. The member for Rockhampton cannot have it both ways. That is the reality. You come into this place and you have to make the tough calls. You cannot sit there and get splinters and go to the doctor to get them out.

The member for Gladstone mentioned Benaraby Raceway, which I remember from my days in Central Queensland. There are a number of places for people who want to get out there and get those juices flowing. They can go to the Benaraby Raceway, or the Benaraby Dragway, the home of motorsport in the Gladstone region. They can go to the Rocky showgrounds or the Rocky speedway—I remember it fondly from my days when Larry Nelson was the promoter there—or Mac's Speedway at Mackay. If you like the go-carts, go to Keilbach Park at Palmyra or the Palmyra Dragway. You can go to Tonker Park, which is the home of motorsport in the Whitsundays, where a lot of people are going out there to learn about road safety. There is Pioneer Park at Brandon, which I have been to as well.

Mr Krause: Willowbank.

Mr COSTIGAN: Willowbank. It goes on and on. There are many venues across Queensland where people can get those juices flowing if they so desire, but not on our roads, and it should be not negotiable. With the Newman government it is not negotiable. Honourable members, we cannot be powder puffs and pillows on this. People expected us to do more in protecting the people of Queensland. There have been too many sad stories—stories of heartache that still linger for families across Queensland. Whatever we do in the House tonight will not bring back those loved ones, but it will make our roads safer and make Queensland a place that other jurisdictions in this nation sit up and take note.

This bill sends a very powerful message to those hoons who think that they can use our roads as a speedway, as a racetrack—as whatever. If you hoon, police will impound your car, police will clamp your car and if you still do not get the message, police will crush your car. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (9.43 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill. Many speakers before me have spoken about the details of the bill and how the amendments to the impoundment and seizure provisions and changes to the definition of type 1 and type 2 impoundment schemes will operate. I will address briefly from a local perspective—from the Beaudesert electorate—why these provisions should be supported.

Various areas within my electorate are affected by hooning and dangerous driving. Indeed, having driven over 30,000 kilometres throughout the electorate in the past 12 months, I witness daily such driver behaviour, including high-level speeding, which offends decent residents and endangers the lives of law-abiding road users. In this respect I endorse the sentiments just expressed by the member for Whitsunday.

Residents near Albert River Place in Tamborine, which is just off Waterford-Tamborine Road, residents in Tubber Street and Edward Street in Beaudesert, recreational users at Wyaralong Dam and road users on the Boonah-Beaudesert Road are regularly put at risk by groups of hoons doing burnouts in the middle of main roads with 100-kilometre per hour speed limits and doing burnouts in streets where residents live and try to sleep through the illegal and disruptive behaviour of hoons. Some live in fear as sometimes dozens of vehicles descend on various favourite hooning spots right outside people's homes to engage in races down both lanes of main roads and perform burnouts across the entire width of these roads. This often occurs late at night and continues into the early hours of the morning. It frightens elderly ladies—it frightens elderly residents—and young families.

Dangerous driving and hooning affects the whole community. It endangers the lives of those hooning and bystanders, it disrupts the peace and quiet of local streets and towns and it consumes vast amounts of police time, which could be better utilised patrolling our streets to deter break and enters or in combating youth crime or the infiltration of drugs into our communities.

I see two important aspects to this bill. Firstly, it provides a deterrent to people knowing that their vehicle will be seized and potentially crushed. This legislation sends a clear message that will be heard and will to an extent deter people from engaging in hooning and other reckless behaviour on our roads. The importance of deterrence should not be understated. Secondly, this legislation provides a lawful remedy to prevent repeat offences. The seizure and crushing of vehicles necessarily limits the ability of offenders to reoffend in their vehicle, contributing to the protection of law-abiding road users and residents.

This legislation is necessary, because this parliament needs to send a message that the reckless and idiotic dangerous use of motor vehicles will not be tolerated. This legislation is necessary as a first step, but an essential step and only the first step in seeking to bring about, as the member for Coomera referred to earlier, a change in attitude in drivers, some of whom seem to think that it is okay to use the road as a racetrack and that the law does not apply to them when they are behind the wheel. This attitude needs to change. This lack of respect for society, lack of respect for the law and lack of respect for the police who work so hard in keeping our society safe must change. I have alluded to this before in this place and it is worth repeating. Without law there is no freedom and I say without respect for the law by all in society, including those who use our roads, there can be no freedom for our law-abiding citizens and road users. The provisions in this bill are no silver bullet that will achieve all of these lofty ideals. They will not make all road users perfect, but this bill is a clear statement of intent that provides both a deterrent and also a preventive mechanism.

