



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

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TUESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 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 a letter in respect of assent to certain bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter 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 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: 17 October 2013

“A Bill for an Act for the purpose of disestablishing vicious lawless associations”

“A Bill for an Act to provide for the licensing and regulation of body art tattooing businesses and body art tattooists and other related matters and to amend the Liquor Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for an Act to amend the Bail Act 1980, the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, the Criminal Code, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Tow Truck Act 1973 for particular purposes, to make a regulation under the Criminal Code and to amend the Crime and Misconduct Regulation 2005 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

17 October 2013

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 17 October 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to bills on 17 October 2013 [[3847](#)].

REPORTS

Auditor-General




Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General report No. 3 for 2013-14, *Follow up of selected 2011 audits—Report to parliament No. 9 for 2011: Acquisition and public access to the Museum, Art Gallery and Library collections*, and report No. 4 for 2013-14, *Follow up of selected 2011 audits—Report to parliament No. 1 for 2011: Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*. I table the reports for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 3: 2013-14—Follow up—Acquisition and public access to the Museum, Art Gallery and Library collections [[3848](#)].


Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14—Follow up—Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community [[3849](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Absence of Member

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received a letter with supporting documentation from the member for Whitsunday advising of his absence from the House until 30 October 2013. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.


Parliament House, Public Access

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I note public commentary attributed to the Leader of the Opposition about the security posture of Parliament House and which gates are open. I am reluctant to publicly canvass the security settings of parliament for obvious reasons. However, it is extremely inappropriate for members to raise this in the media when their first port of call should be to talk to the Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition, as a member of the CLA, has also had the added benefit of additional briefings regarding the security settings of the parliament and the security infrastructure they were asked to put in place.

For the sake of correcting the public record, I can confirm that access has always been possible through the Parliamentary Annexe and the front central gate of Parliament House has and continues to be open for sitting days to allow access to the public gallery. The public gallery was open during the last sitting of parliament as it is this week.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister and a Member

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in August 2013 I received two letters from the member for Bundamba making complaints about the Minister for Health and the member for Capalaba about statements concerning the role the Queensland Nurses Union played during the Health payroll problem. I have decided not to refer either complaint to the Ethics Committee. For the sake of time, I seek leave to have a statement, detailing my reasons, incorporated into the parliamentary record. I also table correspondence in relation to the matter.

Leave granted.

I have received two pieces of correspondence from the Member for Bundamba, one on 21 August 2013 and one on 22 August 2013, raising allegations that the Minister for Health and the Member for Capalaba deliberately misled the House. As the two matters were related they have been considered together.

Firstly, the Member for Bundamba wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Health deliberately misled the Health and Community Services Committee by way of a response to a question at that committee's estimates hearing.

The Minister for Health was referring to the Queensland Nurses' Union's response to the 2010 Queensland Health Payroll System problems when he stated:

"I am sure they are on about a lot of things, but they were never on about it when their members were not being paid without your payroll debacle. They never raised a single word—never a single word ..."

Reviewing the Hansard, I see that the statement by the Minister for Health was part of an exchange with the Member for Bundamba, in which the Minister was interrupted from completing his response a number of times. I table copies of Hansard.

Secondly, the Member for Bundamba also alleged that the Member for Capalaba, Mr Davies misled the House in asking a question without notice to Minister Springborg on 21 August 2013.

The Member for Capalaba's question included the following words:

"I refer to the stunning silence from the bosses of the Queensland Nurses Union when their own rank-and-file members were going without their basic right to a pay packet as a result of the former Labour government's health payroll debacle ..."

I table the correspondence in relation to these matters.

The Member for Bundamba submitted media comment from senior executives of the Queensland Nurses' Union from 17 April 2010 onwards but this does not negate the Minister's evidence about a lack of public comment for a period of time after the initial payroll failure on 14 March 2010.


Matters of privilege are not an opportunity to prosecute political debate but to raise allegations of deliberately misleading the House. The matter must have sufficient evidence to support it being further investigated and the obligations of the Speaker include assessing whether a prima facie case exists.

Reviewing the evidence presented to me by all parties, there is no prima facie case established. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence regarding an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Minister for Health, Hon. Lawrence Springborg and the member for Capalaba, Mr Steve Davies MP [\[3850\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 12 September 2013 I received a complaint from the member for Rockhampton about the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and a counterclaim from the minister. I table the correspondence in this matter. I have decided not to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee. Again, for the sake of time, I seek leave to have a statement, detailing my reasons, incorporated into the parliamentary record.

Leave granted.

By letter dated 12 September 2013, the Member for Rockhampton, alleged that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, misled the House in his response to a question without notice from the Leader of the Opposition earlier that day.

The statement objected to was about the Member for Rockhampton's non-attendance at the opening of the Gracemere Overpass, in which the minister stated:

"We invited the Member for Rockhampton. What was surprising was that there was no RSVP back from him and he did not turn up on the day ..."

The minister also wrote to me on 12 September 2013 making a counter claim that the Member for Rockhampton misled the House during a statement on a point of order that day when he said:

"The Minister is not stating the facts of the matter in relation to the invitations that were issued. My point of order is that he is misleading the House in terms of what transpired."

The minister also wrote to me on 13 September 2013 with further supporting documentation.

I table the correspondence from both members.

On the material before me, the fact that an invitation was issued is not disputed by either party and it appears that the two members were largely at cross purposes in the Chamber with respect to the other's statements.

The Member for Rockhampton was objecting to the specific wording that he did not RSVP for the opening. The minister objected to what he considered to be the Member for Rockhampton's assertion of a specific fact that an invitation was not issued.


Taking all the material before me into account, I am of the view that the material in the correspondence provides an adequate explanation from both parties. According to Standing Order 269(4) this does not warrant the further attention of the House.

Accordingly, I will not be referring the matters.

Tabled paper: Correspondence regarding an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Scott Emerson, and counterclaim by the minister [\[3851\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliamentary Procedure

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it has come to my attention there are some myths about parliamentary procedure and practice circulating amongst members which need to be dispelled. While members will often learn their procedure from each other, this can have the effect of simply perpetuating misunderstanding and it seems this is happening in some instances.

Firstly, some members have raised with my Deputy Speakers their view that standing orders do not apply during divisions. This is a novel interpretation and is quite wrong. A division—either when the bells are being rung or after the bars have been closed for counting—does indeed form part of the proceedings of the parliament and standing orders do apply. It is vital that the chair clearly be able to hear what is transpiring in the chamber at all times, including during divisions.

I refer to my ruling of 4 June 2013. In short, members can and will be warned or named during divisions when their behaviour warrants it and I will be asking my Deputy Speakers to act accordingly, consistent with standing orders. The removal of the member from the chamber who has behaved in a disorderly way and been warned or named under standing orders is executed after the division and tally has been completed.

The second myth that I have become aware of is the view by some members that you are unable to ask questions of a minister in the consideration in detail stage of a bill's passage. I have conferred with the Clerk and he confirms it is correct Westminster procedure for a member to be able to ask the minister a question in the clause under standing orders, as long as the question is relevant to the clause.

Members are effectively bound by time limits in sessional and standing orders as to how many questions they can ask, issues they can canvass and the length of their overall questions and statements. Ministers are, of course, able to answer members' questions and issues in the manner they think appropriate. In short, asking questions and canvassing issues about clauses is a vital part of the legislative process.

The *Parliamentary Procedures Handbook*, written by the current Clerk whilst Deputy Clerk and tacitly approved by executive government as part of the then governing Queensland suite of documents, first published in 2000, states regarding consideration of clauses in the then committee of the whole and applicable to consideration in detail—

This stage also affords Members, particularly the Opposition, further opportunity to probe the Minister (or Member responsible for the Bill) for explanations about the operation of the Bill and the interpretation of clauses.

Finally, the right of the parliament to conduct its proceedings uninterrupted is paramount. Interruptions caused from either within or outside the precinct will not be tolerated. I have asked the Clerk to obtain advice as to how to lawfully safeguard the opportunity of elected members to speak on behalf of their constituents.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated and the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Orders 119(3) and (4)—

Local Government Amalgamation, Referendum

Hon. Springborg, from 710 petitioners, requesting the House to enable all residents of Queensland affected by the forced local government amalgamations to exercise their democratic right to be heard and facilitate a referendum that enables communities to return to natural boundaries or create new boundaries [\[3852\]](#), [\[3853\]](#).

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

Cyclists, Overtaking Distances

Dr Flegg, from 6,198 petitioners, requesting the House to enact legislation to modify existing regulations requiring that a motorist maintain a minimum safe distance of one point five metres between their vehicle and a cyclist whilst overtaking, with a thirty metre exemption at intersections to allow for filtering [\[3854\]](#).

Ergon Energy Depots, Closures and Outsourcing

Mr Pitt, from 914 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the proposed closure of more than 30 Ergon Energy Depots and outsourcing of energy jobs as indicated by the Government's in principle agreement of recommendation 23 contained in the Independent Review Committee Report [\[3855\]](#).

Ergon Energy, Privatisation and Outsourcing

Mr Pitt, from 671 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the proposed privatisation of Ergon Energy's isolated generation assets and the outsourcing of more than 160 energy jobs as indicated in Recommendation 29 of the Independent Review Panel's final report [\[3856\]](#).

Dog Breeders, Regulating

Mr Mulherin, from 1,654 petitioners, requesting the House to outlaw puppy farms by passing legislation which adequately regulates dog breeders in Queensland to prevent cruelty, raise standards of care and improve the welfare of breeding dogs and their litters [\[3857\]](#).

Petitions received.

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—

18 October 2013—

- [3806](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 30—Review of the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament 10: 2012-13 Results of Audits: Local government Entities 2011-12—Government Response
- [3807](#) Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3808](#) Chicken Meat Industry Committee—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3809](#) Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3810](#) QRAA—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3811](#) Safe Food Production Queensland—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3812](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3813](#) Magistrates Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3814](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 32—Report on Subordinate Legislation tabled between 5 June 2013 and 20 August 2013
- [3815](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 28—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3816](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Subordinate Legislation tabled between 5 June 2013 and 6 August 2013
- [3817](#) Report: Release of Images to the Queensland Police Service during the financial period 2010-11
- [3818](#) Report: Release of Images to the Queensland Police Service during the financial period 2011-12
- [3819](#) Report: Release of Images to the Queensland Police Service during the financial period 2012-13

21 October 2013—

- [3820](#) Annual Report to the Parliamentary Commissioner for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013—Compliance requirements under the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 (CM Act) for assumed identities in relation to misconduct offences

22 October 2013—

- [3821](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 34—Portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 30 April 2013 and 20 August 2013
- [3822](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Forestry Regulation 1998
- [3823](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2002
- [3824](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Mt. Gravatt Showgrounds By-law 2001
- [3825](#) Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013: Erratum to explanatory notes
- [3826](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 35—Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2013
- [3827](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 35—Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013
- [3828](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 33—Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013
- [3829](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 33—Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013—Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- [3830](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Coal Mining Safety Regulation 2001
- [3831](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Regulation 2001
- [3832](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Water Regulation 2002

- [3833](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 41—G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013
- [3834](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 42—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 June 2013 and 10 September 2013
- [3835](#) Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3836](#) Queensland's Category 2 Water Authorities—Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2012-13
- [3837](#) Queensland's River Improvement Trusts—Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2012-13

23 October 2013—

- [3838](#) Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services: 2011-12 Child Protection Partnerships Report—Annual report on the operations of Queensland Government agencies relevant to child protection
- [3839](#) QIC—Statement of Corporate Intent 2012-13: Erratum

25 October 2013—

- [3840](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996, Health Regulation 1996, Mental Health Regulation 2002, Private Health Facilities Regulation 2000 and Private Health Facilities (Standards) Notice 2000

28 October 2013—

- [3841](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on an overseas visit by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney) to India, Republic of South Africa and Botswana, 23 August-7 September 2013
- [3842](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999, Casino Control Regulation 1999, Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Regulation 1999, Criminal Code (Animal Valuers) Regulation 1999, Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Regulation 1998, Land Sales Regulation 2000, Liquor (Approval of Adult Entertainment Code) Regulation 2002, Liquor Regulation 2002, Personal Injuries Proceedings Regulation 2002, Property Agents and Motor Dealers Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (Auctioneering Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (Commercial Agency Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (Motor Dealing Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (Property Developer Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (Real Estate Agency Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Property Agents and Motor Dealers (restricted Letting Agency Practice Code of Conduct) Regulation 2001, Trust Accounts Regulation 1999 and the Wagering Regulation 1999
- [3843](#) Family Responsibilities Commission—Annual Report 2012-13
- [3844](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade (Mr Nicholls) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Statistical Returns Regulation 2001
- [3845](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade (Mr Nicholls) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2000
- [3846](#) Australian Agricultural College Corporation—Annual Report 2012-13

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Lotteries Act 1997—

- [3858](#) Lotteries Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 200
- [3859](#) Lotteries Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 200, explanatory notes

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

- [3860](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 201
- [3861](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 201, explanatory notes

Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008—

- [3862](#) Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 202
- [3863](#) Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 202, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

- [3864](#) Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 203
- [3865](#) Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 203, explanatory notes

Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, Environmental Protection Act 1994, Nature Conservation Act 1992, Queensland Heritage Act 1992, Sustainable Planning Act 2009, Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, Wild Rivers Act 2005—

[3866](#) Environment and Heritage Protection Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 204

[3867](#) Environment and Heritage Protection Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 204, explanatory notes

Building Act 1975—

[3868](#) Building Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 205

[3869](#) Building Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 205, explanatory notes

Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997, Queensland Treasury Corporation Act 1988, Statistical Returns Act 1896, Statutory Instruments Act 1992—

[3870](#) Treasury and Trade Legislation Amendment and Repeal Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 206

[3871](#) Treasury and Trade Legislation Amendment and Repeal Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 206, explanatory notes

Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994—

[3872](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 207

[3873](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 207, explanatory notes

Forestry Act 1959—

[3874](#) Forestry Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 208

[3875](#) Forestry Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 208, explanatory notes

Transport Legislation (Port Pilotage and Document Verification) Amendment Act 2013—

[3876](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 209

[3877](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 209, explanatory notes

MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney)—

[3878](#) Report by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney), pursuant to section 432 of the Sustainable Planning Act, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application at corner of Como Road and Bruce Highway, Toobanna

[3879](#) Report by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney), pursuant to section 432 of the Sustainable Planning Act, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application at Railway Terrace and Cribb Street, Milton

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



Madam SPEAKER: Order! Before I call ministerial statements, I wish to acknowledge visiting the parliament today, and who are in the Speaker's Gallery, the honourable Speaker of the Parliament of Vanuatu, as well as the Clerk of the Parliament of Vanuatu and other MPs from our twinned Parliament of Vanuatu, and the Clerk of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands, who has also been participating. We welcome you to the Queensland parliament.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


Report, Former Members' Travel Benefits



Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.41 am): Pursuant to section 1.3.1 of the *Members' Entitlements Handbook*, I lay upon the table of the House the annual report of travel benefits afforded to former members of the Legislative Assembly for 2012-13, which I have received from the Clerk of the Parliament.

Tabled paper: Travel benefits afforded former members of the Legislative Assembly—annual report 2012-13 [[3880](#)].

Safer Queensland Communities

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.42 am): Madam Speaker, 20 years of Labor left us with a law-and-order vacuum in Queensland. Under Labor, sentencing laws did not match community expectations and police did not have the resources they needed to do their jobs properly. When we were making our case for election, we promised Queenslanders that we would work to make our community safer and crack down on crime. Queenslanders told us they wanted us to attack lawlessness and to build a system that puts the interests of victims ahead of the welfare of criminals. Queenslanders told us that they wanted a strong government and more police on the front line.


We are delivering on our plan to make Queensland safe. We have introduced mandatory minimum sentences for gun offences and toughened up laws on murdering and assaulting police, drug trafficking and unexplained wealth. We are well advanced in our four-year plan to recruit 1,100 new police and to shift another 200 existing police from behind office desks back to strengthen the front line. We have launched a crackdown on graffiti crime and offenders, and we are revitalising Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers.

In the last few weeks we have taken another big step to deal more effectively with criminals, with a crackdown on criminal bikies and dangerous paedophiles. Our new anti-racketeering and anti-association laws and minimum mandatory sentences—the toughest in the nation—will put criminal gang members in prison where they belong. Criminal gangs will be left with no role to play in our state and, more importantly, no power to run their front businesses, extortion rackets and drug cartels here in Queensland.

We have also recently passed laws to keep Queensland's worst sex offenders off our streets, while our two-strike policy means repeat child sex offenders now face mandatory life in prison. Our focus is on ridding our communities of the threat of attack or intimidation from thugs and deviants—and we are seeing that Queenslanders support us. We promised to better protect Queenslanders, and that is what we are doing.

I assure the people of Queensland that this government will continue to act responsibly to deal with crime and criminals in the community and not make excuses for the crims. It is all part of our plan to make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family.

Royalties for the Regions

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.44 am): During the past week I have announced a range of funding opportunities for regional communities that have been funded under the government's Royalties for the Regions program. The Royalties for the Regions program was a key election commitment of our government and it, for the first time, delivers some of the royalties that are earned from the resources industry to the regional communities of Queensland. It is a very important program for country towns and country people, and our government was determined to ensure that the Royalties for the Regions program was in place from day one, despite the horrendous financial legacy that we inherited from the former Labor government.

I want to place on record today that the Royalties for the Regions program is very strongly supported by members in this House who represent regional Queensland. It is also strongly supported in this House by the member for Clayfield, who, while he does not represent a regional seat, is very important because he is the Treasurer. We thank the Treasurer for the commitments that he has made to Royalties for the Regions and we thank the Treasurer for his ongoing support and the promises he has made to boost funding for Royalties for the Regions in the future. The people of regional Queensland appreciate your support, Treasurer.

In round 2 of Royalties for the Regions, \$104 million was allocated to regional councils. Of the 64 local governments eligible to apply this round, 41 councils submitted 90 expressions of interest seeking funding for nearly \$311 million towards projects that had a total cost of over \$500 million. The bids were assessed, and I am very pleased to announce that 32 projects from the 20 eligible councils have been approved for funding. I table, for the benefit of the House, a full list of those projects and the funding they received.

Tabled paper: Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning: Royalties for the Regions—Round 2, shortlisted expressions of interest, dated 25 October 2013 [\[3881\]](#).

These projects have a total cost of nearly \$230 million of which Royalties for the Regions will provide just over \$100 million. We will fund road upgrades—major upgrades in the Arcadia Valley in the electorate of the member for Gregory; in Gladstone at a roundabout that has long been a problem there; in Cloncurry for a bypass there that has been raised with me every time I have visited Cloncurry over the last 14 years—

Mr Johnson: How long have they been waiting for that?

Mr SEENEY: How long have we been waiting for that? And we funded it despite the fact that the member who represents that area has never made any representation to me about it. We have funded other road upgrades of the Fairview and the Injune and Taroom roads in Maranoa. We have also funded road upgrades in the south-west and on the cape and a large number of local road upgrades in the shire of Western Downs in the electorate of the member for Warrego.