I pay tribute to the continuing efforts of both Jimboomba police, led by Senior Sergeant Bill Sheehan, and Beaudesert police, with Senior Sergeant Chris Stewart leading the way, for the work they do in combating hoons in the community. The Jimboomba police in particular have gone out of their way to support the community affected by hooning. The member for Logan would also be well aware of this matter, as his electorate shares the Jimboomba police resources with the Beaudesert electorate. Recently, the Beaudesert police have had four additional police officers allocated to it, which will enable 24-hour policing in Beaudesert and a greater police presence to combat hooning in that area. Twenty-four-hour policing is something that the community has been seeking for some time and I am proud to say that the advent of this LNP government has delivered for Beaudesert. I thank the minister for the government's commitment to delivering extra police resources for Queensland and for the Beaudesert community.

As many members have alluded, this bill is not aimed at motorsports enthusiasts. It is for people who abide by the law and who have nothing to fear. I have many motorsports enthusiasts in my electorate, including the Scenic Rim Motor Sports Association, which runs a series of events through the year, including their hot rod festival and the Garter Belts and Gasoline Festival, including the soapbox derby, which is coming up shortly. If they do not run it they are certainly involved in it.

The bill is not aimed at these types of events, it is not aimed at these types of enthusiasts. In fact, the proliferation of dragways and other motorsports precincts around Queensland are actually part of the solution in addressing hooning issues. Willowbank is outside of my electorate but not that far away and I know it is a place which many people from the region go to in order to engage in or indulge their passion for motorsports.

When it comes to hooning I know the police work very hard to detect and apprehend hoons and to bring them to justice, but the police cannot be everywhere at all times. In many cases hoons disappear when they know police are on the way. Often they are monitoring police radio and will be gone by the time police arrive. We need the community to have confidence that, when they report hooning, police will be able to deal with it swiftly and have the power to act. This legislation achieves that. I would suggest that working with local government to operate fixed or mobile CCTV cameras could also assist in enforcing this law where police cannot catch offenders at the scene of the hooning.

In conclusion, this bill sends a clear message to hoons that their actions, reckless and dangerous, will have consequences. This bill is a deterrent to engaging in hooning behaviour. This bill enables prevention of further hooning through the seizure and crushing provisions. This bill sets out the toughest anti-hooning provisions in the nation and I am glad to support the bill.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.51 pm), in reply: I thank all members who have contributed to the debate here today. I cannot overstate how important this bill is for Queensland. This bill will improve road safety by taking those who engage in dangerous and antisocial behaviour off our roads. I would now like to address some of the specific issues raised by members in the context of the debate. In response to the member for Rockhampton in regard to comments about the level of consultation undertaken in the bill, there was a public committee hearing, as we all know, in which public submissions were encouraged and 28 submissions were received.

In relation to performance indicators and measuring the effectiveness of the bill, the member for Rockhampton has commented that he wants performance indicators to confirm whether the vehicle impoundment schemes introduced by this bill will be successful. Determining whether a scheme is successful should not be measured by just looking at one benchmark. A multifaceted approach will be undertaken. Indicators may include the number of fatal traffic crashes, the number of injury traffic crashes and the number of impoundments. However, it would not be appropriate to limit the evaluation of the success of this legislation to these indicators alone. Other factors may be considered in determining its success such as its deterrence value and its effect on road safety as outlined by the member for Ipswich West.

I wish to clear up a number of misconceptions and alleviate a number of unnecessary fears by clarifying the position that this bill will take in relation to modified vehicles. Modified vehicles may only be impounded if the vehicle is being driven on a road while subject to a defect notice requiring it to be inspected by an authorised officer. Impoundment only applies if another type 2 vehicle related offence has taken place within the relevant period under this new legislation. The reality is that the number of modified vehicles being impounded is insignificant compared to vehicles impounded because of other offences. In 2011 the QPS impounded 9,116 vehicles. Only 19 vehicles were impounded due to being illegally modified. This represents only 0.2 per cent of all vehicles impounded in 2011 were due to a vehicle being illegally modified.

In relation to research that has been undertaken about vehicle impoundment, other jurisdictions have reported substantial reductions in offences through impounding vehicles. For example, in Saskatchewan in Canada a 50 per cent reduction was seen in disqualified driving when they impounded 2,500 vehicles a year for between 30 and 60 days. In that comparison there was definitely a lowering of those types of offences. Other reductions have been seen to occur in other jurisdictions, such as New Zealand and various states in the US. These studies point to vehicle impoundment acting as an efficient deterrent to that type of behaviour.

The other area of concern to a number of members was the implementation of the bill. I assure the member for Gladstone, as well as a number of other members, that the implementation of the bill will include compulsory training for all police officers from constable to inspector, developing policy and procedures, procurement and industry briefing processes and a media campaign to advise the Queensland community, including the consequences of committing hooning type offences.

Before moving on to the amendments to the Corrective Services Act that were addressed by the member for Rockhampton, I would also like to thank the member for Gaven for his comments. I can reassure him that a great deal of consideration has gone into the definition of a burnout and assure the member that this bill certainly rectifies that defect in the previous legislation.

In relation to the member for Gladstone's question regarding driving without a licence and her suggestion that registered mail is used for SPER instead of the current practice of regular mail, I would like to reassure the member for Gladstone that a number of safeguards have been put in place. I would point out that, if a person is unlicensed due to them forgetting to renew their licence and if the vehicle is impounded, it is returned upon the licence renewal being completed. Once police have the proper details that vehicle will certainly be handed back to that person. At the end of the day police officers have a discretion in relation to those types of offences. Police will want to have evidence before they impound a vehicle.

In relation to the amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006, I note the member for Rockhampton's concerns for young property offenders and the courts being less reluctant to keep alleged offenders in custody as there is no low-security classification. The government is focused on reducing red tape and redirecting resources to front-line services, which is the intention of these amendments. In practice, because of the high risk associated with remanded prisoners, they are only classified as either maximum or high security. This clause will allow an automatic classification of high security with the ability for a maximum security classification to be applied as necessary. This will streamline admission processes for these offenders and remove the need for consideration of classification, except for offenders identified as requiring a maximum security classification.

In plain speak, if the offender goes before the court and they are remanded and not sentenced to a jail term, we want to make sure that all care is taken of that person while they are in a correctional facility, whether it be a young person or a person of any age. In the past they used to be listed as low, medium, high or maximum. We are setting it at high because then there is less chance of checks and balances in relation to changing it up from low to high. We just set it as high security so that a person is placed in the proper facility within a correctional centre. Then it is up to the discretion of the centre management if they want to take them to a maximum security classification because of any particular reason. We want to set juveniles at a high standard. There are facilities all along the coastline to care for them. I hope that answers that particular question.

In closing, I acknowledge the extensive number of members of the government who have contributed to this debate here today. I particularly thank the members of the Queensland Police Service, the men and women who have prepared this legislation, and thank them for their time and effort. It certainly will stand the test of time. I know that that good work will keep our roads safer and the end result will be that people will be able to drive on our roads knowing that their rights are protected. At the end of the day it is a privilege to have a licence; it is not a right. With those few words I commend the bill to the House.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 84, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JM DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. JM DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.00 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.01 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Rockhampton Regional Council, Deamalgamation

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (10.02 pm): Members can imagine my joy last week when I read the *Courier-Mail* comments from the Minister for Local Government, David Crisafulli, regarding outstanding rate notices. The minister talks about other businesses not accepting the level of debt that councils are. That is the same minister who, in estimates last year, talked about the strong financial position of the Brisbane City Council, which is in a demonstrably worse position than that of the state. However, that ham-fisted nonsense and those pretentious platitudes distract me from what I really want to talk about.

Again, I emphasis my community's absolute disgust at the outcome of the recent amalgamation vote in the Rockhampton region. In this House, the minister suggested across the chamber that he fully supported the QTC report reflecting on the prospect of a deamalgamated Rockhampton region and, of course, the minister had independent advice from the Boundaries Commissioner. For the sake of some government backbenchers who may not be across this issue, I will refer to the independent advice to the minister. The Boundaries Commissioner nicely summarised the key points and recommendations in his report.