Improvements to water supplies and water treatment plants have also been funded at Banana, Baralaba, Chillagoe, Kingaroy, Woorabinda, Mackay and Rockhampton. There has also been major funding for sewerage upgrades—the sort of infrastructure that regional towns need—in the electorate of the member for Nanango. The member for Nanango and I had the great pleasure of visiting that facility on a very hot and windy day. Can I assure the House that both of us came away from there appreciating the fact that it needed to be upgraded.

The most significant and the most rewarding funding allocations, I think, were for child-care centres in communities that have never had child-care centres before. More than \$1 million will go to help to establish child-care centres in Barcaldine and Blackall. I think that is the sort of infrastructure that Royalties for the Regions can fund. Last time we funded a medical centre in Dysart. This time we have funded child-care centres in Barcaldine and Blackall. Funding projects that otherwise would struggle to achieve funding from normal sources is what Royalties for the Regions is all about.

One of the key success factors of this round is the support the program has attracted from regional partners. Royalties for the Regions was designed to encourage collaboration and partnership, and that is exactly what has happened. For the 32 shortlisted projects, the following potential financial co-contributions have been received: \$45 million from local government; \$51 million from industry, particularly the coal seam gas industry; \$26 million from other state and federal government sources; as well as \$185,000 from the not-for-profit sector.

After assessing 23 eligible applications, Royalties for the Regions is also funding 14 flood mitigation projects across 11 local councils to the value of over \$12 million. Over the next four years we hope to invest almost \$500 million in critical community infrastructure through Royalties for the Regions. The Newman government is delivering on its promise to provide Queenslanders better services and safer communities, and we are doing that through the Royalties for the Regions program for country towns and country people.

Trade and Investment Queensland

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.50 am): What a pleasure it is to support the Deputy Premier on his Royalties for the Regions program and to make those funds available. There are occasions where I actually have to push some more money on the Deputy Premier to make those funds available. I know in the electorate of Callide we will be looking very closely at the next round of grants.

In the years before the Newman government was elected, Trade and Investment Queensland was shifted from pillar to post. The former Labor government had no strategic direction or plan for Trade. It seemed to be a glorified travel agency for the Premier of the day. A frequent change of ministerial oversight—if I recall correctly from the report, seven ministers in 10 years—meant that the agency's goal posts were constantly being changed. When we came to government, TIQ needed a clear focus and a new approach. That is why in November last year I asked Geoffrey Thomas, Special Commissioner to North America, and the Hon. John Mickel, a former trade minister, to conduct an independent review of the operations of Trade and Investment Queensland.

Earlier this year the commissioners presented me with their review, containing 86 recommendations on how to transform and refocus the direction of the organisation to concentrate on delivering front-line services for business. Their main recommendation centred on TIQ becoming an independent statutory body to free the organisation of the confines of the departmental process. As recommended by the two commissioners, the Newman government committed to refocus TIQ to become Queensland's shopfront to the world. I am pleased to inform the House that the government


has now decided on the make-up of the new Trade and Investment Queensland board—a board that will ensure TIQ is modern, flexible and can efficiently respond to the fast pace of international trade in the 21st century.

Like all effective statutory bodies, TIQ will have a diverse board with specialist trade knowledge in agribusiness, construction, education, tourism and financial services. The board will be chaired by Mark Stockwell, a well-respected businessman and property developer who is also known as a great Australian swimmer and triple Olympic medallist. I am confident that Mr Stockwell has the experience and, importantly, the drive and enthusiasm needed to oversee the important change taking place at TIQ. Mr Geoffrey Thomas, who is also Queensland's Special Commissioner to North America, has agreed to be deputy chairman. Mr Thomas has an innate understanding of what it takes to succeed on the international stage, with successful businesses in Australia, the US, Indonesia and Thailand.

We have also appointed to the board Professor Ian O'Connor, from Griffith University, and Josie Angus, who has a great passion for the development of regional and rural Queensland. As the Vice Chancellor and President of Griffith University, Professor O'Connor brings his considerable academic experience to the position. Ms Angus understands the challenges facing Queensland's rural exporters, as the owner and operator of a pastoral company running 35,000 head of cattle across 400,000 acres in Central and Northern Queensland and the owner and operator of the Signature Beef brand of beef exports to over 20 countries throughout the world.

The board is supported by my Under Treasurer Helen Gluer and the Deputy Premier's director-general, David Edwards, ensuring there is a clear line of communication back to government. Creating a statutory body with an expertise based board will give TIQ the autonomy and flexibility it needs to operate in the 21st century. TIQ will move to a sector focused structure, where businesses will liaise directly with a team which understands the industry and our plans to grow a four-pillar economy. We will spend an additional \$14 million over the next four years to ensure TIQ is resourced to have greater capacity to identify in-market opportunities for Queensland businesses and, importantly, to attract investment by promoting a single uniform 'Brand Queensland' interstate and throughout the world. Each one of these appointees brings a unique set of skills and experience to the board, ensuring TIQ is equipped to handle the very diverse range of inquiries and tasks that come its way. I congratulate each of the board members and thank them for their willingness to serve Queensland.

Youth Boot Camps

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.54 am): The people of Queensland wanted a strong government—a government that gets on with the job; a can-do government. The rollout of youth boot camps across the state continues to meet the commitment made to Queenslanders to break the cycle of repeat youth crime in this state left behind by the former Labor government. To this end, I am pleased to announce today that the location of the Cairns-Townsville super boot camp will be a remote property location called Lincoln Springs Station. Lincoln Springs Station is a remote cattle property approximately two hours west of Ingham, a mid-point between the camp's catchment areas of Cairns and Townsville. The closest neighbouring cattle stations are approximately two hours walking distance. I thank the members of North Queensland and Far North Queensland for their continued support of the rollout of boot camps across the state.

My department has consulted with residents on neighbouring cattle stations in the surrounding areas regarding the proposed location of the boot camp. I have also spoken personally with some of the residents regarding any concerns they may have. This week Mr Boyd Curran, the CEO of Beyond Billabong and the provider of the super boot camp, will also be meeting with the surrounding cattle station owners to address any further concerns they may have. I have spoken to both the member for Dalrymple and the local mayor, Frank Beveridge, and thanked them for their wholehearted support for the rollout of boot camps across the state.


The isolation of the property coupled with around-the-clock supervision and other security measures will ensure the community is kept safe. Comprehensive assessment through pre sentence reports will also ensure that only young offenders appropriate for the program will be eligible to participate. Beyond Billabong, as well as the other providers I have selected, has contemporary experience in working with high-risk youth with complex behaviours, a proven track record and the

best possible chance of success in breaking the revolving door cycle of youth offending. They will participate in a highly structured program designed to teach them discipline and skills, develop resilience, address their offending behaviour and give them a chance to turn their lives around.

In terms of the early intervention boot camps, I recently announced that a fortnight ago 17 young people had commenced programs in Rockhampton and Fraser-Sunshine Coast boot camps. As for our first boot camp run at the Gold Coast, 15 young men have now completed the program, with our first cohort of five young women having recently commenced the program. I have heard many encouraging stories from participants in the Gold Coast boot camp. I still have parents writing to me from all over Queensland seeking a spot for their children in one of our boot camps. The camps aim to instil discipline, values and self-worth to address high-risk behaviour and divert young people from the youth justice system.

The opposition is all over the place when it comes to youth crime. It cannot make its mind up about what it wants to do to address the youth justice issues it left behind. It spent 20 years in office creating a generation of repeat young, arrogant offenders, with 30 per cent of young people having been in detention five times or more. When debating our new criminal justice legislation, not only do they have nothing constructive to contribute to the debate but they also act as if they hold the moral high ground because they can tolerate crime whilst the victims in their electorates suffer in silence. This government is about rebalancing the scales of justice. This government is about holding young offenders accountable and assisting those who want to make a change by diverting them away from the criminal justice system. We are doing everything we said we would do when elected in 2012. We are getting on with the job and we are delivering for Queenslanders.

National Parks, Grazing

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (9.57 am): I rise to inform the House that the Newman government will not extend emergency grazing measures in national parks beyond 31 December this year. While I make no apology for responding to the dire animal welfare crisis facing graziers in our state by offering this agistment in some remote and rarely visited properties and national parks, I have always said that this would only be available as a temporary, emergency fixed term of six months. These agistment permits for five national parks in North-West Queensland were provided as a crisis management tool in the wake of the former federal Labor government's disastrous decision to shut down the live export trade in the face of worsening drought conditions.

The Newman government has provided a lifeline to graziers by allowing emergency access to these five national parks as well as more than 400,000 hectares of QPWS managed land which is still available to be utilised. This was a common-sense solution which has been widely supported by the Australian people and organisations including the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League Australia and AgForce. While it was only a small part of our government's ongoing response to the drought crisis, for the 13 graziers who have been able to access the land it has been lifesaving for their stock. My department will now work closely with these graziers, alongside my colleague the Hon. John McVeigh and the department of agriculture, to ensure alternative arrangements are put in place over the next two months.

The Newman government will continue to help drought-affected Queenslanders make it through this crisis through a range of drought services, including financial assistance, livestock nutrition and animal welfare information, and business management strategies. Equally, we will continue to protect and strengthen our national parks, with more than \$25 million invested across Queensland's national parks this financial year, ensuring they are open for Queenslanders to enjoy for generations to come. The Newman government is delivering on its promise to provide Queenslanders better services and safer communities. Only a strong, responsible government prepared to make tough decisions can ensure Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.59 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Energy and Water Supply is absent from the House this week. Minister McArdle is attending and also speaking at the sixth annual Singapore International Energy Week New Horizons in Energy conference. Minister Cripps is acting minister for the portfolio during this absence.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Newman Government, Election Commitments



Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.00 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes that the Newman government has breached its Contract with Queensland and failed to honour its election commitments.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Public Service, Jobs



Ms PALASZCZUK (10.00 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his commitment on 11 December last year when he said there would be absolutely no more public sector job cuts, and I ask: will the Premier explain why he has broken this commitment given that the government announced further job losses at RoadTek, TAFE and the environment and heritage department just last week?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. In answering it I am also remarking on the notice of motion as well.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, it is a matter before the House. So please do not pre-empt debate.

Mr NEWMAN: Madam Speaker, with respect, please bear with me. This government said certain things prior to the election and it said that it would be revitalising front-line services. When we look across Queensland I think we can see today that front-line services are indeed being revitalised. There are many examples of this. Today we are celebrating that the Ipswich Hospital has achieved some wonderful results. I congratulate the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service Chief Executive, Lesley Dwyer, whose emergency department has, for the first time, hit its 100 per cent target for treating and discharging within four hours. I say congratulations to the entire team at that hospital.

We know now that the emergency departments in Queensland's hospitals are the best performing EDs in the nation. We know that our Ambulance Service is performing as part of that vital team. We know that there are hundreds of extra police on the beat in Queensland. We know that, because of the tough but necessary decisions to sort out the Labor financial mess, we now have the ability to fund a surge in police numbers to deal with criminal motorcycle gangs on the Gold Coast. I am getting great feedback from Queenslanders who are saying, 'We know that the effort on the Gold Coast and in South-East Queensland has made a real difference.' Everywhere you go we are keeping our commitment to revitalise front-line services. So the Labor Party can bleat about 'no more job cuts'.

Ms Palaszczuk: You said absolutely no more public sector cuts.

Mr NEWMAN: They can bleat about job cuts and they can also misrepresent what I said. I was very clear that the government had a plan to downsize by 14,000 and I said that that is what we would do. That is what we have done and we have done it for the right reasons. Meanwhile front-line services are going forward. That is the point that matters.

The Labor Party have always confused spending money and wasting money with actually achieving outcomes. Front-line services are being lifted up by this government and waste and inefficiency is being dealt with. I am proud of the government's track record and I thank all the ministers and their teams that have worked so hard to achieve these results.

Electricity Industry

Ms PALASZCZUK: My next question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his comments in November last year when he said, 'The poles and wires transmission stuff, I believe, should be owned by the people because they are natural monopolies.' Then in May this year the Premier told the parliament that the government would not be selling off Energex, Ergon or Powerlink, and I ask: why then has his government hired investment banks Rothschild and Macquarie to scope the sale of Powerlink and SunWater assets without permission from Queensland voters?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am delighted to respond. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to things that I have said and then asked, 'What is going on now?' I make this point: Andrew Fraser and Anna Bligh said there would be no privatisations, and what happened? They privatised, and people like the member for Mulgrave were enthusiastic cheerleaders for asset sales. Do honourable members remember his Mythbusters website? Do they remember his earnest and sincere advocacy for asset sales despite having stood up in his electorate as part of a team in that election campaign back in 2009 and said, 'No, there will be no asset sales'?

So where are we? I will say it again today. We are not selling Ergon, Energex or Powerlink. We are not privatising them. What we did say is that we would look at ways to get private sector capital in them. We have said that before. I say it again today. We said that about \$14 billion worth of capital expenditure in the power sector is required over the next five years. We said that we did not want to see the debt go up and we would be looking for innovative ways of bringing private sector capital into those businesses. I urge the economic Neanderthals opposite to go back and look at what we said. We stood up and responded to the Commission of Audit report, and all these things are a matter of public record in *Hansard*. It is therefore appropriate that the Treasurer and his team would then pursue expert advice on the businesses that were mentioned to see the best way that we can achieve these outcomes, and that is what we are doing.

In relation to privatisations, the difference between those opposite and these people over here whom I lead is chalk and cheese. They go to elections saying that they will not do something and then they actually breach that fundamental trust. They have never come into this place and apologised properly for their deceitful actions. On this side of the chamber we have not privatised any government owned corporations and we have been here 18 months. We made a commitment to only do something like that by going to an election. We have kept our commitment, unlike those dishonest people opposite. They can bleat and carry on about this, but their track record is there. They cannot escape the treacle that immerses them, that covers them and coats them—the treacle of shame for misleading Queenslanders. The stench of that misleading effort in the 2009 campaign will never go away until they come in here and say to the people of Queensland, 'We are sorry for misleading you back in 2009.'

New South Wales Bushfires

Mr YOUNG: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise the House what assistance Queensland firefighters gave during the recent New South Wales bushfires?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for his question. I think it is fair to say that Australians are a very resilient people. This resilience gets tested time and time again and in recent years we have seen a lot of floods, cyclones, drought and, more recently, fire. In the past week, tragically, we have seen the loss of two lives and hundreds of properties destroyed through the devastating bushfires throughout New South Wales. I have been watching, as I am sure have all honourable members, the disturbing scenes that have been going on across the border. We have been very keen, therefore, to do whatever we can to assist our neighbours in their time of need.

Last week 118 men and women from Queensland's urban and rural fire services headed south to assist their New South Wales counterparts to tackle these fires. These men and women were based at Lawson, Katoomba, Bilpin and Wyong and provided on-the-ground assistance. Our emergency workers are obviously well versed in dealing with natural disasters and possess a great deal—a huge amount—of expertise in this area. It is not surprising, therefore, that they are called on to assist in times like this. It is also a case of returning the favour for the help we received from our friends from south of the border in the past few years.

A number of the brigades that came north to help during the 2009 fires around Rockhampton and Bundaberg came from the Blue Mountains New South Wales brigade. On behalf of all members of parliament, I want to thank these fine men and women for putting their lives on the line every single day during these fire events to protect not only Queenslanders, but other people and citizens of this nation who are in need. Many of our rural firefighters volunteer their time without the incentive of a pay cheque, and I make very special mention of the work that they are doing for those who are south of the border. While the fire threat in New South Wales is not yet over, I can report that each and every one of the men and women who have been deployed has returned safely last week. I urge all Queenslanders to take the time to show their gratitude and acknowledge the risks and sacrifices that rural and urban firefighters make for our communities to keep us safe.

Sale of Public Assets

Mr MULHERIN: On behalf of the opposition, we support the comments that the Premier has made in relation to the safe return of firefighters who have worked so hard to protect lives and property in New South Wales. My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Does the Treasurer stand by his media release at the weekend that the government has 'no plans to privatise SunWater or Powerlink'?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his question. It is nice to get one from him. When we talk about privatisation, I always harp back to my old friend the 'mythbuster' over there and some of his quotes. I realise that members may feel that the mythbuster is getting a bit hackneyed and that we have been over it a few times. Perhaps for seven members of the House it is a little bit that way.

I thought I would look up some other issues in relation to privatisation, and one of them I thought I would have a look at was someone called Paul Howes. Members may not be totally familiar with Mr Paul Howes. He is a very senior figure in the union movement. I think he might even be the National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union. As it falls within my portfolio, I did chance to look at the *Australian Financial Review*, a journal of record that I recommend to the opposition. There is an article entitled 'Labor reform, private solution: Paul Howes makes the case for privatisation to resolve infrastructure and asylum seeker issues'. So there are two issues in one there from Mr Paul Howes, and for about three of you—I am not sure about the member for South Brisbane—I think he is with the right faction and I think that is the knife-wielding faction, from memory. I am not quite sure which one it is; it depends on which day of the week it is. Here we have the AWU faction on the front bench over there, and this is their leader: the man who put Julia in and then took her out again and then put Kevin in and took him out again. He says—

We simply can't borrow and spend our way out of the infrastructure hole we have dug for ourselves without creating—

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Treasurer, please take your seat. What is your point of order?

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order on relevance. It was a specific question about a specific press release, and I would ask you to rule on relevance.

Madam SPEAKER: Treasurer, I ask you to address the question that has been put by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr NICHOLLS: Indeed, Madam Speaker, I am very happy to do that. Of course I stand by the statement that I made on Saturday. But in saying that, it is important to put it all into the context of where those opposite are coming from. Here is something else from Mr Howes. He says—

Enter privatisation. Unfortunately, this remains the kind of issue that sends many unionists running out the door and straight onto a picket line. For them, selling any government-owned assets amounts to selling off the family farm and must therefore be resisted at all costs.

Today, this reaction is less ideological than it is reactionary.

Here they are: the great reactionaries! So here we have the party of reform, they call themselves—the party of modern ideas—being described by their own national secretary as reactionary. He said—

Public sector ownership means familiarity.

There is the perception that the government will be more lenient on inefficiency. It is the opposite of big-picture thinking.

There you go: that is the Labor Party way!

(Time expired)

Broadwater Marine Project

Miss BARTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Could the Deputy Premier please update the House on the Broadwater Marine Project?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Broadwater for the question. There have been some developments on this project that I think the House deserves to be updated on. As members of the House will remember, the state government entered into this project to support a commitment that was made by the mayor of the Gold Coast during his election campaign to pursue the construction of

a cruise ship terminal on the Gold Coast. We were happy to play our role to try and bring that about following the success that the mayor enjoyed in that election campaign. However, a few weeks ago we did become aware of comments that were being made in the media by various people from the Gold Coast City Council which threw into some doubt whether or not support remained within the Gold Coast City Council for the Gold Coast cruise ship terminal. I wrote to the mayor to ask him to clarify that issue, and I table a copy of that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Hon. Jeff Seeney, to Mr Tom Tate, Mayor, City of Gold Coast, regarding the Broadwater Marine Project [3882].