The QTC projected ratepayers of the proposed Livingstone shire would have a minimum increase in their rates of \$429 in the first year and a minimum of an extra \$194 over the following four years, adjusted for inflation. Deamalgamation will result in a number of diseconomies of scale. The Boundaries Commissioner's recommendation was that, in the Commission's view, the social and cultural issues raised by the Capricorn Coast Independence Movement do not outweigh the significant financial impost that the deamalgamation of the Rockhampton Regional Council would have on the local community. What would remain of the Rockhampton Regional Council was evaluated as unsustainable and deamalgamation would result in an unwarranted financial burden on ratepayers, and in this case a poll was not recommended.

Here is the question for the minister: where is the written record that documents the minister's basis for the decision? I bet it is nowhere. This entire fiasco belongs to one person, that is, the minister, who apparently accepted the advice of an unidentified although well-known bunch of clowns. These decisions are probably the only consequential core matters that go across his desk in 12 months. Over the past 12 months this government and this minister have made a big deal about cost-of-living issues, yet the minister had no problem imposing significant escalating rates on all the ratepayers within the boundary of the old Rockhampton Regional Council. It is an absolute disgrace.

As I said before, with friends like this government, my community does not need any enemies. The Minister for Local Government has failed entirely in his responsibilities. His actions will cost the ratepayers hundreds of dollars more than they should have been paying. Why is this? Because the minister could not take a cup of concrete and get the fortitude to do the right thing. It is an absolute disgrace. If members do not believe what I am saying, they can read the editorial from today's *Morning Bulletin*, headed 'Crisafulli must cop the blame'.

(Time expired)

Tamborine-Oxenford Road

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (10.05 pm): The Newman government takes road safety seriously. Tonight I inform the House of infrastructure improvements that have been undertaken in the electorate of Albert. Over recent times, residents living in the upper reaches of the Tamborine-Oxenford Road on Mount Tamborine have expressed concerns about road conditions and safety. One resident in particular has been very vocal in her dismay about the number of accidents she has witnessed personally near her property. Only recently, that resident took it upon herself to care for an accident victim until the paramedics arrived. The section of Tamborine-Oxenford Road near Hayes Road is a steep, curvy roadway and crash data indicates most accidents occur at night and/or in wet conditions. The roadway is a key gateway to Mount Tamborine. Tamborine-Oxenford Road is crucial for tourism and business on Tamborine Mountain and for residents who work on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane. I cannot express enough how crucial this roadway is for businesses and residents.

Therefore, it is my pleasure to inform the House that the Department of Transport and Main Roads has fast tracked multiple road improvements for this section of road. Safety improvements include installing guardrails on the sharp bends on the western side of Tamborine-Oxenford Road, chevron markers on the descent, additional safety warning signs and a refresher of road line markings. Those safety improvements have been scheduled to start this month and should take about six to eight weeks to complete. This government is committed to taking road safety seriously. I will continue to apply pressure to the department with regard to this section of road. I have also been informed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads that it will carry out another safety audit of this area of Tamborine-Oxenford Road after the works have been completed.

Furthermore, I would like to update the House on the John Muntz Causeway. Construction has begun. Golding Contractors is working to complete the new bridge.

Miss Barton: Well done, Mark.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take the interjection. Certainly it is a momentous occasion for the local community to see the heavy machinery working on the bridge site, preparing for a new bridge. The community can see a light at the end of the tunnel when it comes to this major arterial road. The bridge, which the previous government should have provided for many years ago, is long overdue. However, that government continuously repaired the dilapidated causeway. Only the Newman government, with good budgetary measures, committed to building a new bridge for the local community.

Cancer Research

 **Ms MILLARD** (Sandgate—LNP) (10.08 pm): I rise with more than a little sadness in my heart as today my sister Susan would have turned 55 if she had not passed away from cancer a few years ago. Although this speech is not about my sister, I would still like to say 'happy birthday' to her. I feel that she would have approved of me talking about the disease that took her life. I acknowledge that I am not alone in the pain associated with watching a loved one decline under this horrible disease, as another friend passed a few years ago and currently two friends of mine are battling the disease.

I also offer my heartfelt condolences to the Skiller family who live in my electorate. Just days before Easter, they lost their seven-year-old daughter Miette following a 19-month battle with DIPG, a rare form of childhood brain cancer that has a zero survival rate. The Skiller family has been courageous in raising awareness of DIPG and encouraging people to donate funds towards research by sharing their struggle in the blog, Miette's Journey. I am sorry for their loss and that of many others.

Clearly, as a community, many of us share an experience of cancer and certainly a degree of knowledge, but how informed are we really about what we are dealing with? Do members know that at current rates one in two Queenslanders will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85? This year,

over 20,000 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Queensland alone. Over 7,000 Queenslanders died of cancer in 2009, which was when figures were last published. Although we hear a lot about more common cancers, including skin cancer, bowel cancer, prostate cancer and breast cancer, there are around 200 forms of other cancers. Research to increase survival rates remains relatively underfunded for most of those cancers. Cancer is still the leading cause of death in Australia, accounting for around 30 per cent.

I commend the efforts of the Queensland government in providing extra funding for bowel cancer screening, for free breast screening and a strong awareness raising campaign for skin cancer. There is however so much further to go, particularly with regard to cancers that may not be at the top of the list in terms of commonality but nevertheless in serious need of lifesaving research. It is massive community support that could see some of the greatest advancements.

Please make a point of noticing next time someone in your community is fundraising or seeking support, whether that be outside the shopping centre or what you read in a blog or perhaps it is a reason closer to home. Even better, choose a project and become an active participant in raising awareness and funds in your own community as I did in October for my 40th birthday with the Cancer Council's Girls Night In. I did that in memory of my sister Susan. As a last note—but certainly not the least important—look out for yourself, your family and your friends, as early detection can often be a life saver.

Stroke

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—Ind) (10.10 pm): I rise to speak on the prevalence of strokes and the need to improve health services in this critical area. Stroke is the second leading cause of death and disability in Australia and the Western world. It comes a shy second behind heart disease which shares the same risk factors as stroke. Unfortunately, it is among some of our most poorly supported and resourced areas within the health system in Queensland.

Stroke increasingly kills more Queenslanders every single year. It cut my mother's life short a number of years ago. It is not only a health concern for the elderly; young and middle-aged people are often victims of stroke as well. Stroke is described as the silent killer. Often victims do not feel like they are having a stroke. This is unlike the situation with a heart attack.

As a community we have been educated about the warning signs for heart attack, but we are not so aware of the signs of stroke. For this reason alone, more resources need to be allocated to areas like stroke services to help educate the community on what a stroke is, when to present to an emergency department, treatment options and primary prevention strategies.

The National Stroke Foundation 2010 guidelines have class 1 evidence that states that all stroke patients should have access to a stroke unit which provides evidence based quality care by a specialised multidisciplinary team. Reportedly, Queensland has the least number of stroke units in comparison with other Australian states. Other states in Australia have resource rich priority stroke centres. Agreements within the Victorian and NSW ambulance services have protocol based procedures that bypass non-thrombolysis and stroke unit hospitals in the event of an emergency.

I draw the attention of members to a special drug called Thrombolysis. I am reliably informed that it can be administered to stroke patients within 4.5 hours of stroke onset. In layman's terms, this drug helps to soften and break up the clot in a stroke patient's brain. Such treatment combined with specialised stroke care can mean the difference between living independently or living in a nursing home. Too many people think stroke is unavoidable, resistant to treatment and too hard. It is not. Other states within Australia also have well-resourced secondary prevention nurse led clinics that effectively help reduce stroke patient readmissions to hospitals and, very importantly, help prevent further strokes.

Considering job cuts are still pending in the Metro North Health District, it is necessary to highlight that losses in stroke service areas would be extremely detrimental to stroke patients and their families. I would encourage the Newman government to consider this in any health service cuts.

Autism; Sunnybank Electorate, Student Accommodation

 **Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (10.12 pm): Tonight I rise to draw the attention of the House to the wonderful work being done by Autism Queensland, a community based organisation in my electorate. This April we are encouraged to Go Blue for Autism. To that end, many members of the House have kindly worn badges in recognition of this government's commitment to early intervention autism services.

I understand and appreciate the invaluable contribution community organisations like Autism Queensland and its staff and volunteers make to the many Queensland families living with autism. Autism Queensland is extremely dedicated in providing the support services needed to deliver important, personalised programs for children with autism spectrum disorder.