Following the receipt of that letter, the Gold Coast City Council considered a resolution that read—

That Council continues to support, in partnership with the State Government, the current Broadwater Marine Project development tender process.

The Gold Coast City Council have assured us that they continue to support the process that we put have in place to evaluate whether or not it is possible to establish a cruise ship terminal within the Broadwater on the Gold Coast, and I tabled the mayor's letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 October 2013, from Mr Tom Tate, Mayor, City of Gold Coast, to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Hon. Jeff Seeney, regarding the Broadwater Marine Project [3883].

The expressions of interest for the construction of that terminal on the Broadwater closed on 17 October. We received two proposals, and those proposals are currently being evaluated by a project team that is comprised of officers of the Gold Coast City Council and officers of my department. That evaluation process has only just begun, and it will be completed in coming weeks.

It is fair to say that we have always known that there were going to be major technical challenges in establishing a cruise ship terminal within the Broadwater, and resolving those technical challenges is the first hurdle that any proponent has to address and cross. Prior to the EOI the state government commissioned a range of technical studies to quantify those challenges, and proponents have been made aware of that. It is fair to say that the technical studies indicated that a cruise ship terminal that does not expose the state to any cost or risks will be a challenge, and the current process of evaluation is about determining whether or not the proponents who have put forward proposals have been able to address those challenges in the first instance.

This project has always been about a cruise ship terminal. The challenge has always been whether or not a cruise ship can be successfully brought into the Broadwater and moored at a terminal constructed for that purpose. That is the challenge that continues to be faced by the proponents that are involved in this project.

(Time expired)

Sale of Public Assets

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. An internal memo from the CEO of SunWater on 18 September says—

Projects Queensland and SunWater are meeting to discuss the contents of the scoping study regarding the industrial pipelines divestment.

Does the Treasurer still deny that this sale of up to eight SunWater pipeline distribution networks is happening? If so, how can Queenslanders take him at his word?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Mulgrave for his question. We know that, when it comes to talking about privatisation, the member for Mulgrave has many faces: he has the face before the decision that was made by his government in 2009; he has the face after his government made that decision in 2009 where he said, 'We have had to make tough decisions'; and he has the Mythbusters face that he produced when he was in government when he said that it was appropriate to increase taxes and charges. But that was not enough under the Labor government to deal with the debt black hole, so then assets had to be sold.

Let me make it abundantly clear for the member for Mulgrave and those opposite that our response to the Commission of Audit was clear: we will not be privatising the corporate operation known as SunWater. The SunWater operation will not be sold. If you go to the government's response to recommendation No. 27 of the Commission of Audit, you will see that we said we would

look at the commercial operations that involve direct supply of material, water and other services to private enterprise. That was the response to recommendation No. 27. We said that we would investigate it—

Mr Pitt: That is not an asset sale?

Mr NICHOLLS: More importantly, we did not say that we would do it. If the member for Mulgrave was sufficiently interested to listen, he may learn something about it. He has obviously been incapable to actually get to recommendation No. 27, that SunWater's dedicated water supply—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I warn members on my left. There are too many interjections. I call the Treasurer.

Mr NICHOLLS: Recommendation No. 27 said—

SunWater's dedicated water supply infrastructure servicing commercial and industrial clients be offered for private ownership and/or private operation, depending on which solution provides the best value for money outcome for the Government.

There it is. Nothing has changed. Nothing has changed since the response. The only person who thinks something has changed is the 'mythbuster' over there. It is a different month this month, so he has a different position on where he stands. The position is unchanged.

Export Week

Mr DOWLING: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please update the House on the success of Export Week celebrations held last week?

Mr NICHOLLS: It is nice to get a question from the member for Redlands in relation to the success of Export Week last week. I thank the member for the question. Last week brought together, if you like, the Queensland export family in a celebration of all that has been achieved over the past 12 months. The member for Redlands has been a strong advocate for business and small business in his electorate. Export Week was about exactly that: promoting businesses and Queensland businesses to the world. It is also about acknowledging the contribution those businesses make, not only to our economy but also to our international reputation.

Not only was last week Export Week; this week Queensland hosts the AusBiotech conference. Last night I was fortunate enough to join the Premier and Minister Walker in welcoming a delegation of potential investors both in science and in our life sciences industry. We are having two weeks, if you like, of international exposure on the world circuit.

The Premier will no doubt at some stage make mention of some of the great award winners from Export Week, in particular Bundaberg Brewed Drinks from Bundaberg. They were delighted on Thursday night to receive the Premier's Export Award. I have to say: rarely have I seen anyone quite so excited as John from Bundaberg Brewed Drinks that night. He was just ecstatic with that award—a tremendous fillip for the people of Bundaberg, who have been through so much over the past 12 months. I congratulate him.

Mr Dempsey interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I beg your pardon? I thought I might get a 'Jack-ism' there!

I place on record my thanks for what those businesses do for Queensland in terms of exporting. In 2012-13 exports contributed \$56½ billion to the Queensland economy. That is more than one-fifth of our total gross state product and more than \$12,000 for every man, woman and child in this state.

While we are known worldwide for our resources and our agriculture, we are also gaining a reputation for being at the forefront of new and exciting industries making their mark on the global stage. Last week I had the opportunity to visit a number of those organisations, including PWR Performance Products. For those who watched the V8s at the Gold Coast, PWR's products cooled those V8s that raced around that track for 300 laps on both days. They supply the cooling systems for the Red Bull Formula One racing team and all of the NASCARs around the world. They are an exporting, world-class business. They, together with Cook Medical, which provides implants around the world to save people's lives, are a demonstration of just what can happen here in Queensland and show that we are an outward-facing economy that is innovating amongst the best in the world. I congratulate all of the participants and winners for Export Week.

Separation of Powers

Mrs MILLER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's comments that the separation of powers is 'more of an American thing'. I now table the *Everyone's Parliament* Factsheet 2.1, from the parliament website, which is designed to educate primary school children and clearly states that the judiciary is considered to be separate and independent from the other two branches of government.

Tabled paper: Queensland Parliament Factsheet 2.1—The separation of powers in Queensland [3884].

I ask: has the Premier read the fact sheet and does he understand that the separation of powers is very much a Westminster thing?

Mr NEWMAN: Not a day goes by that we come into this place that the Labor Party do not try and verbal me. The point I was making on radio station—

Mrs MILLER: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like to table the—

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

Mrs MILLER: I haven't verballed him.

Madam SPEAKER: We do not table documents in interjections. I warn the member under standing order 253A. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Not a day goes by in this place without the Labor Party trying to verbal me. Let us be very clear: what I was saying on radio station 4BC is that it is most marked in the American system because the executive—in other words, the American President, his cabinet and the appointees—is completely separate from the legislature, and that is what I meant. But in relation to the separation of powers, let us be very clear: the government makes the laws, after being elected by the people of the state, and judges are there to administer those laws to the best of their ability. That is what is happening and that is what this government has been most true to.

The Labor Party and other commentators have sought to suggest that one should not criticise the actions of the judiciary. That is what they have done in the last few days. But I say: we will be true to Queenslanders. We promised Queenslanders to be 'can-do'. We promised Queenslanders that we would deal with the problems of lawlessness that had grown out of control, arguably, under the Labor Party. We promised them that we would deal with that. There are plenty of things on the public record about that.

In terms of hypocrisy, we know that the Labor Party are hypocrites. I have here an article from 2011 titled 'Bligh slams judges as "out of touch"'. It states—

Premier Anna Bligh has accused the judiciary of losing touch with the community after two controversial decisions involving—

Government members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Honourable members, please listen—

serious child sex offenders in as many days.

The then Premier said—

People want to see these types of offenders treated very harshly and that isn't what they have seen in the past two days.

They said that they would do whatever they could do about the matter. Well, what did they do? They did nothing. They railed and they got a headline, but they never acted. I hope those opposite ask some more questions today, because I will be delighted to explore this more.

The difference is that they bleat and carry on. They have their little crime summit. They talk and talk and talk. In contrast, we act. There is a problem. The people of Queensland want action. We have passed laws that are strong and effective to deal with criminal motorcycle gangs and sex offenders. What is most important is that the people of Queensland, who elected us, want these things to happen. They will not be misused in the way they have speculated.

(Time expired)

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

Mr CRANDON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister outline to the House how this government is cracking down on criminal motorcycle gangs and their associates?

Mr DEMPSEY: Following on from what the Premier said and in answer to the question from the member for Coomera, the people of Queensland wanted this government to get tough on crime. I am so glad that we have a can-do attitude to make sure that we achieve that and listen to the people of Queensland—unlike those opposite, who were in government for the last 20 years and sat on their hands. The people of Queensland know that criminal motorcycle gangs are parasites who prey on the most vulnerable people in our society. This government has made it absolutely clear that their criminal activities and networks will no longer be tolerated. We have vowed to smash them, and that is exactly what we are doing. If they congregate together, we will hunt them down. If they gather in their clubhouses, we will be waiting for them. We will use the full power of our new laws to ensure that they are removed from our society and inside prison they will be subjected to the country's toughest prison regime, reflecting society's outrage at their activities. Criminal gangs can run, but they cannot hide. If they continue their criminal activities, we will crush every last one of them.

Deputy Commissioner Brett Pointing is the overarching commander of Operation Resolute, which has been the spearhead of our war against criminal motorcycle gangs. Since the creation of Operation Resolute and through a state-wide coordinated approach, police have charged 184 criminal gang members and their associates with 362 offences, executed 47 warrants, issued 102 traffic offence infringement notices against criminal motorcycle gang members or associates and carried out over 4,106 street checks, including licensed establishments and businesses connected to associates of criminal gang members.

On 12 October 2013 a national day of action against criminal motorcycle gangs was undertaken and nationally 57 criminal gang members and associates were charged with offences. On 24 October Task Force Maxima closed a protracted operation targeting Hells Angels criminal motorcycle gang members, with 21 of those members and associates being charged with 57 offences, quantities of illicit substances including amphetamines, steroids, ecstasy and fantasy being found and seizure of assets including three Harley-Davidson motorcycles and a motor vehicle. We are also providing \$5 million to Crime Stoppers—which has received record calls to get rid of this scourge of society—as rewards for information that assists prosecution of motorcycle gang members. A range of legislative amendments have been passed and further opportunities are being pursued to enhance enforcement capabilities.

Let me make it clear to all members of criminal gangs: we intend to wipe you out of existence. The people of Queensland have asked us to get tough on law and order. We make no apologies. We are listening to them. We have enacted the legislation giving the police and other departments the resources.

(Time expired)

Correctional Centres, Smoking Policy

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Minister, are there any additional measures of support for correctional officers being put in place to assist them when dealing with prisoners having severe nicotine withdrawal symptoms when Queensland's correctional centres become non-smoking prisons in March 2014?

Madam SPEAKER: I ask the member to repeat that question. I was having difficulty in hearing all of the elements of it.

Mr KNUTH: Madam Speaker, my question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Minister, are there any additional measures of support for correctional officers being put in place to assist them when dealing with prisoners having severe nicotine withdrawal symptoms when Queensland's correctional centres become non-smoking prisons in March 2014?

Mr DEMPSEY: Obviously the member knows about Nicabate and other nicotine patches and so forth. By and large, the safety of our correctional officers and the safety of the community is of utmost importance in terms of how we look after our correctional facilities. We make no apologies for being tough on offenders who go to correctional facilities. We have ensured that, if there is any chance that they happen to get out of our correctional facilities, our parole boards put the rights of the victim and the community first way above the rights of the offender. Also, if you go to a correctional facility you are expected to work. This is a new change of focus in relation to how we conduct correctional activities.

In relation to smoking in prisons, we look at what happens in other states and countries in that regard. There is no direction at the present time in relation to smoking in prisons. We will ensure at all times that the safety of correctional officers is adhered to. That is why we have strict processes in

relation to where prisoners are allowed to go within the facilities and how they are able to interact with each other, even down to what they eat and how they conduct themselves when people come to visit them. It is a strict regime. We make no apologies for that. It reflects the government's tough stance on law and order, and we will continue to do that.

If the member has any information or wants to talk to me about smoking in prisons, I am always happy to listen to the member for Dalrymple in that regard. In terms of the member's electorate, Lotus Glen is a magnificent facility. It is achieving some great outcomes. However, it is a sad fact that at any given time the majority of males in that facility are from the gulf and cape communities. We have to not only ensure that those communities are protected but also send a clear message that while they are in those facilities they will certainly do their time in a way that meets community expectations.

Cancer Rates, Solariums

Ms MILLARD: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. Minister, I refer to the decades of neglect of our health system under Labor, and I ask: can the minister outline the positive actions by the can-do Newman government to reduce cancer rates, starting with a crackdown on commercial solariums?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Sandgate for her question. We are all concerned about the issue of increasing cancer rates in our community, and that of course is related to the fact that people are living much longer. However, many of the things that cause it also relate to lifestyle and other environmental exposures, and nothing could be more true than what we have seen with skin cancer. Queensland has been described as the skin cancer capital of the world. We have to make people in the community aware that the things that they do on an everyday basis can expose them to greater risks.

Certainly over a long period of time we have had a significant degree of success with the 'Slip! Slop! Slap!' campaigns. Therefore, it is very strange that we continue to allow people access to commercial sun-tanning units. Those units, otherwise known as solariums, have been absolutely identified and proven beyond any doubt to significantly increase the risk of people developing very serious skin cancers. Indeed, the latest research indicates that those who have used commercial solariums have a 22 per cent increased chance of developing the most dangerous form of skin cancer—that is, melanoma—and a 78 per cent increased risk with regard to squamous cell carcinoma. So it is of real concern in the community.

I am very pleased to be part of a can-do LNP government that is about making sure that we are doing the things that are going to make a difference in public health. I recently announced that we will be expanding the regime in Queensland to completely phase out commercial solariums by 31 December 2014. We will have a graduated system in that those people who sign up before 1 April 2014 will be eligible for \$5,000 in compensation for their systems; those who sign up by 1 July will be eligible for \$2,500; and those who sign up by 31 December 2014 will be eligible for \$1,000. We have a graduated system that will ensure that our can-do government—one that I am very pleased to be a part of—will make a significant difference to the public health system in Queensland, because this will reduce the incidence of skin cancer and will save people's lives. I believe that our system will actually take us ahead of the national gain when it comes to phasing out solariums.

(Time expired)

Sex Offenders

Dr DOUGLAS: My question is to the Premier. The Premier has publicly stated that critics of Queensland's new sex offender laws are 'apologists for paedophiles'. Can the Premier please outline to this House what other proportional measures he considered in addressing this problem before introducing these laws, described as bad law and policy by retired Mr Justice Richard Chesterman?

Mr NEWMAN: I am delighted to answer the question from the honourable member and I say that you only have to look at the way the government went about its business over the past 18 months. These laws were not put in in April, or May, or June, or July, or August, or September, or October, or November, or December 2012, nor were they put in place in January, or February, or March, or April, or May, or June, or July, or August, or September 2013. However, laws were put in place to protect our police, to provide the measures for bodies like the CMC and the Queensland Police Service to go after unexplained wealth and also for tougher sentences for drug organisations and individuals. So this was not something that just happened overnight; it was something that we had tried to send signals to the judiciary on.

I have said before—I will say it again today—that I do not like mandatory sentences. I said only in the last few weeks that I did not particularly like the sex offender or paedophile laws and I made that very clear. But the thing is that this is a can-do government. I say to honourable members that there is a problem. We have looked at the problem out there in the community and we have talked to the community and we have acted—unlike the Labor Party, which talked and talked and did nothing. And they carry on about it.

I will go back a few years to 2005 to another sex offender, Mr Dennis Ferguson. We all remember him, don't we? Mr Ferguson was released into the small community of Murgon in the electorate of the now Deputy Premier. What did Peter Beattie say at the time?

Queensland Premier Peter Beattie said his Government was looking at suggestions that convicted paedophiles should not be allowed to live within a certain distance of kindergartens, child care centres, schools and other places where children gather.

What a surprise! I would like them in jail.

Dr DOUGLAS: I rise to a point of order. I asked the Premier what other proportional—

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. This is not about debating an answer. The Premier has time on the clock to answer the question.

Mr NEWMAN: The then Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Jeff Seeney, said he wanted them in jail. What a surprise! Our policy has always been that dangerous sex offenders should be in jail. I refer to another article, dated 1 February 2012, which states—

Premier Anna Bligh has lashed Queensland's Supreme Court for refusing to detain a dangerous sex offender who yesterday disconnected his GPS ankle-bracelet, disappeared into the community and allegedly attacked a female jogger in broad daylight.

They talk about things; we act. The people of Queensland want these tough laws and we will stick by the community and protect them.

Armor All Gold Coast 600

Mr MOLHOEK: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister please update the House on the Armor All Gold Coast 600 and its benefits to the Gold Coast and Queensland?

Mrs STUCKEY: I thank the honourable member for Southport for his question and for his support for this action packed event that has had the Gold Coast certainly on its feet and showing the world just what it is made of. Of course, under the most splendid weather conditions, with this great event we have also been able to send a very strong advertising message around the world that the Gold Coast is the place that is famous for fun and action.

The Gold Coast has something pretty exciting happening every month but, mind you, the city was really abuzz with adrenaline at the Armor All Gold Coast 600 V8 Supercars over the weekend. As I said, we experienced splendid weather, but we also had fantastic crowds. This year, we had an event packed program that extended over the entire month.

But it was the cars that the majority of the people came to see—or perhaps the drivers, or maybe even some of those gorgeous Indy and V8 girls from years gone by. I know a number of my colleagues certainly enjoyed the events on and off the track. Nissan and Mercedes Benz joined their rivals Holden and Ford on the track this year. I would like to congratulate the race winners, the Bottle-O racing team and drivers Dean Canto and David Reynolds, who celebrated his maiden V8 Supercars race win. I would also like to congratulate James Warburton and his team for their outstanding efforts.

The Newman government is very proud to support the Gold Coast 600. This year, we have shown that it is more than a thrilling three-day car race with the launch of the V8 Superfest—a month-long program of 36 different community events held the length and breadth of the Gold Coast. Many of those events were free, but those that did have a small cost saw the donation going to our wonderful surf-lifesaving movement. Throughout October these events attracted an estimated 77,000 people and encouraged greater visitation to not only the event hub in Surfers Paradise but across all of the Gold Coast. The superfest included pop-up concerts, the V8 BillyKart Derby at Burleigh Heads, the Gold Coast Rockers GC600 Hop at Runaway Bay, moonlight movies on Surfers, and the Race of Stars karting event at Pimpama. In my electorate I joined 1,500 music lovers at Opera 600, a free afternoon of opera classics held in Palm Beach Parklands by the sea. But if people liked their music a

bit louder and modern, there were performances from US rap-rock outfit the Gym Class Heroes and the Australian acts the Presets, Spiderbait and Grinspoon. I hear that Saturday night's concert was so popular that people tried to swim across to it. This event was the largest in the history of the car race. The Newman government has been proud to support this event and has extended the contract for three years.