The success of William Norris is testament to the dedication of the staff at Autism Queensland. Will attended the Autism Queensland School between 2008 and 2011. Since then he has received funding through the Support for School Leavers program which has enabled Will to experience carer supported attendance at TAFE and adult learning classes. Will has now gained the confidence to begin looking for part-time work and has been guided by Autism Queensland's post school support to demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour in the community.

There is clearly a demand for specialist services for children with autism and their families and that is why the Newman government committed \$5 million in 2012-13 to fund specific programs across 12 service providers throughout Queensland. In my Sunnybank electorate alone, \$77,000 will be spent on autism specific programs in this financial year. Early intervention is vital to making a lifelong difference so these children can grow up to have fulfilling lives. I thank the House for supporting the Go Blue for Autism initiative this April and I commend Autism Queensland for the inspirational work it continues to do in my Sunnybank electorate.

I also rise today to inform the House of the work being undertaken by the student accommodation executive committee in my Sunnybank electorate. The executive committee, of which I am chair, was formed to investigate issues of student accommodation and especially concerns about noncompliance with regulatory regimes.

International students provide an invaluable contribution to the Queensland economy. However, demand for low-cost accommodation by students has given the incentive to some homeowners to convert their private premises into rooming accommodation without appropriate approvals and with little regard for student safety or the impact on local residents. These issues have been particularly prevalent in my Sunnybank electorate, being a transport corridor and close to university campuses.

In my pre-election campaign, I spoke with Sunnybank residents and found student housing and associated living conditions to be of major concern. I decided to investigate these issues further through an executive committee of 12 members, representing a cross-section of interested parties. This comprises residents Kim Chang and Jack Zhai; town planner Helen Kerr; Brisbane City Councillor Steven Huang; educational institute representative Samantha Hilbig; landlords Sue Bowen and Sharon Wilson; Griffith University liaison group chair Alan Druery; and community group representative Don Pegg. It is the intention of the executive committee to table its findings in parliament in the coming months and to pursue recommendations to ensure the effective and efficient enforcement of Queensland's regulatory regime—

(Time expired)

Thatcher, Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (10.16 pm): It is with a great sense of melancholy that I rise this evening to pay tribute to the Rt Hon. the Baroness Margaret Thatcher LG OM PC FRS. I mentioned the great Iron Lady in my maiden speech to this House and I was deeply saddened by her passing last Monday in London. Lady Thatcher shaped who I am, what I believe, what I think and what I feel.

I do not think there is any doubt in most people's minds that she was the greatest peace time Prime Minister that Britain has ever had and I think will ever have. She changed the world immeasurably and infinitely for the better. The world is a sadder and lesser place for her passing.

I have many favourite quotes of Margaret Thatcher's, but one of my favourites is her 1982 declaration that she owed nothing to women's lib. She proved that women can indeed achieve and hold great and high office on the basis of merit and their words and their actions, not elevated falsely through affirmative action.

As the hardworking daughter of a humble grocer she showed the world that regardless of your background, your age or your gender hard work, determination, principles and conviction always pay off. I take comfort in the knowledge the great Iron Lady suffers no longer and she joins her soul mate in love, Sir Denis, and her soul mate in philosophy, Ronald 'The Gipper' Reagan, in that big soapbox in the sky in her green chiffon evening gown, her face softly made up, her fair hair gently waved and the ubiquitous strand of pearls.

I am saddened to see and read reports of people celebrating her passing. I truly believe those people should be ashamed of themselves. That they could revel in her passing says more about them than their comments will ever say about her. It is a shame that common courtesy cannot be extended to her at the time of her death. Regardless of how one feels about her actions, you should always have respect for someone who was loved, someone who loved and someone who held such great office.

Finally, I think today, as we see horrible events around the world, we can draw comfort from some of her more famous words, 'Where there is discord, may we bring harmony. Where there is error, may we bring truth. Where there is doubt, may we bring faith. And where there is despair, may we bring hope.' May God bless her soul and may the great Iron Lady rest in peace. God bless.

Lyme Disease

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (10.18 pm): I use this opportunity to speak on behalf of some Queenslanders who suffer from Lyme disease and to urge our government to support the call for the better identification in Queensland of this debilitating but curable disease. I am informed that Lyme disease is an infectious disease which is passed to humans by some ticks that have picked it up from infected animals. I am informed that possible carriers of this disease are bandicoots, dogs, wallabies, kangaroos, deer and rodents. Symptoms of Lyme disease are wide ranging, from intensive pick axe headaches to seizures; irritable bowel syndrome; cognitive and memory problems; dizziness; shortness of breath; vomiting; rashes; swelling; aching pains in joints, muscles and skin; hair loss; extreme fatigue; limb weakness; hallucinations; and many other symptoms.

Unfortunately some people, like one of my constituents, have suffered from this debilitating disease for a number of years because their doctor and/or medical specialist were not able to diagnose the patient's symptoms of Lyme disease. I am informed that early treatment with specific antibiotics can generally stop the illness in its tracks, while delay in receiving treatment will allow the disease to progress and in severe cases affect many organs in the person's body. Recognising Lyme disease in Australia will allow sufferers of the disease to access existing treatment services which at present are unavailable to them as Lyme disease is not yet a Medicare approved disease and including expensive antibiotics on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will minimise the cost of treatment.

In support of this call, I have today written to the Minister for Health with a real-life story of a constituent of mine who suffered for a number of years with this debilitating disease before it was finally diagnosed. I urge our government to listen to calls for better diagnosis and recognition of this important disease and hopefully take the matter up with our interstate government colleagues.

Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (10.21 pm): 'Kirwan is working wonders' was the headline in the *Townsville Bulletin* on Saturday, 6 April. The article went on to say, 'If you want to find a job consider moving to Kirwan or Rasmussen.' These are two of the suburbs in my electorate of Thuringowa. The five state MPs in my region work closely together to support each other and to promote what we consider to be the best part of the state.

Tonight I am speaking to praise the efforts and fortunes of my particular electorate of Thuringowa. Recent employment figures released and passed on by the Parliamentary Library clearly show we are leading the way in our region, which is one of the bright lights on the road to recovery for the state of Queensland under the LNP government. The latest ABS jobs data shows trend employment in Queensland has risen for the sixth consecutive month, increasing by 3,900 persons in March and 9,200 persons higher over the year. This is a pleasing result and evidence that green shoots of recovery are showing through.

Unemployment figures in our region read as follows: Thuringowa, 4.1 per cent—1.5 per cent below the state average; Mundingburra was next with 4.7 per cent; Hinchinbrook had 5.3 per cent, followed by Burdekin on 5.5 per cent and Townsville with 6.1 per cent. These figures are compiled from state and federal public service departments for the September quarter of 2012. I must say tongue in cheek that it seems my guys are doing all the work! I am proud though to represent the seat with the lowest unemployment in the Townsville region. Queensland's employment growth rate is also double the national growth rate for March. This a further sign of economic growth under the Newman government, which remains committed to achieving its target of a four per cent unemployment rate over six years.

Thuringowa, as I have said before, is very much the growth area of the city, with new estates like Kalynda Chase, new shopping centres at Deeragun and Jensen and the new Coles going up near Greenwood Estate. These factors may help to give me the edge in relation to these figures, but as a whole they do prove the contribution the region plays in the workforce, growth and revenue for this state.

The LNP came into government to get this state back on track and to pull us out of the death dive we were in under Labor with the rising debt and deficit. There have been a lot of people saying the sky is falling, especially those opposite and their union friends. But they know the truth: that it is not. It is quite the opposite. The sun is continuing to rise in the east and set in the west, except the difference being we are now seeing new shoots of growth in old growth areas like our foundations for economic recovery—the four pillars. Tourism, agriculture, resources and construction are moving again, especially in my region of North Queensland, with Townsville leading the way. Queensland is a great state with great opportunity and this government is working every day to ensure we grow the economy for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Townsville has a diverse economic base: health services continue to grow; education is a big employer; the defence forces have played a huge part since the 1970s; as well as manufacturing, agriculture, construction, servicing the great resources and mines to our west, and of course tourism.

Calliope, Proposed High School Site

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (10.24 pm): A recent decision by the Minister for Education and the department of education has brought a great deal of concern from the Calliope community. For many years a 14-hectare site has been set aside at Calliope for a high school. Given that the Calliope township and its surrounding areas has experienced significant growth in the last couple of years, it has become more important for a high school to be established in the short to medium term rather than in the long term. Additionally, the two high schools that service Calliope—the closest high school, Gladstone State High, and the other state high school in Gladstone, Toolooa—are about 17 kilometres from Calliope. Both of those are experiencing growth and both will see even more growth with the inclusion of year 7 in the high school cohort.