Walton Construction

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. I refer to the minister's answer to my last question about the failure of the Walton Construction company and I ask: has the government's investigations identified any noncompliance with current state laws by Walton Construction?

Madam SPEAKER: Members, before I call the minister, there is too much noise in the chamber when members are asking questions. I call the Minister for Housing and Public Works.

Mr MANDER: I thank the member for Nicklin for his question. The collapse of Walton Construction on the Sunshine Coast is of great concern to the subcontractors on the Sunshine Coast and also to me as the Minister for Housing and Public Works. It is not right that subcontractors can perform work in good faith and not receive payment for that. So, of course, this is an area that I am very concerned about and one that I have been looking into over the last few weeks.

My office has been in constant contact with the stakeholders involved in the collapse of Walton. I will outline to the member for Nicklin some of that contact and those conversations, which will, I think, answer the question that he has asked. We have been in contact with Councillor Greg Rogerson, who is the divisional councillor for the area where the Nambour Coles complex is, which is the centre of the dispute. He has been representing the views of subcontractors and today at lunchtime he and a group of those subcontractors are coming to meet me—I think the member might be involved in that meeting as well—as we talk about their plight, talk about their concerns and, importantly, work out a way forward with regard to what the state may be able to do or not be able to do with regard to securing the future payments for subcontractors. So I look forward to that meeting. We are committed to consulting with people who have been affected by this and, hopefully, some positive things will come out of that.

We have also met with Coles. There has been some comment about Coles' obligations to subcontractors. We had a meeting in my office with their respective office-bearers and it was a very good conversation. Coles was very forthright in providing some information—talking about the fact that this is the first time that they had ever used Walton. Therefore, they went through a very thorough due diligence process. They have been dealing with the subcontractors as well, trying to work out ways that they might be able to help out those people.

Ironically, Coles really encouraged Walton's to actually use local subcontractors and unfortunately that has come back and bitten them. Probably more specifically to your question, the BSA—soon to be the QBCC—has been doing investigations. The major area of concern is the area around phoenix companies—companies that have risen out of the ashes from previous companies that have collapsed. We are looking into the directors of Peloton Builders which did have Craig Walton as its nominee. There are only certain things that we can do in the BSA with regard to excluding this person from being a building contractor in the future. We will be dealing with the federal authorities as well to see what might have been contravened there.

Stock Theft

Mr HOBBS: I have a question for the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister provide an update on how the Newman government is strengthening stock theft laws and what effects these laws will have on those convicted of poddy dodging through to large scale cattle stealing?

Dr McVEIGH: I thank the member for his question. I understand his concern about this serious issue. The fact is that the Newman government has strengthened Queensland's stock laws to stamp out cattle stealing. The new laws will deter perpetrators of their greedy ways while providing magistrates more power to help farmers get their stock back, as has been called for by industry for many years. Cattle stealing is a serious offence that requires serious penalties. It is a dirty act that hurts farmers and the wider community with annual losses into the millions of dollars. Life on the land can be hard enough and the last thing farmers need is to have their stock stolen. Cattle producers spend a lot of time and money to bring their stock for sale so for someone to steal them is financially

devastating. That is why the Newman government, and in particular the Attorney-General, is throwing the book at stock thieves. I congratulate the Attorney-General because not only is he stamping out renegade criminal bikie gangs, he is also stamping out cattle thieves in the regions.

The minimum fines for a range of stock offences will now be increased from \$200 to \$1,100 per animal or the value of that animal, whichever is the higher amount. These fines will hit the hip pocket of those who attempt to profit from hardworking farmers. Other amendments to the legislation will benefit investigating authorities and primary producers by empowering police to effectively investigate stock crime by extending stock related search warrant durations from seven to 21 days, modernising evidentiary requirements in stock offence prosecutions, maintaining the ability of police to immediately return cattle to victims of crime where there is no dispute as to the ownership and streamlining the disposal process where there is a dispute to the ownership, allowing the stock to be sold pending an order from the court to distribute the funds at the conclusion of the proceedings.

As the Minister for Police full well knows, that will assist them greatly in their role in regional Queensland. Under the new laws the court can order the return of cattle when stock have strayed onto a person's property and the stock owner refuses to remove the cattle. These moves are good for farmers, good for animal welfare and, as I said, good for the efficiency and responsiveness of our hardworking local police officers throughout the bush.

It is important to remember that the Newman government supports regional Queenslanders who are the backbone of our great state. We support a four-pillar economy. We promised to get tough on crime. We promised to support families no matter where they are throughout this great state of Queensland.

SunWater

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Premier. There are reports within SunWater that around 20 per cent, or 115 staff, are being axed as part of the government's sale process. Will the Premier rule out any plans for cutting up to 115 jobs at SunWater as part of the sale preparation process?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am happy to answer it. Perhaps the opposition would have been better to ask me a question about the real issues in public debate this week which is obviously about law and order and the tough new laws that this can-do government is putting in place.

Ms Palaszczuk: Yeah, you were prepped for that one.

Mr NEWMAN: I will take the interjection. What, prepped for SunWater, too, ladies and gentlemen; because they are so darned obvious, they really are—they really, really are. They have to do better than to get their questions from the newspapers. Please, do better.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They have 22 staff. They receive the same budget as the previous opposition got. They have plenty of people to help them come up with good questions to hold the government to account. If we are all the things that we have been called in the last two weeks then surely a good opposition with 22 staff could ask some tough questions to challenge the government about these important tough new laws. That is what they could do.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr NEWMAN: Since they will not use the resources they have been given to challenge us appropriately on these tough new laws to deal with criminal gangs and sex offenders, I will therefore have to answer the question in relation to SunWater, which I am happy to do. They have to go back and read *Hansard*, they really do. I plead with them: read *Hansard*. This is nothing new. We said when we handed down the Commission of Audit report—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They keep talking. They clearly do not want to hear the answer. I am trying to answer. I implore them. I really want to answer their question.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: Maybe they have not heard in the past because they keep talking during question time and they keep talking amongst themselves during ministerial statements. Because the 22 staff have written the questions for them and written the speeches so they really are a very lazy opposition when you have three staff to every member.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Back to SunWater, we said very clearly, the Treasurer said it today—

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They are not listening now. I am happy to give up. I am trying to answer the question. There are 28 seconds on the clock. There has been no change to the policy.

Mrs MILLER: You're an embarrassment.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, please take your seat. I now ask the member for Bundamba to leave the chamber under 253A. Her interjections are interfering with proceedings.

Whereupon the honourable member for Bundamba withdrew from the chamber at 10.56 am.

Madam SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: We said at the time when we handed down the Commission of Audit report, as the Treasurer said today, that the commercial operations supporting people like BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance would be looked at for sale. That is all that is going on. We are not privatising SunWater.

Community Organisations

Mrs OSTAPOVITCH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. What is the Newman government doing to support our hardworking community organisations to continue the delivery of their vital services?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for her question, her very dedicated support of the community organisations in the Stretton electorate but also for her ongoing support for the Caring for our Community grants program. I know the member was very pleased that in the first round the Salvation Army in her electorate was a recipient and was able to put the money towards improving their building facilities.

Under the former government many community and volunteer organisations were struggling to afford the equipment they needed to do their work in the community. Spiralling red tape and compliance, along with increasing operational costs, made upgrading essential equipment near impossible for those who are delivering important services in our community. That is why the Newman government introduced the \$4 million Caring for our Community grants program to help community organisations to purchase the equipment they need, making front-line delivery services that much easier.

I am pleased to inform the House that the second funding round under the Caring for our Community grants program is now open. This means Queensland's hardworking community and volunteer groups have the opportunity to share in almost \$1.3 million worth of funding for essential items and equipment as part of a helping hand from this can-do government. The Caring for our Community initiative offers small grants of up to \$5,000 for local community and volunteer groups such as sporting clubs, PCYCs, men's sheds and playgroups just to name a few. In some cases organisations can also apply for bigger grants of up to \$15,000 to purchase more significant equipment for more substantial projects.

Whether it is for a printer, a computer, safety equipment, sporting equipment, fridges or a microwave, the cost of vital equipment can quickly mount up for community groups and these grants provide a fantastic opportunity to improve community facilities and upgrade resources.

Applications for the second funding round for Caring for our Community grants close on 2 December and applications can be made online at the Department of Communities website. Right across Queensland there is amazing community spirit and the Newman government understands the invaluable contribution that not-for-profit community groups and their volunteers make to our great state. I am confident a small boost like these grants can make a real difference in revitalising their front-line services. I encourage all Queensland community and volunteer groups, no matter how big or small, to apply for our Caring for our Community grants.

Criminal Justice System, Resourcing

Mr JUDGE: My question without notice is to the Premier. In relation to the government's lengthy mandatory imprisonment regime, reverse onus for bail applications, plans for non-parole periods and removing sentencing as a last resort for juveniles, can the Premier confirm what action is being taken to resource the criminal justice system and, in particular, the courts and prisons, which are already reported as exceeding capacity.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, you have one minute to answer.

Mr NEWMAN: I can inform the honourable member that we have already made announcements about resourcing those who go after the criminals: the CMC will receive up to \$7 million; the Queensland Police Service will receive \$20 million; and there is \$5 million worth of reward money. That is on the table right now. In relation to resourcing the rest of the system, through our budgetary processes we will take action as required. On another day and at another time, I might be able to enlighten the member more. To return to the theme of today, we are a can-do government. The community has asked us to take action—

Mr JUDGE: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, take your seat. What is your point of order?

Mr JUDGE: Relevance. I asked the Premier a question directly and he has not responded.

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I listened to the Premier's answer. He did address the issue of resourcing. The Premier has time on the clock.


Mr NEWMAN: To return to what I have been saying today, in July 2007 Judy Spence expressed frustration that the courts were being lenient towards sex offenders and said she would introduce new laws to force sex offenders to wear electronic tagging devices when they were released into the community with supervision orders.

(Time expired)

Madam SPEAKER: The time for questions has finished.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Newman Government, Performance

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.01 am): Over the past week, I think Queenslanders have been shocked by the Premier's unprecedented attacks on the judiciary. This has been echoed by voices from the Law Society, the Bar Association and, most recently, as of yesterday, from an opinion piece by Tony Fitzgerald. This is an unprecedented attack. It is an attack that is one of the worst that we have seen in living memory. What we have witnessed in Queensland since the March 2012 election is a government determined to chart a course to steer this state backward to a time that nobody wants to revisit, a time of almost 25 years ago that should be rightly consigned to the history books.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Maryborough, please take your conversation outside. If members wish to have conversations, go outside.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is a time of almost 25 years ago that should be rightly consigned to the history books; a dark time, a dark place. We have watched appalled as this Premier leads his government and, at the same time, leads all Queenslanders back to a pre-Fitzgerald Queensland where the lines were not only blurred, but in many areas they were simply obliterated. In the past fortnight, we have seen this Premier, his Attorney-General, his cabinet and each of his members of parliament in this House amplify that effort, resolutely and doggedly attacking the very important principles governing the separation of powers. We have seen this Premier and this Attorney-General launch an extraordinary and unprecedented attack on the judiciary in their unyielding desire to assume absolute power, to ignore the very important line that must exist between the state and the judiciary, and to install themselves as not only law makers but also judge and jury to enact those laws.

This is a dark period we are entering. It is a dangerous period. It has come to define a government that is not content merely governing as it was elected to do, but now wants to control our legal system and control our courts. The Premier and the Attorney-General hope to achieve that by insulting our judiciary, by belittling our magistrates and our judges, and by sinking to a schoolyard

level where name calling becomes the order of the day. They achieved this by bypassing this parliament's critical committee system and allowing just over two hours of debate on the amendments to the Criminal Law Amendment Act. By doing that, they bypassed any scrutiny and any opportunity for anyone to be consulted or to have important input. Then they unleashed the Premier who last week was behind some of the most offensive, ill-informed and deliberately divisive comments made about the judiciary in this state for decades. Those attacks were simply unprecedented.

Last week the Premier was interviewed by Greg Carey on 4BC radio. On that program the Premier set about attacking the judiciary in the manner of someone who understands absolutely nothing about the critical separation of powers. As the member for Bundamba highlighted this morning during question time, there is a pamphlet available to all primary schoolchildren and high school students visiting this parliament, and it is available to every member of this House. It is entitled *The separation of powers in Queensland*. I table that for the benefit of all members. It might do them some good to actually make sure they are well versed in the convention and the doctrine that they have breached over the past two decades.

Tabled paper: Queensland Parliament Factsheet 2.1—The separation of powers in Queensland [3885].

To the judges, the Premier said—

You need to come out of your ivory towers ... they go home to their comfortable, well-appointed home and they talk among themselves.

He described and accused anyone who did not agree with his government's decision to grant the Attorney-General the power to decide who stays in jail and who gets out as 'apologists'. That is simply disgraceful. It is absolutely disgraceful language and it is disgraceful behaviour from the Premier of our state. As if to deliberately rub salt into the wound he has opened, the Premier insinuates that members of the bench actually face elections to office. Clearly, this is the mark of a Premier who does not understand our legal system, does not understand the important line that must exist between the parliament and the courts, and clearly will dish out insults to anyone who dares to disagree with him.

Mr Mulherin: He might be Premier, but he is no statesman.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. Let us examine what the real experts, the people with actual experience within the legal profession and members of the judiciary, have to say about what the Premier and the Attorney-General have done in giving themselves these new unprecedented powers. Let us start at the top with Tony Fitzgerald, author of the landmark 1989 Fitzgerald report and, in many ways, the architect of the anti-corruption regime that has shaped government in Queensland for the past two-plus decades. Queenslanders can decide for themselves whether Mr Fitzgerald's opinion is accurate or otherwise. What is absolutely clear from Mr Fitzgerald's comments yesterday is his disbelief in what the Newman government has done. I quote—

And it is incomprehensible that any rational Queenslander who is even remotely aware of the state's recent history could for a moment consider reintroducing political interference into the administration of criminal justice, even to the point of making decisions about incarceration.

He goes on—

It is foolhardy for politicians who lack material expertise to make major changes to the criminal law without first obtaining and acting on advice from criminologists ... prosecutors and other experts ...

He describes the new laws as draconian, and I concur. But the Premier and the Attorney-General would have no idea of Mr Fitzgerald's views. Why? Simply because they did not bother to ask him. They did not bother to consult with him, just as they failed to consult with anyone outside their cabinet, before they slammed these laws through the House in the early hours of the morning just over two weeks ago.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are talking about the criminal law amendment bill. If members were here witnessing it—some of them were not here—they would understand what we quite clearly raised. In fact, we have been backed up by Tony Fitzgerald. We have been backed up by the Bar Association and the Law Society. These are the people who are coming out condemning what this government has done. This has been a shameful week in Queensland politics—a shameful week.

These members have no concept of Tony Fitzgerald's report into corruption in this state. They have no concept of the separation of powers in this state. They have no concept of what they have done. They have blurred the lines between the executive and the judiciary. Not content with that, anybody who does not support them—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members! The noise is starting to crescendo with the number of interjections competing with the person with the call. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I remember the Fitzgerald inquiry. I know that there are some people sitting in this House today who remember it. Those members who do not remember it should have a good long read of the report. Tony Fitzgerald is a man of integrity. Tony Fitzgerald is a man whose views and opinions count for something in this state. For this government to ignore his views—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let us keep going. Let us listen to what Mr Gary Crooke, the counsel who assisted Mr Fitzgerald during his inquiry 25 years ago, said. He said that history will record the move to give the Attorney-General the jailer's keys as akin to the transportation of convicts to Australia for petty offences two centuries ago.

Why did they not consult with people of the standing of retired judge Richard Chesterman—a long-serving and respected justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland?

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Justice Chesterman was not soft on crime.

A government member: You are too.

Mrs Ostapovitch: Oh, you are.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I find those comments from the member for Sunnybank offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr STEWART: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Yes, member for Sunnybank.

Mr STEWART: I find those comments offensive. I was not even in my seat nor was I making any statements at the time. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam SPEAKER: Let us just settle for a moment. I am going to warn the member for Ipswich West under standing order 253A for interjections that did not use appropriate titles. I did not hear the member for Stretton, but did you make a comment, member for Stretton?

Mrs Ostapovitch: I was trying to explain.

Madam SPEAKER: You have been asked to withdraw under the standing orders.

Mrs Ostapovitch: No problem.

Madam SPEAKER: Could you please use your microphone and stand and do so.

Mrs OSTAPOVITCH: Yes, I will.

Madam SPEAKER: Could you please make it clear as to what you are doing.


Mrs OSTAPOVITCH: I withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In conclusion, the law in its abhorrence, in all that it does to conscientiously and so thoroughly blur the lines must be repealed and replaced at the first opportunity. What this government needs to do today is apologise to the judiciary for their unprecedented attacks, the likes of which Queensland has not seen. We do not want to return to the dark days, we want a clear future.

(Time expired)

Im, Ms D; Building Industry

 **Mr GRANT** (Springwood—LNP) (11.13 am): There are two things that I would like to speak about this morning. I am extremely confident that the first of the two matters of public interest will be the most popular spoken about in this House for a long time. We have recently received the news that Dami Im won *X Factor* 2013. What a popular win that was. How many people across the state and the nation have been barracking for her!

She is a resident of my electorate of Springwood. I congratulate her sincerely for the manner in which she conducted herself. I think of the joy she receives from using that gift that she has been given—that voice to entertain so many. Dami, congratulations to you. Congratulations also to your husband, Noah. Keep up the good work and please keep enjoying yourself.

Another matter of public interest I wish to speak of today is that of the significant problems in our building industry. I wish to articulate some of these problems and suggest, in keeping with our ethos as a can-do government, some ways in which we can fix these problems. As I speak of these issues, I want us to contemplate that for the last 20-odd years Labor has led this state. This is the condition that our building industry is in currently.

I will give members the picture. When an unsuspecting owner, doing the best they can, engages a builder to build their home they can be horribly confused by the number of certificates that come in from different people who do different elements of the work on their home. One company will do a certificate on the foundations, another the wall frame and a separate one again the roof trusses. They get certificates from private certifiers. They get certificates from people who inspect termite barriers. They get certificates from the council that inspects the water supply and sewerage. They might get a certificate from the man who does the excavation and another one from the man who does the stormwater drainage. I point out that a new owner would not have the foggiest idea who is taking responsibility for which part of their home.

Some of the examples of the problems that I am experiencing in Springwood illustrate my point. I had a resident come to me and complain about her home that is cracking apart. The home that her and her husband had invested their life savings into is cracking apart. I want to make this point. These days, with sophisticated soil analysis and structural engineers designing homes, we can be confident of one thing. The system is letting this resident down because buildings do not crack apart without shortcuts having been taken.


Other problems I have seen are roof framing not being completed to the standard and therefore not strong enough to hold the roof load. Roofs not tied down properly such that they could fly off. These problems do not show up immediately, but that is the problem. Builders know the system. They know that if they move on very quickly they can withhold certificates from owners for long enough for them to move on and cover-up the shoddy workmanship.

I am absolutely disgusted with what is happening in our building industry. I am determined that we can do something about fixing this problem. Consumers are being ripped off hand over fist daily by shonky builders. I am not talking about good builders; I am talking about shonky builders, unethical builders. We need to look into standard building contracts that are so one sided it is unbelievable. We need to require builders to give certificates to owners immediately not just if owners know to ask for them.

We need to give back to local governments the legal right that they had taken from them to intervene when builders are found to be doing shoddy work, when shonky builders are found to be damaging public infrastructure. While the contracts are on foot local governments do not have the right to intervene. What a silly system.

What about private certifiers who have cosy relationships with builders? A can-do government can do something here. We can look into that and see what further pressure we can bring to bear on shonky private certifiers.

Central Queensland University

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (11.18 am): I take this opportunity to share with the House the strong desire of my community to pursue the options of expanding the opportunities that Wide Bay TAFE Bundaberg campus and the Central Queensland University can bring. My electorate clearly identifies with CQU and welcomes the prospects of becoming a centre of excellence for education. The Central Queensland University is now on track to become Queensland's first dual sector university with the initiatives in Central Queensland. The opportunities for my region would change the face of postschool education and training in our region forever. Becoming a dual sector university would transform the lives of so many people in the region by providing them with seamless access to the full range of postschool education and training options and allowing them to skill up for the unique workforce needs of the region.

We have seen a real and concerted effort of this government to provide training that leads to real jobs and real opportunities, and we need to improve our academic and technical capacities. This can be achieved by offering all levels of postschool education and training 'under one roof' to better meet our communities' unique workforce and skills needs. Whilst there is great news for the workforce in the Central Queensland region, encompassing Gladstone, Rockhampton and Mackay, with their merger we are potentially missing the chance to provide this opportunity to the Bundaberg and Burnett regions.

Under a dual sector delivery model, students from all backgrounds will have access to better education and training pathways, improved facilities and job placement opportunities, more streamlined articulation into further study and more study options than ever before. Staff would benefit from new career development opportunities, students will enjoy greater options and choice when it comes to their education, and alumni will benefit from new partnerships and professional development opportunities. Importantly, the wider community will benefit from better accessibility and openness, and industry will benefit from a larger pool of highly skilled graduates from a wider range of disciplines.

Students in a dual sector university will be able to select study options at various different levels ranging from pre-apprenticeship to postdoctorate. This supports lifelong learning and encourages the workforce to pick up different skill sets at different points in their career. This will extend across a comprehensive and diverse selection of courses and programs in discipline areas such as business and commerce, trades and apprenticeships, health and fitness, aged care, nursing and midwifery, childcare and education, humanities, hospitality, science, performing arts and engineering. These programs and courses are relevant to our region and will help to meet skills shortages in the area and make Bundaberg and Burnett sustainable communities.

For instance, a healthcare assistant who gains a certificate III from a dual sector institution will be less intimidated to come back to that institution later in their career to undertake a bachelor's degree in physiotherapy. Equally, a physiotherapy graduate may come back to the institute to undertake a certificate IV in business management to assist them with setting up their physiotherapy practice. Students studying engineering may be able to gain technical skills like welding somewhere along their career pathway. Along with this, CQ University aims to be Australia's most engaged university and in achieving this they will build and promote partnerships and facilitate connections with a wide range of organisations and communities at a local, national and international level.

We in the Bundaberg region are keen to become part of the opportunities that a merger between Wide Bay TAFE Bundaberg campus and CQ University would allow. In highlighting the strong educational aspirations of our region, it is important to reflect on the needs of those disadvantaged who live in the region. It is important that areas like the electorate of Bundaberg or the electorate of Burnett that have unfortunately ranked higher in the scan of disadvantage than other areas in Queensland continue to work towards flexibility and innovation that allow for creativity and responsiveness for educational outcomes. In closing, I just want to stress that we do want to become a centre of excellence for education in the Bundaberg and Burnett electorates and I think it is very important that these mergers be reflected on and pursued.

Gold Coast, Crime Summit



Mr BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (11.22 am): I report today on a crime summit hosted by the Labor opposition on the Gold Coast last Friday. For months the Newman government resisted calls for such a summit, despite proclaiming itself as an open and accountable government. It said that the time for talk was over. But this is a government that does not listen in the first place. It thinks it knows everything. This is not a government that is open and accountable. This government thinks that just because it says something often enough then it is actually true—delusional in many respects.

The opposition wanted this crime summit to be a bipartisan event because all sensible people want the best outcomes for the Gold Coast. But the government responded by dubbing it all a 'talkfest'. Well the deputy opposition leader and I attended, as did the member for Gaven which I thank him for. Yes, we talked but, more importantly, we listened—something this government never does. For those who aspire to lead, the most important leadership quality possible is the capacity to listen. We listened to people concerned about crime and the perception of crime on the Gold Coast.

We listened to a number of mainstream Queenslanders who simply want to continue to enjoy riding motorcycles but are being caught in the wide net cast by the LNP's new crime gang laws. This is occurring despite the government's assurances during the second reading debate. Friday's summit heard complaints from everyday citizens being searched and targeted in a manner that is completely at odds to commitments given by this government during the debate last sitting. These are the types of unwarranted impacts legislation can have when it has not been subject to proper scrutiny and public discussion. These are the impacts we get when the government thinks it knows it all.

Today I call on the Minister for Police to release the number of street checks completed on people riding motorbikes since the Broadbeach incident and indicate the strike rate of identifying gang members. The House should recognise that the significant investigations leading to the drug-

trafficking arrests, despite the spin from this government, were conducted under the previous Labor government's legislation and that this LNP government legislation has attributed nothing to those outcomes.

At the summit we listened as tourism operators complained that this government seems happy to whip up fears of crime for its own political purposes, despite the economic damage it is likely to do. We heard that the government needs to moderate its language to protect the \$6 billion Gold Coast tourism industry to protect jobs on the coast. We heard that no government in the world would talk up crime in a critical international tourist area. The opposition will request the Newman government to compile and release detailed crime and tourism statistics as the overlay of this data needs to be analysed and provided to private businesses on the Gold Coast who operate in an increasing global market place. This information is vital so businesses can negotiate effectively with overseas competitors who will use the comments of the Premier against us in the global contest for tourism dollars.


And we listened to Bond University criminologist Dr Terry Goldsworthy, who said that the failure to release the annual crime statistical review makes it almost impossible to confidently state the real picture of crime committed on the Gold Coast or in Queensland. For more than 20 years the annual crime statistical review was released by the Queensland Police Service as a single reference point to judge if crime in general, or certain types of offences, were a real problem. It allows people to see what types of offences are prevalent in their area, what types of people are the offenders and what types of people are the victims. Preventing or obscuring the truth about crime from being analysed by experts allows this government to pick and choose villains and bogeymen to misrepresent any situation for political gain. Eventually a cost-benefit analysis must be aligned to a risk assessment to ensure police resources are used appropriately. But how can we be confident it will happen when this so-called 'open and accountable' government obscures the facts?

Our crime summit did not focus on bkie gangs; we looked at all types of crimes. This government does not want anyone shining a light on any of its activities, or its shortcomings, given that crime has risen at least two per cent last year on the LNP's watch. At the summit there was also very critical review of what has occurred with the CMC.

On a personal note, I want to state that I have called on this government for many months to take organised crime seriously, and I reject completely any suggestion that I or any of my colleagues are apologists for criminals. This is the language of cowards. The opposition leader has said that it shows how badly the Premier and others in this government have lost the plot and how desperate and absolutist they have become in their frustration. My advice to this government is to take the finger off the transmit button and listen.

(Time expired)

Algester Electorate, Public Transport

 **Mr SHORTEN** (Algester—LNP) (11.27 am): I wish to talk about a number of public transport matters which have a direct impact on my electorate of Algester. Members who know me know my passion for public transport, particularly rail. Over the years I have been a frequent user of both buses and trains. When I worked in the city in the early 1990s, I caught the train every day for six years to and from work. Most recently I have caught buses from Browns Plains to Chermside for 2½ years for work. There are many people who would catch public transport but for many reasons do not. We know what commuters have told us they want—reliability, value for money, comfort and frequency of service. So I commend the minister on the recent announcement of major timetable overhauls which will see 200 additional train services a day across the South-East Queensland network.

Unfortunately, my constituents only have access to these services if they first drive to a station on the Beenleigh or Springfield lines. That is why the Salisbury-Beaudesert rail study is so important firstly to finalise and secondly to begin to build. I note the commitment of both the federal and state governments to build a dedicated inland freight line from the Port of Brisbane. The current interstate line runs smack bang through the middle of my electorate. So I say to both the federal and state ministers: 'If you are going to work on the corridor, put passenger rail in at the same time. Don't come back and try to retrofit it later.'

I have heard the argument that the rail line will be delivered in stages based on passenger demand. The demand is already there: from Algester-Parkinson, Hillcrest and Boronia Heights. Just look at the number of buses running to the city from the Algester-Parkinson area that are full. Put a train service in place and take the buses off the road. As for my constituents of Hillcrest and Boronia


Heights, they do not have a choice. It is either drive their car or catch a bus. I want to see as many people out of their cars and on public transport as possible. The way I look at it is that, if you start driving your car to work, you will form the habit of driving your car to work so it will be even harder to entice you out of that car and onto public transport. But, if we made it convenient and simple for you to get on a train or a bus from your first trip, then your travelling habits will develop in favour of public transport.

If demand is a criteria for the implementation of a rail service, then I would suggest the current situation at Flagstone in the member for Logan's electorate is a perfect candidate. I understand there are around 14,000 residents living there with no access to a rail service or a bus service. If you do not have a vehicle, you are stuck. So a generation of kids are growing up and forming transport habits around vehicles. I am seeing firsthand the increasing number of vehicles on Middle Road and Beaudesert Road. The numbers are getting earlier and earlier in the morning. The question I ask the planners is: how do you judge a lack of demand if the residents do not even have access to a rail line. Build it and they will come. Look at the Springfield line.

I turn now to the provision of bus services in my electorate. We have just seen the biggest review of services in the south-east corner for many years and not before time. In relation to my electorate, Brisbane City Council made a number of decisions around changes to routes and the withdrawal of some services. In the Logan part of my electorate, I have to question at least one decision that has been made to the extended 534 service. Do members think it is fair to ask or expect someone to walk up to three kilometres to access a bus stop? I do not think the residents of Carindale or Taringa would accept that. If we want people to use public transport, we have to provide a service within reason, particularly if residents have no access to another form of public transport. A solution can be found if people are willing to find one. It may not fit in the already defined outcomes or goals, but we have to be flexible and remember our community obligations. I will continue to lobby for changes to the 534 service or another innovative solution.

As I said at the start, I am a huge advocate of public transport. My area and areas beyond me are part of what I call the western wedge, and it is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland. If we do not start to build rail infrastructure soon, it will cost more and create more issues when future governments are forced to due to growth pressures. We need to lose our car-centric mentality and move towards the goal of being the best in the provision of public transport in the world. Yes, it will take money but investment now will reap multiple dividends later.

Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.32 am): Despite recent shocking events on the Gold Coast, outlaw motorcycle gangs are not a new phenomenon. Labor recognised the seriousness of the issue back in 2009 and the LNP has finally caught up. Not content with the free media coverage, the Newman government is spending \$800,000 of taxpayers' money to tell people what they are up to. So much for the need to pull back on government advertising!

The bikie blitz has been sucking political oxygen and public attention away from the Newman government's hidden agenda—a sacking, slashing, selling and slowing agenda that is continuing full steam ahead under the cover of a campaign against various criminal groups. On Friday last week it was revealed in the *Australian Financial Review* that the Newman government has hired investment bank Macquarie to launch a scoping study into selling off SunWater's large distribution networks and Rothschild to start looking at the sale of the \$10 billion Powerlink poles and wires business. This is how this Treasurer announces asset sales. He sneaks it into the *Australian Financial Review* on a Friday hoping that nobody will notice, all the while claiming to be 'open and transparent'. The Treasurer pulled a similar swiftie with the sale of seven office buildings in the Brisbane CBD. They were sold for \$226 million below their market value, with additional rent costs estimated to exceed sale proceeds by more than half a billion dollars over the next decade.

The cost of selling these buildings is on track to exceed \$750 million. The Treasurer announced the sale of these seven CBD office buildings after they had been sold. All we saw before this was the odd drop of information to the *Australian Financial Review*, just as we are seeing now with SunWater and Powerlink. Similarly, the government tried to keep under wraps its record sale program of school property, the biggest single year in Queensland's history at \$58 million, and is budgeted to continue at \$30 million per year over coming years. There was also little talk prior to the sale of more than \$2.3 billion in the government's ownership stake in Aurizon, formerly QR National. And the sale of the \$500 million ElectraNet business almost went completely unnoticed.


Queenslanders may soon awaken to more rude shocks of assets being sold during the night under a cloak of Newman government secrecy. In the last sitting of parliament, the Treasurer said that he stood by his comments advocating for a report which recommends flogging the lot and selling \$48 billion in electricity assets. Meanwhile, government sources have been telling the *Australian* newspaper that they are looking at selling the state's court buildings, housing assets, rubbish dumps, land sites, industrial properties and stadiums reported to be valued at \$2 billion. Sources have confirmed to the opposition that, despite the Treasurer's denials and spin, substantial pipeline distribution networks valued at \$1 billion within SunWater are now in the process of being sold. I table a memo from the CEO of SunWater.

Tabled paper: SunWater—Message from the CEO, dated 18 September 2013, regarding SunWater business realignment [3886].

There are reports that 20 per cent of staff, or up to 115 people, in SunWater will be axed as part of this sale restructuring process. By the time the Newman government has finished executing this corporate raider model to financial management, there may be very few assets left. The Newman government is on track to execute the largest asset sale and privatisation program in our state's history with no mandate from the people. Nobody voted for a program of sacking, selling, slashing and slowing. Labor learnt the lesson the hard way. We received a strong message from Queenslanders that they do not support the sale of publicly owned assets. Queenslanders need to send this Premier and Treasurer the same message before it is too late. These asset sales will have serious long-term implications for Queensland taxpayers. The simple reality is that it is cheaper for the Queensland government to own its buildings than to rent them from the private sector. Private companies pay higher interest costs than the government. This will mean the taxpayer will have to foot the bill for the private companies' higher interest bill plus a profit margin. It is simply fiscal madness. It is also cheaper for the government, through Powerlink, to build the poles and wires that supply electricity to regional Queensland. The Premier has said that Powerlink is a monopoly business—a monopoly business that provides electricity to Queensland families. The LNP in opposition opposed the sale of assets that serviced multinational companies, but it is very comfortable selling assets that service ordinary Queenslanders and which will directly drive up the cost of living.

Nobody at the last election voted for the Newman government to sell schools, TAFEs and office buildings or to outsource and privatise front-line clinical health services. Nobody voted at the last election for the Newman government to spend potentially millions of dollars of their money preparing the Powerlink poles and wires business and SunWater's major distribution networks for sale. If we are to believe the Premier and the Treasurer's claim that no privatisation will occur, then why spend this money? If it is not being considered, then why is the government paying investment bankers to consider it? When the Premier and the Treasurer talk about 'core' and 'non-core' assets, it is time to turn on the spin alarm. This is a level of spin akin to John Howard's 'core' and 'non-core' election promises. If the government sells the most valuable parts of a business to the private sector but not the overall business and leaves the shell, it is still privatisation and it is still an asset sale without a mandate. Queenslanders have a right to know about this government's secret asset sales agenda. It is simply not good enough to tell Queenslanders they are seeking a mandate while selling them off in secret. We deserve better than this arrogant, unaccountable Newman government.

Renouf, Sir Clem

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (11.37 am): From time to time we have the privilege of meeting some amazing people and I had that privilege recently at a function I attended when I met Sir Clem Renouf. I was walking out of the function after having said a few words and this chap was walking in. Sir Clem is 91 years of age and as sprightly as can be, and he said, 'Are you someone that I should know?' I said, 'I don't know, but my name is Michael Crandon.' He introduced himself and I recognised the name immediately. This is the man who started the push to eradicate polio in the world.

Mr Cripps: A Rotarian.

Mr CRANDON: A great Rotarian. I went back to my office and asked my staff to contact Sir Clem inviting him to my office for morning tea and a chat. I was very pleased to see that he did come. Quite coincidentally, we had morning tea on the 24th of this month which just happened to be World Polio Day. It was an incredible coincidence that he came to see me on World Polio Day, a day which raises awareness of polio and the aim for worldwide eradication. He and his wife of 19 years,

Firth, came to see me. She was just as sprightly as Clem, I have to say. Sadly, Sir Clem's first wife passed away some 20 years ago. But he and Firth have certainly found a great match on their journey into retirement and beyond.


He was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Nambour, which was chartered on 26 September 1949. Indeed, the Rotary Club of Nambour was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Gympie, which was in itself only 12 months old at the time. Sir Clem went through the process. He became the president of the Rotary Club of Nambour in 1954-55. He became a Rotary International Director in 1970 to 1972. Interestingly, he waited until 1978-79 before he became Rotary International President.

Today I would like to make the point that, because of Sir Clem Renouf, there are now only three countries in the world in which polio is endemic. That means that 193 countries in the world no longer have polio in them. It was during Clem Renouf's term as Rotary International President in 1979 that Rotary International first took up the international fight to stop polio. Providing humanitarian grants funding and hands-on support from everyday club members, Rotary committed to a five-year effort in partnership with the government of the Philippines to immunise about six million children against polio at a cost of \$640,000. The scheme grew into PolioPlus, a program that has since helped over two billion children worldwide, reducing worldwide polio cases by over 99 per cent.

Not many people know that the global movement to eradicate polio was begun by Rotary International. That might be news to many members here. Certainly Rotarians themselves know that it was Sir Clem Renouf, an Australian international president, who created the possibility for all of this. Since the start, Rotary International has raised more than a billion dollars for polio eradication. In fact, Rotarians all over the world have worked tirelessly lobbying government and volunteering during polio vaccination campaigns. They physically go out into the field in various countries raising money and awareness. As I said, it has now reduced the incidence of polio by 99 per cent.

An announcement at the Rotary International Convention in Lisbon, Portugal recently set the stage for a bold new chapter in the partnership between Rotary and Bill and Melinda Gates. Between the Gates Foundation and Rotary International, we are going to see the eradication of polio right around the world. To summarise, an Australian and a charter member of a Rotary Club became a Rotary International president and, as a result of that, he has changed the world for many young people. I would like all members to reflect on the saying, 'Who are you to think that you can change the world?' and know that, just like Sir Clem Renouf, you are able to do exactly that.