The site in Calliope is central and it is becoming more central with the growth in the township. It is well above flood height and it is accessible by road transport and is within walking distance to most housing areas in the Calliope township. When it was first mooted in this current government that the site was going to be sold, I contacted the education minister and asked for his reconsideration. He wrote back at the beginning of last week to say that it had been reconsidered and that the sale was going to proceed. The previous Labor government also considered selling that property and was requested to reconsider and did withdraw the property from sale, and I commend it for that.

This proposal to sell the site is short-sighted. It is in total opposition to the community's wishes and it does fly in the face of the growth in the community. This growth will necessitate, as I said, a high school in the town in the near future as not only additional students will attend the high school—that includes growth—but also there is the migration from year 7. Calliope does not just support the township; it supports the community in the rural areas to the west of the village and even that area is growing as well.

Travel on the Dawson Highway between Calliope and Gladstone is increasingly dangerous. There is a lot of heavy transportation on that road and a lot of congestion. That is going to increase over time. It will create a greater risk to the increasing number of students who are required to ride a bus in peak hours. I really would ask the Minister for Education to reconsider this proposal. That site is ideal for a high school. It is a good site for a modern, up-to-date, accessible high school in a location that has been set aside by a visionary person, or people, in the past. I believe that that is an exceptional site for a modern high school in the near future, not in the distant future.

Electricity Prices

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (10.27 pm): I rise to highlight the real threat to the farming sector in my electorate who are confronted with massive electricity price increases if the Queensland Competition Authority proposals go ahead. We all need to be very concerned about the long-term viability of agriculture in Queensland if these recommendations are adopted. Electricity prices are one of the greatest threats to ongoing profitability, sustainability and growth.

Cane growers in my electorate have highlighted many times the running costs, showing that electricity costs have doubled over the last seven years, exceeding all other input costs. An example provided to me this week of those increases is that, since the year 2000, electricity prices on the popular farming tariffs 62, 65 and 66 have risen 250 per cent, or an average of 20 per cent per year. In terms of gross value added, employment and small business, the Burnett electorate has a much higher reliance on agriculture of around 13 per cent. Any additional negative impact on our farmers' ability to produce crops and products will have a much greater impact on my electorate than on some others of course.

In attending many industry meetings many solutions have been tabled—all have merit and need to be considered. There is a need to investigate options for payment subsidies to allow competition in the regions outside the south-east corner, especially in agriculture, to have additional providers other than Ergon. There is no competition within retail supply for most of Queensland. QCA includes a 'head room' allowance of five per cent, even though QCA acknowledges that it is a 'free kick' for retailers.

Proposed transitional tariffs require at least a 12- to 15-year transition period to achieve the required efficiencies. The current proposal is seven years and we ask why? Irrigators cannot pay down or write-off capital investment in under 20 years. I am asked repeatedly why the government does not review the rate of return applied by the Australian Energy Regulator. A reduction in the rate would reduce costs significantly.

Discussion is encouraged on not charging the N network component on transitional tariffs. It is firmly believed that network assets are overvalued. In Victoria, land and easements are not part of the network valuations but in Queensland they are. There has been no investment in the network for my irrigators for 30 years.

Time of use concessions have been removed from irrigators. The night rate was using power outside peak demand, reducing the need for network expansion. Consumption forecasts are overinflated, leading to overinvestment and higher costs. The federal government's fixed renewable energy target adds \$120 to average bills, while the carbon tax contributes more than \$170 to the average bill.

The solar PV scheme with a feed-in tariff of 44c per kilowatt hour is not efficient. Solar PV should be part of climate change and environmental costs, not electricity costs. Farmers are not opposed to price increases. However, why don't we limit the increases to CPI? The CPI last year was two per cent. Irrigation charges will have increased by over 90 per cent in the last five years if, or when, the QCA recommendations are adopted.

While it is acknowledged that we as a government are faced with extreme challenges in relation to electricity prices and we inherited a network which contributes to the sustainability of costs, we have to throw in green energy schemes and ridiculous mandatory targets for renewable energy and the carbon tax. It is firmly believed that unless a solution can be implemented the recommendations of the QCA will send irrigators into decline.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young