Bendigo Bank

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (11.42 am): Today I say beware all borrowers of the Bendigo Bank when taking out a mortgage with that bank and signing their documents. There are loaded clauses in these documents that may lead to a very good borrower, families and businesses; losing everything through no fault of their own. I want honourable members to listen to this story and consider how they might advise their own constituents and their families. There are 120 branches of the Bendigo Bank in Queensland alone.

The property that I am describing is an historic fire station on the Maroondah Highway in Ringwood, which is an outer eastern suburb of Melbourne. However, there are many other similar examples. I want to tell members about what has been going on. I refer to a document regarding one couple. In August 2012 their finance facilities expired. Bendigo advised the owner that they should refinance in the middle of the SBC market rental review required under the lease and retail tenancies act. Efforts to refinance met with similar responses such as 'until the rental review is determined a valuation cannot be done'. Bendigo's response was that it did not believe that to be the case and in any event it was not their problem.

With no notice or warning, Bendigo took control of the property on 23 October 2012 appointing two liquidators as 'controllers'. Bendigo claimed to have served notice of default seven days before, which the owners never received. This is the critical thing; it is about the documents. In a reprehensible display of unfairness, Bendigo gave its default notice by apparently sliding it under the locked door of the tenants' restaurant—not the owners of the building—which the tenants deny ever receiving, knowing full well that the owners would not receive it. Bendigo gave the default notice to the third party and they knew it was in the middle of a rental dispute with those current tenants.

Bendigo hides behind an unfair, absurd law which they say allows them to give notices to a customer's address shown in the mortgage at the land registry. Bendigo argues that this is a fair notice despite (a) knowing that its customer left the mortgage address five years earlier; (b) knowing a


third unrelated party would receive the default notice, not the customer; (c) never telling the owners, who are the current owners of the property, that they should amend their address in the mortgage; and (d) the owners, having notified Bendigo in writing and having receipted it in writing years earlier, in this case seven years, and strictly complying with Bendigo's change of address procedures in the terms and conditions, that still was not done. Bendigo says that they comply with the banking code of practice, but they expect everyone to act reasonably and fairly towards them in a consistent, ethical manner which they claim to be doing in relation to the owners of this property. Is it ethical, fair and reasonable: (a) for Bendigo to have mandatory address change procedures for customers which say absolutely nothing about being required to formally change the address kept at the land register; (b) for customers to give Bendigo their new addresses, 100 per cent in accordance with procedure; (c) that Bendigo accepted customers new addresses and sent hundreds of letters and statements to that new address over five years—that is exactly what happened to these people and there are plenty of examples like this; (d) for the most important notice ever sent by Bendigo to be left at a third-party address, which was critical as it meant that they are now in the process of losing their property, which is going to be auctioned on Thursday; (e) that Bendigo did not send that critical note to one of at least three addresses where the owners had expressly asked for correspondence to be sent? Any chance of refinancing vanished when Bendigo appointed controllers seven days after leaving the notice at the one place where they know the owners would not receive it. Bendigo was never at risk. There was ample equity. I am going to table the documents.

Tabled paper: Correspondence regarding Art Pacific Pty Ltd and Bendigo Bank Ltd [3887].

There was ample equity in the property with an LVR of 64 per cent and ample income to satisfy the loan. Their entire loan, which was charged 5.71 per cent interest, was dropped into an overdraft and charged at 14.16 per cent. None of the \$115,000 rent for that facility was credited to the contract. With all the penalties, costs, controllers fees imposed since October 2012 totalling \$612,000, the LVR—the loan to value ratio—is now at 90 per cent.

In conclusion, Bendigo has claimed that the magistrate ruled in its favour, but that is not the case. This couple, who was fighting this case—and there are others—were actually not deemed to have leave to appeal on a procedural technicality, yet Bendigo has put out press releases saying that it ruled in their favour. Bendigo has not settled this case with this couple properly and it is using the law to defend its case. These people may also lose their own home. The bank gets their money and income at 14.6 per cent with controllers fees at \$600,000. This is good business if you can get it. Bendigo Bank stands condemned by its actions.

Medical Research

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (11.47 am): I rise to speak on a matter of great importance to Queensland and Queenslanders. Recently I have been fortunate to come in contact with some brilliant minds in the field of medical research. Firstly, in my own electorate of Stretton at the Brisbane Technology Park at Eight Mile Plains I am proud to report that Cook Medical has been awarded first place at the Premier's Export Awards in the medical category. Its custom-made aortic stents, medical devices and physician training have no comparison in the world and it is Australia's largest manufacturer. It is continuing to be at the forefront of breaking-edge research. Cook Medical has just celebrated its 50th anniversary and may I also thank the Treasurer and Minister for Trade for his visit to Cook Medical last week.

I move on now to Dr Paul Mainwaring's research into identifying different cancer cells. At a recent Lions convention we were treated to an insight into this research where an exuberant Dr Mainwaring took us through a journey into how some cancer cells can already be identified from a blood sample and then potentially treated before they become a problem. Lions Club does a tremendous job raising funds and awareness for medical research, and I might add that I am a proud Lion.


Last, but not least, I had the great privilege of meeting Professor Patrick Warnke, who is the Professor of Faciomaxillary and Regenerative Surgery at Griffith University and has previously led prestigious multinational stem cell and biological joint tissue engineering network MyJoint as chief investigator for the European Union. Imagine if you could grow your own replacement body parts using your own adult stem cells.

There would be no need for organ donations from other people or stem cells taken from embryos. This is particularly important to me personally, as I detest the thought of taking stem cells from aborted human embryos. The Griffith organ and tissue factory is an innovative concept to

address the above challenges by combining the latest bioengineering technologies with pioneering minds and the proven potential to create medical breakthroughs. We are on the verge of being able to grow living tissue in the complex shapes and structures of entire organs so that organ function can be achieved and their transplantation into patients will be realisable. I saw photographs of a man who had his jaw removed due to cancer, but with this technology he was able to grow a jaw on his side which would be transplanted after it had fully grown. Knee joints, organs, even eyeballs: there is no limit to what tissue can be replaced from one's own stem cells. In Australia and worldwide far too many patients who are waiting on suitable replacement organs die while on waiting lists because of low organ donations or organs which do not match recipients. The goal is now to design 'perfect fit' organ and tissue replacements from a patient's own stem cells using the latest nanotechnologies and rapid prototyping methods for cell integration and growth control.

Unfortunately, the only thing standing in the way of making Queensland a world leader in this world-changing, cutting-edge technology is money. One might guess that millions and millions of dollars would be required, but they need just \$567,571.38. \$100,000 has already been contributed by Griffith University. This will buy three new pieces of equipment that will allow the rapid manufacture of organ tissues. Natural organ growth would be a slow and year-long complex process, and patients would probably die while waiting. I am hoping we will be able to find a benefactor to help these genius professors and doctors make this enormous contribution to Queensland and those unfortunate Queenslanders who have death sentences due to disease.

United Nations Convention on Young Offenders

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—UAP) (11.51 am): I make this speech in anticipation of the Newman government and the Attorney-General adopting yet another uninformed policy position—this time in relation to dealing with young offenders under 18 years of age. I encourage all members, and particularly LNP backbenchers, to do your job and not just blindly follow the party-line. If you are unsure how to gather information on this topic, please ask the parliamentary library staff to help you. While you are here in Brisbane I encourage you all to visit the Griffith University's Centre for Excellence in Policing and Security and seek expert advice based on the latest research.

Ignorance and arrogance are dangerous ingredients when mixed, and the Premier and Attorney-General have both overdosed on this cocktail. Your party leader, the Premier, has revoltingly insulted retired Justice Chesterman along with many ordinary Queenslanders simply for having a differing opinion to his. He labelled them 'apologists for sex offenders and paedophiles'. The Attorney-General has also dismissed Queensland's leading corruption crime fighter, the Hon. Tony Fitzgerald AC, QC. Most of you would recall 1987 when he was appointed to conduct the Commission of Inquiry into Possible Illegal Activities Associated with Police Misconduct. History shows that the Fitzgerald inquiry made a dramatic impact on public life in Queensland and influenced the entire future institutional framework of the state. The Attorney-General was five to seven years old when all of that occurred. It is time for him to grow up and learn from the events of the past as well as respect recent research.


The Premier and the Attorney-General have demonstrated a willingness to abuse the parliamentary process. All LNP backbenchers have an obligation to stop this from happening, especially in relation to responding to youth justice matters. Do your job and do some research. Understand the complexities of youth offending by visiting the communities with high rates of juvenile crime. Importantly, take the time to comprehend the high rates of Indigenous youth offending and incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Youth offending will not be solved by the Attorney-General's approach. He has an immature understanding of crime. Even worse, as Queensland's so-called and self-proclaimed 'first law officer', he has also demonstrated a willingness to ignore Australia's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified in 1991. I encourage all members to read it and to pay particular attention to articles 37 and 40.

The Australian Law Reform Commission and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission recommend that all Australian jurisdictions set the age of adult responsibility at 18 years. In Queensland the Youth Justice Act 1992 defines a child as one who has not reached 17 years of age. You may recall your own immaturity at 17 years of age. You should be aware that 17 year olds are extremely vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse in adult prisons. Understandably, concern has consistently been expressed that Queensland's treatment of 17 year olds as adults in the criminal justice and corrections system is in breach of Australia's obligation under the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child, as I have mentioned. A 2012 policy paper from the Queensland Law Society emphasised the need for reform, calling for 17 year olds to be treated as children.

As a former detective specialising in child protection and juvenile justice, I concur and believe in our nation's obligations under the UN conventions. I qualify this position by emphasising that I have dealt with more young offenders—as well as sex offenders and paedophiles—than both the Premier and Attorney-General. Frankly, neither of them has a clue and both have demonstrated ignorance and arrogance as well as disrespect to those whose opinions differ. In my opinion, only fools would follow them.

Kobble Creek

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (11.55 am): I rise to speak about the important work being undertaken by this Newman government, specifically in the area of local government community recovery and resilience under the stewardship of Minister Crisafulli. In a somewhat isolated section of my electorate about 40 kilometres west-north-west of Brisbane city between the townships of Samford and Dayboro lays a small area known as Kobble Creek. Kobble Creek forms a boundary between two fantastic areas: my electorate of Ferny Grove and Pine Rivers, represented very well by the efforts of my colleague Seath Holswich.

Annually, or at least over the last few years, this community faces a level of uncertainty when the summer rains begin. The uncertainty is that of wondering when and for how long this community will again be isolated from central services, schools and emergency service provisions as a result of damage to three key areas of Pringles Road. It gives me great pleasure to speak today about a joint project which is one of those identified through the betterment fund for work that will ultimately ensure that the farmers and residents who place a high reliance upon access along Pringles Road will, as a community, become more capable of enduring the next wet season with an increased level of resilience.

Pringles Road follows the line of Kobble Creek and crosses it twice at gravel floodways that are frequently inundated at times of excessive rains. This has resulted in the isolation of 25 farmers and residents three or four times a year for periods of up to two weeks. The isolation clearly means no access to schools, work, provisions, medical or emergency services and results in financial loss, hardship and stress upon those who are affected. I am sure that most members would understand too that this has over recent years become an all too regular occurrence. The rain event of the Australia Day weekend 2013 caused severe scouring, erosion and washouts, with the volume and speed of water resulting in a damage bill for restoration of \$51,153. The great work of the Moreton Bay Regional Council in completing the emergent works and the assistance of local councillor for division 11, Bob Miller, has meant normality has returned to this community.


As is often said—and at the end of our 'get ready campaign' many communities will now hopefully better understand—we need to take actions that ensure we are better prepared for what may lay ahead; not simply return to the same level of preparedness or in fact to the same level of risk. This betterment project will improve the resilience of the floodway crossings, and the realigned and raised section will improve the flood immunity of Pringles Road. The resulting safer creek crossings and raised sections will mean that farmers and residents will have safer evacuation routes, and by improved access to emergency services the community will indeed have a greater level of resilience. The total cost associated with this project is \$818,520, which consists of NDRRA category B funding of \$51,153; a Moreton Bay Regional Council contribution of \$200,000; and a significant contribution of the betterment fund initiative of \$567,367. Once this project is complete, the likelihood of future damage as a result of flooding will be significantly reduced.

In closing, I would like to thank the minister for his efforts in delivering areas such as Kobble Creek, devastated by natural disasters in recent years, with a renewed level of hope so that the communities will be better prepared and more resilient to the challenges Mother Nature may place before us in the future.

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

EDUCATION (QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY) BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (11.59 am): I present a bill for an act to establish the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, to confer particular functions and powers on the authority and to make related minor and consequential amendments to this act and the other acts mentioned in schedule 1. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Education and Innovation Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013 [\[3888\]](#).

Tabled paper: Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[3889\]](#).

This bill will establish a new statutory body, the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The authority will perform curriculum and assessment functions to support quality educational outcomes in Queensland schools. It will be responsible for certification of senior school achievement and provide student rankings—such as the overall position—to enable tertiary entrance. The new authority is intended to replace the Queensland Studies Authority, the QSA, from 1 July 2014.

The educational landscape has changed considerably since the QSA commenced over a decade ago. We have seen the introduction of NAPLAN testing, national school reporting, the growth of vocational education and training in schools, the introduction of the preparatory year, universal access to kindergarten and the replacement of the Senior Certificate with the Queensland Certificate of Education. This landscape is due to change even more.

The Australian Curriculum is setting curriculum content and standards of achievement for all Australian schools. Queensland schools have begun to implement the Australian Curriculum for years P-10 in English, mathematics, science and history, with remaining P-10 subjects set to be implemented by 2016. Australian Curriculum subjects for years 11 and 12 are to be introduced in coming years in English, mathematics, science, history and geography.

Senior assessment processes in maths and science have been the subject of a parliamentary inquiry, which has recently made a number of substantive recommendations. Our broader senior assessment model and tertiary entrance arrangements, which have served us well for many years, are under review by the Australian Council of Educational Research, ACER. This independent review will help ensure we remain at the forefront of best practice nationally and internationally.

Against a background of change, I asked the Department of Education, Training and Employment to review the Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Act 2002 and to look at the QSA's legislative powers, functions and structure. This process built on previous reviews such as the 2006 review of the QSA act by Emeritus Professor Philip Meade and the Webbe-Weller review of non-departmental government bodies. It also involved high-level consultation with the QSA and the chief executives of the three Queensland schooling sectors—the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, the Association of Independent Schools Queensland and Education Queensland.

Based on this review, our government has confirmed the need for a statutory body to oversee school curriculum and assessment frameworks. The development of school curriculum should be driven by experts and practitioners—persons with a deep understanding of education and academic disciplines. It is important for curriculum content to be set by an independent body at arm's length from government.

Further, while the Australian Curriculum will set content and standards for key school subjects, it will not meet all the syllabus requirements of Queensland schools. In the senior years, the Australian Curriculum will cover 16 subjects in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. Senior syllabuses for other subjects, for example accounting or languages, will be developed by states and territories. States and territories will continue to be responsible for determining school assessment processes for these subjects.

High-stakes processes such as NAPLAN testing, senior certification and tertiary entrance ranking are best administered by an independent entity that is clearly at arm's length from the department and schooling sectors. For these reasons, all Australian states and territories have a statutory body responsible for developing senior curriculum, supporting comparable school assessment and issuing year 12 certificates.

This government is committed to a Queensland statutory curriculum authority playing a central role in our changing educational landscape. This role is to be performed under a new, modern legislative framework that provides a clear delineation of the authority's roles and functions. In particular, the new legislation will specifically reflect the authority's role in the progressive roll-out of the Australian Curriculum.

It is also important to note that the incoming federal government has indicated that they will be reviewing the Australian Curriculum. This bill will allow for the authority to address any changes as a result of this review.

The new legislation will also promote effective corporate governance through a streamlined, expert governing body. Strong, expert strategic governance will be critical in enabling the authority to lead the implementation of senior Australian Curriculum subjects and implement changes arising from the ACER review of senior assessment and tertiary entrance processes.

The timeframes for this legislative change were carefully considered. One option would have been to await the outcomes of the review of senior assessment and tertiary entrance in July 2014. However, this would have meant that the implementation of any changes would be likely to occur no earlier than mid-2015. This would not be ideal, as it may coincide with foundational work on new senior syllabuses based on the Australian Curriculum.

The senior assessment and tertiary entrance functions set out in the bill are broad and are likely to accommodate any specific process changes arising from the ACER review without the need for significant legislative amendment. Therefore, the intention is for the new authority to commence operation on 1 July 2014. This will ensure the transition to a new body is bedded down before the implementation of the new senior syllabus subjects based on the Australian Curriculum.

Midyear commencement ensures that transitions to a new authority will not coincide with end-of-year senior certification and tertiary entrance processes. It will also simplify accounting and financial reporting requirements.

Strong, expert strategic governance will be critical in allowing the authority to lead the implementation of senior Australian Curriculum subjects and any changes arising from the review of tertiary entrance and senior assessment processes. Governance is as much an issue of interpersonal dynamics as it is an issue of formal structure. As such, I greatly appreciate the contribution made by those who have participated on the QSA governing body. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the vision and leadership of those who have served as chairpersons of the QSA. However, this government has determined that the new body should operate through a streamlined, seven-member governing body. This structure is intended to support clear strategic direction and prioritisation of effort and resources across a wide range of competing demands. It is also more aligned with corporate governance structures generally adopted across Australian public and private sector organisations.

Members of the governing body will be selected on the basis of knowledge, experience and standing relevant to the functions of the authority. It is recognised that the governing body must have a clear understanding of schools and school operating environments. To this end, the governing body will include a nominee from each of the three schooling sectors.

It is intended that the new body will be informed by the knowledge and perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders—including the teaching workforce, parents, principals, universities, training providers and industry. This will occur through participation on committees that will provide advice and recommendations to the governing body. The governing body will have the ability to establish committees to assist the exercise of its functions and powers. This will provide the authority with flexibility to tailor its committee structure in line with its own strategic directions, as well as state and national agendas. For example, syllabus development can continue to be informed by committees that include a wide range of persons with experience and expertise in syllabus and school operations such as discipline experts, teachers and school leaders. Similarly, the tertiary entrance functions of the authority can continue to be informed by representatives of Queensland tertiary institutions.

The new bill will support clear reporting relationships between the authority and the minister. In particular, the bill enables the minister to issue a statement of expectations that will outline key medium-term priorities and deliverables. This will help to ensure that key expectations are clarified and aligned with available resources.

The bill also enables the minister to direct the authority in the exercise of its functions if circumstances arise where it is in the public interest to do so. However, the authority will be independent from direction in key areas such as syllabus content, the approval of school work programs and the certification of individual student achievement. The authority's functions will include:

- developing senior syllabuses and P-10 syllabuses for subjects not covered by the Australian Curriculum;
- developing and accrediting kindergarten guidelines;
- supporting schools and early childhood education and care providers in implementing syllabuses, guidelines and the Australian Curriculum;
- developing and administering prescribed tests and common national tests;
- moderation processes to support comparable school based assessment;
- issuing senior certificates; and
- ranking students for tertiary entrance.

The syllabus functions of the authority focus on the development of Queensland senior syllabuses. Queensland syllabus documents, with consistent content, standards and assessment requirements, will continue as the foundation of senior certification and tertiary entrance. The bill enables the authority to develop, revise or purchase senior syllabuses. In subjects covered by the Australian Curriculum, the bill requires the authority to adopt Australian Curriculum content and standards of achievement as a basis for developing a syllabus. This is consistent with the state's commitment to nationally consistent content and standards of achievement while recognising that some reorganisation of content may be required to align Australian Curriculum content with Queensland assessment processes. Outside of senior syllabuses, which are required for senior certification purposes, the authority will not develop syllabuses in areas covered by the Australian Curriculum. For years P-10, schools and school authorities will access Australian Curriculum content and standards and will determine their own assessment processes.

The bill will give the authority the function to develop a P-10 syllabus in the event that this is required for a subject—for example, a particular language subject—that is not covered under the Australian Curriculum. The bill empowers the QCAA to develop and accredit kindergarten guidelines, which are not included as part of the Australian Curriculum. The new authority will have a specific function to support schools and early childhood education and care providers in implementing syllabuses and kindergarten guidelines that it has developed. Importantly, the bill also provides a clear function to support schools and providers in implementing the Australian Curriculum. The bill empowers the authority to provide resources and professional development to support the implementation of syllabuses, kindergarten guidelines and the Australian Curriculum. The provision of these services and products will be a matter for consideration by the authority in light of school authority requirements and priorities outlined in the ministerial statement of expectations. In this context, I would generally expect that the implementation of new syllabuses and Australian Curriculum subjects would be funded by the authority while ongoing support would be provided on a user-pays basis.

The bill provides a broad testing function covering the development and administration of tests prescribed under a regulation and common national tests. Under this function, the authority will continue to administer and deliver the Queensland Core Skills Test and NAPLAN. The bill also extends the testing function of the authority to include 'recognised schools'. Recognised schools are overseas schools which, under an agreement with the minister, are able to provide Queensland syllabus products. This may, in appropriate cases, enable recognised schools to offer the Queensland Core Skills Test to their students. Clause 14 of the bill provides a moderation function that will support the continued administration of moderation panels and related quality assurance processes to ensure the comparability of school based assessment. The specific processes administered under this function will be subject to the outcomes of the review of Queensland senior assessment and tertiary entrance processes, which will also include consideration of key recommendations arising from the recent parliamentary inquiry into assessment in senior maths and science subjects. It is expected that the broad moderation function outlined in the bill will accommodate any future changes to these processes.

The new authority, like the QSA, will be empowered to issue senior certificates of achievement and statements of results, such as the Queensland Certificate of Education—the QCE—and the senior statement of results. The authority will also manage student accounts to record student learning that may be listed on a senior statement or a QCE. The bill provides the new authority with the function to develop and administer processes to rank students for tertiary entrance. This currently involves the provision of overall position—OP—and field position—FP—ranks to eligible year 12 students. In future, specific processes to be administered under this broad function will be subject to the outcomes of the review of senior assessment and tertiary entrance. The review report is due to be provided by the end of July 2014. The timing of any changes will, however, be carefully considered to ensure that students are able to plan their senior schooling and tertiary entrance pathways.

The bill also enables tertiary entrance ranking processes to be extended to overseas recognised schools. This would allow the new body to offer an equivalent overall position—or equivalent OP—tertiary entrance rank to international students attending recognised schools. This process would not put international students in competition with domestic OP students but would be available for use by tertiary institutions as part of selection decisions applicable to international students. The new authority will be specifically empowered to consider similar requests in relation to international students studying Queensland senior subjects at a recognised school. It is intended that the regulation will determine specific eligibility requirements that will enable the new authority to consider requests by international students on a case-by-case basis in light of issues of practicality, security and cost. The regulation will also include the power to charge for the provision of these services to international students.

The bill clarifies the new authority's capacity to commercially develop its own intellectual property by providing a specific commercialisation power. The government strongly supports emerging opportunities to market and promote high-quality educational products and services to international schools and students. However, supporting the commercialisation of the authority's products and services does not reflect an intention to charge Queensland schools and school students for the provision of core syllabus and curriculum products. The Australian Skills Quality Authority, ASQA, is responsible for the registration of training providers. Since 2012 ASQA has delegated responsibility for registering and auditing school based training providers to the QSA. The new authority will assume a similar function to exercise delegated responsibility for school based training providers in Queensland, and this is supported by the three schooling sectors.

The bill provides the QCAA with a number of additional functions, including research to support the effective and efficient exercise of its functions and informing the public about matters relevant to its functions. This bill supports transformative change with the creation of a robust new statutory entity with strong corporate governance and clear functions that reflect our changing educational landscape. It reflects this government's commitment to reducing duplication, providing better services to customers and meeting contemporary needs of Queensland students and their families with a high-quality education to meet the needs of all Queensland students and their families. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JH LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (12.17 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 SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education and Innovation Committee.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Resumed from 20 August (see p. 2607).

Second Reading

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12.17 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Health and Community Services Committee for its prompt consideration of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 and note that the committee tabled its report on the bill on 9 October 2013, and I table a copy of the government's response to that report.

Tabled paper: Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 31—Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013, government response [\[3890\]](#).

I am pleased to accept the committee's recommendation that it supports this bill. The committee's report raises a number of points of clarification and recommendations for amendments. I want to address a number of these and will do so in turn. There are a number of recommendations for amendment to the bill which the government has accepted, and I will move these amendments during the consideration in detail stage. I am pleased to accept the committee's recommendation that clause 24 of the bill be amended to clarify that the 'interest' that Indigenous people may have in protected areas is an interest under Aboriginal tradition or Islander custom.

The committee has requested I clarify the types of activity that the bill will permit in areas of high-conservation value and how those areas will be protected from potentially damaging uses. I can advise that the tenure transfer process outlined in the bill is not intended to impact on any activities or uses that are currently authorised or restricted on the various tenure classes. These changes will simply clarify the types of activities and uses that can already be authorised, nor will the new object and management principles for national parks and regional parks automatically result in new activities being authorised. As is currently the case, new activities that align with the management principles may be considered. The particular values of an area will also need to be considered in making a decision about future uses. There are existing decision-making framework, criteria and risk mitigation strategies for permitting activities in protected areas that are set out in legislation, regulation and policy. The government's commitment to increase access to protected areas has been and will continue to be carried out under this framework.

The committee recommended that information be provided about the place of Aboriginal tradition and Islander custom in the proposed amendments to the management principles for national parks. I can advise that the proposed amendments will not alter the existing hierarchy of management principles for national parks or the place of Aboriginal tradition and Islander custom within the management principles. The cardinal principle for national park management includes a reference to cultural resources that recognises Aboriginal tradition. All other management principles are subject to the cardinal principle. So ecotourism, recreation and educational outcomes remain secondary to Aboriginal tradition. I am pleased to further advise that, to ensure absolute clarity on this matter, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has recommended an additional amendment to the bill. The management principles of national parks will now include the term 'cultural resources' in addition to cultural values in sections 17(d) and 17(e) of the Nature Conservation Act.

However, I cannot inform the House of the outcome of the current review of forest reserves before action is taken to designate those areas with a different tenure. The normal processes associated with tenure designations will apply and members will have the opportunity to review these designations following the review. Following Governor in Council approval of the new tenure dedications, the regulations will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The committee recommended changes to the provisions for special management areas, or SMAs. SMAs have been designed to enable flexibility in the management of national parks and are intended to allow management actions to take place in a responsive and timely manner. As an operational tool, it is not appropriate to require a lengthy approval process as proposed by the committee. In addition, if SMAs were subject to disallowance provisions, it could lead to unintended consequences with regard to compensation for parties to which a permit has been granted.

I am pleased to accept the committee's recommendation to guarantee protection of existing conservation parks. Mining, geothermal activities and greenhouse gas storage activities will not be permitted on land formerly dedicated as a conservation park or future areas with similar characteristics. Such activities will be permitted only on land that was formerly a resources reserve or future areas that have similar characteristics to a resources reserve. This will be achieved by amendments to the bill providing that in future a resource use area can be declared over a regional park only at the time of dedication of the park. This excludes the opportunity for a resource use area to be declared over a former conservation park.

The committee has sought a response to concerns about the requirement for a management statement potentially leading to contractual inconsistencies with obligations under existing Indigenous management agreements. I thank the committee for highlighting this particular issue. Under the provisions of the bill, I will have the discretion to require a management plan and am provided guidance on the matters to take into account in making a decision as to whether a management plan is required. One of those matters is the importance of an area's cultural resources and values. The existence of an Indigenous management agreement is a clear indication of an area's cultural resources and values. On that basis, and as a matter of policy, I will request a management plan be prepared for all protected areas that currently have an Indigenous management agreement where this agreement requires a management plan unless otherwise agreed with the Indigenous landholder.

There are a number of committee recommendations that seek to have the bill amended to include a higher level of prescription with regard to the consultation process associated with management plans. In particular those recommendations relate to consultation on a draft management plan, a draft amendment to a management plan and when the minister determines that a change is required to management plans to reflect a change in government policy. The bill has been designed to allow for greater flexibility in the management planning process due to the problems experienced as a result of an overly prescriptive process, as outlined in the Auditor-General's 2010 report. In that report, it was found that the former government had prepared management plans for just 17 per cent of protected areas for which it was a requirement under the Nature Conservation Act. Further, it was admitted that it would take 30 years and \$60 million to complete them all. This is clear evidence that the process was not working.

The response of the former government should have been to address the problems in the process. Instead, it continued to acquire protected areas without the plans or resources required for their management to ensure they continued to exhibit their conservation values. The result was protected areas that were locked up to run rampant with feral animals and weeds at the expense of our native flora and fauna. That is the legacy that this government was left to work with.

This government is a grown-up government. Already, all our national parks are covered by a management plan or statement. Through this bill, we are seeking to implement a more streamlined management planning process so that we can get on with the important task of ensuring that our protected areas are effectively managed so that they are available for future generations to enjoy. The approach adopted in the bill is to provide a minimum standard for consultation—that is, to publish a notice on the department's website. This does not restrict me from determining that additional approaches to public notification, such as newspaper advertising, are required. It means that, when additional consultation is not appropriate, resources are not wasted in fulfilling an unnecessary legislative requirement.

It is already my department's practice to notify interested stakeholders via a stakeholder mailing list that a draft management plan is available for comment. This current practice will not change as a result of the bill. Stakeholders can register their interest by contacting my department and nominating to receive updates on all protected area management plans or a specific protected area.

There are a variety of examples where it is not considered necessary to undertake public consultation on amendment to a management plan when that amendment is to reflect a broad change in government policy. For example, there has been an historical perception that bicycle riding in national parks is prohibited. This has resulted in a number of management plans excluding this activity.

Given that there are no legislative impediments to allowing this activity to occur and the government's policy to increase recreation opportunities in national parks, management plans need to be updated. While targeted consultation may still be required in identifying specific trails, in the majority of cases the management plans can simply be updated to reflect the new policy position. In


other cases, consultation on a state government policy may have already been undertaken prior to the policy being put in place, therefore removing the need for an additional round of consultation. An example of this is the government's election commitments which are scrutinised by the largest public consultation there is—a general election.

I am pleased to accept the committee's recommendation that the bill be amended to provide consistent minimum periods of time across legislation for making submissions on draft management plans and amendments to management plans. However, the government does not support the recommendation that the bill be amended to provide that a gazette notice approving a management plan for a protected area, marine park or recreation area must be tabled in the House and be subject to the disallowance provisions in the Statutory Instruments Act 1992. The suggested requirement that a copy of the management plan be tabled at the same time as the gazette notice is not supported either. Management plans are intended to be a management tool that address operational concerns and issues. On this basis it is not appropriate to require a lengthy approval process that involves tabling the plan in the Queensland parliament and providing for disallowance. In addition, the requirements under the Statutory Instruments Act 1992 are only intended to apply to the tabling of subordinate legislation. Management plans are not subordinate legislation.

I can confirm that there is no drafting error in clause 77 of the bill which provides for renumbering required as a result of the passage of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011. This is because these provisions were scheduled to commence on 29 October 2013. The committee has sought a response to concerns raised by the Queensland Law Society in relation to the civil liability provisions contained within the bill. It is common sense that if there are a greater number of people visiting our protected areas undertaking a wider range of activities then the risk of being sued will also increase. An analysis of recent trends indicates that there has been a growth in claims against the state which has resulted in a significant level of resources being dedicated to managing these claims. The status quo for civil liability on protected areas—that is, a reliance on common law, and some limited provisions in existing legislation—simply does not provide the level of certainty required by park managers as they go about their business of managing parks. The Law Society has emphasised that each situation needs to be considered on its merits which, in their view, is why common law provides a better approach than providing a legislative framework. From a park management perspective this is problematic because it places individual park managers in the position of trying to second-guess how claims of negligence will be considered in the courts. For example, trying to anticipate how many warning signs are required at a waterhole to ensure that if someone dives in and hurts themselves they will not be found civilly liable. Visitors are attracted to these places because they want to view and experience a natural place. This experience can easily be eroded by a lack of certainty around what is required to avoid a claim of negligence. Amendments are also proposed today to further clarify the civil liability provisions for the state, state officials, plantation licensees and plantation officials under the Forestry Act 1959.

I thank the committee for raising the concern about a potential inconsistency between native title rights and the proposed new offence to sell or give away dugong or marine turtle meat from commercial premises. Following the recent High Court decision in *Akiba v Commonwealth*, a concern was raised in the committee process that implementation of this provision might require the state government to pay compensation to traditional owners under section 24HA of the Native Title Act. Legal advice has confirmed that the commercial sale of turtle and dugong meat is not authorised under either state or Commonwealth legislation and that there is no recognised native title right to such commercial sale. On this basis, the legal advice confirmed that the enactment of section 88BA is not a future act under the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 and there is no inconsistency between the provision and existing native title rights.

This bill fulfils the Queensland government's commitments to improve access to national parks and other protected areas, to improve management of protected areas and to provide for a streamlining of legislation and cutting of red tape, unnecessary duplication and waste. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (12.35 pm): The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 is an awful piece of legislation that comprehensively undermines a century of national park management and guts the Nature Conservation Act 1992. This is the second tranche of legislation we have considered on this issue this year and it is even worse than the first. Queensland Labor simply cannot abide these changes and we will oppose them every step of the way and we will repeal them when we are next in government. It is clear that there is a fundamental

philosophical difference between ourselves and the Newman government on the proper management of Queensland's national park estate. Labor believes that national parks exist first and foremost for the conservation of nature. The LNP wants to open them up to 'any charlatan in search of a quick buck'. I feel pretty confident that we are on the right side of this issue because we have commonsense, experience, a century of national park management and the general public on our side.

Humans massively affect the environment. The arrival of Aboriginal people on the Australian continent had large effects on the environment that existed at the time. We know this is the case as a matter of history. The arrival of European settlers has had a much larger and in many respects irreversible effect on much of the Australian environment. Brisbane, for example, is thoroughly unrecognisable compared to what little we know of the landscape when John Oxley first sailed up the river. But the changes are not limited to significant population centres. The felling of trees for agricultural purposes and continued farming also affect the environment. Significant land degradation remains a lasting legacy of poor European agricultural practices in this country. The introduction of feral animals and weed species has also had a profound effect on ecological balance. In light of these threats to the existing environment and biodiversity, it is both good sense and good sentiment to preserve areas in as close as possible to their natural state. That is the justification for the creation and management of national parks and Queensland Labor will continue to follow it even as those opposite trash it—or, in fact, try to squeeze more blood out of the stone of national parks.

The proper conservation of these areas has become, if anything, more important, more essential, as we confront the reality of a changing climate, a globe that is warming due to human activity and the burning of fossil fuels. The CSIRO has conducted significant research on this issue and recent reports from the CSIRO reinforce this point of view. Let me be clear for those opposite: some activities are appropriate within national parks. I encourage Queenslanders to visit national parks and enjoy their splendour. We readily agree that educational, recreational, cultural and even sometimes commercial activities can be appropriate in national parks, but they must always be secondary activities that are entirely 100 per cent subordinate to the protection of nature.

This brings me to the changes that the bill proposes to the object of the Nature Conservation Act 1992. The current object of the act is powerful in its simplicity. The object of the act is the 'conservation of nature'. Queensland Labor believes that this should continue to be the sole object of this act. It is a proper role of government to conserve nature for the enjoyment of future generations and to protect biodiversity. We will not consent to the massive overhaul of that objective to include a number of activities and purposes. The proposed changes would leave the object to read—

The object of this Act is the conservation of nature while allowing for the following—

- (a) the involvement of indigenous people in the management of protected areas in which they have an interest;
- (b) the use and enjoyment of protected areas by the community;
- (c) the social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas in a way consistent with the natural and cultural and other values of the areas.

While many of these are admirable, they are already recognised within the present act without being raised to the status of object. The current act comprehensively details the appropriate frameworks to involve Indigenous owners in joint management. It also sets out that community members should be involved in the management of protected areas and allows for a number of social, cultural and even commercial activities to take place in national parks. However, it does not make the mistake of elevating these activities to equal status with the conservation of nature. This is a profound mistake. It is, in effect, a prostitution of the act's intent.

The opposition does not believe that the object of the Nature Conservation Act requires any amendment and we particularly dislike the inclusion of commercial purposes within this amendment. I have looked at the legislation used to underpin the national park systems in each Australian state and in New Zealand, and none of them have the commercial use of national parks or protected areas as an object or purpose of the act. That is right: not one of them. This amendment would put Queensland out of step with other jurisdictions and historical approaches to managing protected areas in a major way.

The inclusion of the commercial use clause within the object is misguided to say the least, but unfortunately I am not surprised. The minister has always been very open about his desire to bring the profit motive into parks. On Saturday, 17 August, the minister was quoted in the *Courier-Mail* as

saying, 'Unashamedly, I am looking to make money out of this'. That statement horrified Queenslanders and I suspect it even upset the Premier and other ministers. However, the minister's views have never been doubted by anyone. This government would do anything, sacrifice anything and say anything to turn a quick buck or to score an ill-considered political point.

I presented the very clear opposition position regarding this issue during the second reading debate of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill during this parliament. The Labor opposition has not wavered and will not waver one iota from those views. Clearly my previous representations were a little too weighty for the government to appreciate, so I will dumb it down into five-second sound bites so that I can match it to the attention span of some ministers in this House.

Labor supports low-impact, sustainable ecotourism opportunities. Labor insists that the cardinal principle inform the management and operation of national parks. Labor will legislate to ensure that the precautionary principle is applied to all decision making regarding the national park estate. All decisions will be documented and made available publicly. Labor will remove national parks from recreational and entertainment portfolios and align them appropriately with environment and conservation responsibilities of government. Labor will reverse this government's weakening of the Nature Conservation Act as quickly as possible after we return to government. Labor will continue to seek opportunities to expand the national park estate, consistent with independent expert advice.

A large number of organisations and individuals made submissions to the committee opposing the changes to the object of the act and they clearly explained their reasoning. For example, the submission of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland detailed the legal effect of these changes. It states—

It is surprising that a Minister of the Crown does not appreciate that expanding and broadening the objects of the Act all components must be considered. Social, cultural and commercial use of national parks must be taken into consideration and legally have standing when interpreting any provisions of the Act.

Bruce Gall, the former director of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, took the time to provide the committee with his expertise and I would like to read some of his submission into the record. He said—

The Nature Conservation Act 1992 came into effect when I was Director of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is a good Act and has served Queenslanders and their natural heritage well over the intervening 20 years. Why, then, is it being amended?

He goes on to say—

The Object of an Act is its foundation stone; the rest of the Act and its Regulations flow from the Object. If you change the Object, you fundamentally change the Act, and this is what is proposed in these Amendments.

This is a clear and succinct summation of the folly of amending the object of the Nature Conservation Act.

Let me state one more time: Queensland Labor is disgusted with this legislation and we will repeal it as soon as we return to the Treasury bench. The justification that the Newman government and Minister Dickson have used for their continued assault on proper national park management is that they want to open up national parks. In fact, I can inform the House that Queenslanders are increasingly inclined to 'open up' on this government. In this LNP fantasy story, Queenslanders were somehow locked out of national parks under the former government. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In 2011 the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service contracted Newspoll to conduct a survey to establish visitation numbers in Queensland's national parks and protected areas. Between June 2011 and June 2012, Newspoll contacted over 1,200 people from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. This showed that 67 per cent of the people had visited an area managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in the past year. That is an impressive statistic and it stands to reason that it would soar higher once you filtered from the equation the interstate respondents. It also showed that 82 per cent of respondents were very satisfied with their visit. A further 16 per cent of people were somewhat satisfied with their visit, leaving only two per cent of those surveyed dissatisfied. If a private company received feedback as good as that, they would run advertising campaigns about their brilliant customer service and satisfied clientele. Clearly, Queenslanders were happy with the way national parks were managed by Labor. Of course, I would like to see even more Queenslanders visiting the national parks, but the minister's constant claims that national parks were locked up under Labor is comprehensively disproved by these results. They are just troublesome facts to be ignored by the LNP, which never lets fact get in the way of spin.

The minister has also been known to claim that the previous government bought land to add to the protected area estate without scientific backing. In this extra piece of fiction, the previous government was on a mad rush to reach a particular target for a percentage of Queensland to be in the national park estate, so much so that it did not conduct due diligence. That is absolute nonsense. It is just nonsense.

Once again, the minister's own department has proven him wrong. The *Courier-Mail's* environment writer, Brian Williams, obtained ministerial briefing notes that detailed the rigorous scientific assessment process conducted by the department. It showed that the process was so tough that, although more than 1,500 properties were investigated for acquisition, only 15 made the grade. The briefing note also informed the minister that the methodology used for his politically motivated review would be substantially the same as the methodology used before purchasing those properties. It is clear that the minister has continuously made outrageous claims that are completely unsupported by evidence held within his own department and are claims made for purely partisan political purpose. I do note that since the minister was so comprehensively embarrassed by that RTI information in the *Courier-Mail*, he has quietened down about his precious review. In fact, he has gone to ground, so to speak. However, he has turned his sights on grassroots environmental groups. I guess you cannot keep a good attack dog down.

I have been appalled at the way the minister has attacked anyone interested in environmental protection to make cheap political points. This is an ongoing issue however it has taken a particularly unfortunate individual turn over the last few months with the minister feeding information to a favoured journalist who has run it without question. I speak of course of the many articles Des Houghton has run over the last few months about conservation groups in Springbrook and Noosa national parks.

The newspaper reports concerning Springbrook National Park and the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society relied almost exclusively on a review conducted by Minter Ellison Lawyers. This review did not have access to all relevant documents and it did not even contact Dr Keto or ARCS for information. Frankly, it is difficult not to conclude that this review was designed to produce the finding it did, just the same as every other review or inquiry undertaken by this wasteful LNP government. Then of course it was handed over to an uncritical journalist to be used for a beat up.

I think the government's inflammatory rhetoric against grassroots environmental groups is disturbing, but I also recognise that the LNP is unlikely to change tack purely on my opinion. That is why I want to make it clear that this vitriol is also extremely bad politics for the LNP and is turning off conservation volunteers across Queensland.

I want to read into the record some statements that were included in the Bribie Island Environmental Protection Association's latest newsletter. Under the headline 'Your state government thinks you're a radical extremist!', the group wrote—

BIEPA received a response to a letter that claimed, 'Green groups are spreading ill-informed untruths' in a 'desperate attempt' to get 'newspaper headlines'. The truth is most BIEPA members are older people who love and respect the natural environment. What BIEPA members say reflects their skills and experience in monitoring and observing Nature's interdependent systems. It is at our peril, for newly elected decision makers to ignore such a wealth of experience.

I also spoke with the secretary of the association and she expressed her concerns about this legislation. The Newman government is alienating people like her and members of groups like BIEPA all across Queensland with this bill and their constant derision of anyone who is concerned about environmental protection. These are people who probably voted LNP at the last election but are now becoming somewhat despondent. The member for Pumicestone should be worried that the Newman government is alienating so many of her constituents. Other LNP members should also be worried because there will be similar groups all around Queensland that are dismayed at the way they have been denigrated by the Newman government simply for caring about the environment.

I will move on to the provisions of the bill which reduce the number of protected area tenure types. The opposition does not believe that any of these changes are warranted. Moreover we are deeply concerned that they will undermine environmental protections. The minister seeks to justify these wholesale changes by claiming that they streamline the tenure system and will reduce confusion. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to suggest that this is true.

The abolition of the national park scientific and national park recovery tenure classes does nothing to simplify the system. These are important functions of the existing act and do not require amendment. Species protection is a legitimate goal of governments and, in the case of animals that are on the verge of extinction, interventions may be necessary within national parks. This means that

national parks managed for that purpose will require different and more detailed management plans than other national parks and rangers may need to undertake activities that would not be welcome in other parks.

This system currently works well. For example, I would like to point to the success of the northern hairy-nosed wombat program in Epping Forest National Park. While there is a long way to go before we can stop worrying about this species, due to this program the population of wombats has more than doubled. That is a record Queensland Labor is proud to claim given it was developed and occurred mostly under our government. Given the successes associated with declared scientific national parks, we see absolutely no need to tinker with them.

The same goes for the national parks that are designated as undergoing recovery activity. Recovery activities are sometimes necessary in newly acquired land to restore it to its original state. The previous government had significant success in this area. I point to Springbrook as one example. The replacement of these tenure classes with special management areas does nothing to simplify the tenure system; it merely replaces two classes of tenure with two subclasses of tenure.

We are also concerned that, with the current drafting, special management areas could be declared by the chief executive that essentially override the management principles of national parks as they were gazetted by the Governor in Council. This is a concern we share with a number of stakeholders, along with the LNP members of the Health and Community Services Committee. While we disagree with the introduction of special management areas generally, at the very least we believe they must be subject to the disallowance provisions under the Statutory Instruments Act 1992.

I note that the minister has not circulated any amendments to give effect to recommendation 6 of the committee report to subject the declaration of special management areas to the standard disallowance motions of parliament. Given the minister has ignored the express recommendations of his own LNP members, I give notice that I will be moving an amendment of my own in line with recommendation 6. I would hope that the members for Kallangur, Mudgeeraba, Townsville, Beaudesert and Ferny Grove will support this amendment given that it accords with their own committee report's recommendation.

One particular concern we hold in relation to the declaration of special management areas is the potential for the declaration of a special management area—controlled action—may be used to allow cattle grazing in national parks in the future. I note that the minister has today—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr BYRNE: The member will get her chance. She can have a crack later on. She will have a go; do not worry about that.

I note that the minister has today announced that there will be no extension of the current trial past 31 December and I welcome that confirmation. However, the people of Queensland have learnt that they cannot take this government on trust and there remains the clear possibility that the government will abuse the new power to declare special management areas. The decision to allow cattle grazing in national parks has been a problematic decision from day one and it has been disastrously mismanaged by the minister.

Despite the minister's statement today, I want to place on the record a few things Labor knows about this poorly managed program. Labor knows that the entire capital program within the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service regions servicing those areas has been misdirected to fencing, leaving critical capital works projects for another day. They have been taken off the books. Labor knows that a very substantial number of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service personnel have been dragged away from their core responsibilities to enable this essentially agrarian socialist agenda. Labor knows that the government, by which I mean the minister's office, has subverted the permits process. We know that cattle have entered national parks without permission or permits being provided by on-ground senior staff.

I call on the minister to explain these allegations. This is a matter that should be the subject of a parliamentary inquiry into the implementation of this short-sighted program. We are deeply concerned that giving the chief executive the power to unilaterally declare special management areas will be used to continue a policy intervention that has already gone badly wrong.

A second aspect of the changes to tenure classes in this bill which the opposition opposes is the merging of two distinctly different tenure types—conservation park and resources reserve—into one class to be known as a regional park. The National Parks Association made a worthy contribution on this issue within their submission that members of this House should consider. It stated—

Conservation Parks and Resources Reserves have been abolished and rolled into a new class of protected area known as Regional Parks. NPAQ strongly objects to this new designation as it carries no implication of protection. When classes of protected area are combined, the resulting management principles tend to shift towards the lowest common denominator, delivering a net loss to the conservation of nature.


The management principles of conservation parks and resources reserves are entirely different and therefore it makes absolutely no sense to lump them together in one new type of tenure. There is a very real possibility, particularly under this reactionary and delinquent government, that important protections will be lost by combining these tenure classes.

The proposed changes to the tenure system will also take Queensland out of step with the accepted international guidelines established by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Queensland Labor believes it is sheer folly for a government to completely ignore international best practice in any area and in this case in environmental protection. Specifically, these changes will leave Queensland with no protected area tenure class to match the IUCN category 1A protected area guidelines, as the Queensland Conservation Council stated in its submission. It stated—

This would be an astounding outcome for a state that prides itself on its natural wonders and healthy environment.

Next year the IUCN world parks congress will be held in Sydney. It will be extremely embarrassing for Queensland representatives to explain why they no longer follow international best practice in this area.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

 **Mr BYRNE:** The opposition's final objection to the tenure provisions of this bill is the grandfathering of the holding tenure of forest reserve. This was a tenure class developed through the South-East Queensland Forest Agreement process and was designed to give protections to an area of land while appropriate arrangements were made to transition to a national park tenure. This is land that has been used for a number of purposes and therefore it can take a significant period of time to identify current land uses and encumbrances.

The grandfathering of this tenure class is an indication that the Newman government will not transfer any existing state forests into the protected area system. If that is the case, it is a deeply misguided policy. A number of stakeholders have objected to this provision including the Queensland Tourism Industry Council. In short, I am unconvinced that the protected area tenure system is in need of the drastic overhaul that this bill represents, the minister has not proven any significant shortcomings of the current system, and there are real concerns that the changes will undermine existing protections.

I now want to deal with the changes to the legislative requirements for management planning in Queensland's protected areas. First of all I would like to step members through a brief history of this issue going back to 2010 when the Auditor-General identified significant flaws in the management planning process. Specifically he showed that only 17 per cent of protected areas were covered by a management instrument. I want to be clear that that is a criticism that the previous government accepted. Labor took that criticism and immediately set about addressing this failing. A tremendous amount of work was done after the report was released by both Kate Jones and Vicky Darling which increased to 47 per cent the percentage of protected areas covered by a management instrument by the time Labor left office. This great work was continued by the department after the 2012 election. By October last year over 70 per cent of protected areas were covered. That is work that the current minister has claimed credit for despite the fact that it was all set in train by his predecessors.

Sadly, according to information the department provided to this committee during examination of this bill, it appears that this increase has stalled, with only 17 management instruments being approved since October last. The minister has repeatedly tried to claim that we left him with only 17 per cent of protected areas covered by a management instrument when the truth is very, very different. The changes to the management planning process for protected areas can only be seen as an embarrassing admission from the minister that he is unable to fulfil the requirements of the Nature Conservation Act 1992. Moreover, it is a breathtakingly hypocritical move given the minister's constant and incorrect claims that the previous government left office with only 17 per cent of protected areas covered by a management instrument.

The opposition accepts that some revision of the current management planning process may be required given the labour intensive requirements of the current management planning regime. However, we do not believe that the amendments in this bill are appropriate as they may weaken the current process and leave areas uncovered by appropriate instruments. A number of stakeholders also pointed out that the amount of community consultation has been drastically reduced, which is very concerning particularly given the government's desire to open up national parks for the public. Queensland Labor supports appropriate management planning systems and recognises that management statements are sufficient in a number of cases. However, we also recognise that in order to have a robust management system you need well-trained staff within the department. Unfortunately the cuts to the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service leave us with no confidence that this is still the case.

I asked the department during the committee hearings about current staffing levels and I was extremely disappointed that no answer was forthcoming. The ability to translate legislation into action rests on a skilled department and it is entirely logical that I asked about staffing levels in this area. I would ask the minister to provide the House with the current full-time staffing allocation for the preparation of management instruments and contrast these with staffing levels under the previous government.

Turning to the civil liability provisions of this bill, let me just state that they are entirely unnecessary and an abrogation of the government's role as a responsible land manager. What an extraordinary turn of events we have witnessed in recent times. We now have the Minister for National Parks, Mr Dickson, presenting amendments so as to provide immunity to the state from civil liability. This is a load of nonsense. Clearly this government is completely unable to accept its responsibilities, to manage those responsibilities and to mitigate those risks as identified in an appropriate fashion. Again we have a government composed of ministers who are incapable of grasping the detail associated with their responsibilities. The same old clichés are rolled out—stopping the nanny state, cutting red tape, getting back on track. It is all meaningless sound bite nonsense, in effect. Why is this only applying to national parks? Why doesn't it apply to all government properties—a get-out-of-jail-free card? The minister has so far been completely—

Mr Crandon: Have you got something against getting back on track after the mess you lot left us in?

Mr BYRNE: You can get up and talk any time you like, mate.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! I ask the member for Rockhampton to direct his comments through the chair.

Mr BYRNE: Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker. The minister has so far been completely unable to define the failings of the present legal system other than to suggest that the state has an accrued liability. In fact the information provided by his department to support this legislation does not provide any evidence to back up that claim. According to the government's own figures, approximately \$2 million has been paid out by the state for death or personal injuries in national parks over the last 20 years. This is a relatively small figure that would not be cause for undue concern. While there are nine current claims against the state totalling \$11.9 million, these are yet to be determined and may very well result in a much lower amount of compensation.

The Queensland Law Society also undertook an analysis of information contained within annual reports which shows a marked decrease in the number of claims against the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service over the last four years. The government has completely failed in its duty to prove that these changes are in response to an increase in claims.

When it comes to damages, the state is bound to be contributory. There will always be a liability by degrees. No amount of failure to manage, failure to identify and mitigate risk, failure to apportion appropriate resources, failure to understand the role and responsibilities of managing parks, failure to understand the real on-ground issues and failure to appreciate the detail on behalf of this government is sufficient to explain the nonsense put forward by the minister on this issue.

Within the present legal process the legal system already accounts for the actions of anyone who behaves recklessly or injures themselves and subsequently seeks to sue. For more than a decade, the state has had the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act that mandates the process of mediation to try to settle damages claims before they go to court. That has been very successful. Contributory negligence can be assessed at that stage—during the initial mediation. It will also be

assessed appropriately and independently if the action cannot be mediated and finds itself in a courtroom. Judges make independent determinations on these matters, as they should, and as a matter of course apportion or discount damage payments by percentages. A major factor in this is the degree to which the individual may have contributed to the injury by their own negligence.

The legal term 'volenti'—regarding the degree to which a person consents to their own injury—is already understood and incorporated in present legislation. So I would submit that the entire rationale put forward by the minister is a nonsense and reveals that this government is completely unwilling to embrace the truth of its fundamental responsibilities. I can bet that there are still some professional managers in the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service who are saying that the government agenda of opening national parks for business will bring a variety of increased risks and potential liabilities. In fact, this has been shown in a number of briefing notes that have been released under RTI which show the minister has been warned about state liabilities for allowing horse riding and biking in protected areas. This is a set of problems that the minister does not have the capacity to appreciate or mitigate. After all, one would have to have some experience in management on the ground, one would have to have some appreciation of the detail, one would have to have the intellect to consider the problem and provide sound, reasoned grounded opinion. This is not evident here. What is evident is that the government is being forced to revert to tory sound bites rabbiting on about nanny states—again evidence that this government has no capacity to develop policy beyond the three-second sound bite. This government is infected by ministers lacking the attention span necessary to effectively administer their portfolios.

Let me make this absolutely clear: the Labor opposition opposes this legislation. This is Neanderthal in its logic, where the justification is nothing short of a demonstration of stupidity. This government lacks the power of execution and appreciation of detail. This legislation is the equivalent of a five year old having a tantrum in a shopping centre when it does not get what it wants. This government thinks so little of the conservation value of national parks that it lumps them in with sport and racing—the consistent thread being recreation and entertainment. This is a government happy to stampede—

Government members interjected.

Mr BYRNE: You can have a chance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Rockhampton, I would ask that you refrain—


Mr BYRNE: They can speak to the bill if they like, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am more than happy to listen to them—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Rockhampton, I was speaking. I would ask that you refrain from using the term 'you' and you direct all your comments through the chair.

Mr BYRNE: I will, Madam Deputy Speaker. This government thinks so little of the conservation value of national parks that it lumps them in with recreation and sport. This is a government happy to stampede cattle across national parks, to direct funding away from core projects, to drag staff out of conservation roles to support grazing, to turn national parks into monster truck parks and to change conservation acts to make it easier for their mates. This is a government that does not give a toss about the protection of biodiversity and expanding the national park estate appropriate to the challenges presented by climate change.

Government members interjected.

Mr BYRNE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to invite them all to speak on this bill if they feel so animated about the matter. Let us be honest here: not one of these 74 members has the slightest idea how to manage national parks or address the real issues in that portfolio. This government has used national parks as a plaything—something to be exploited for profit. The intelligent element of the community will damn this government for that. The Labor opposition opposes this legislation, opposes the corruption and degradation of national parks and, frankly, represents a complete contrast to this government in terms of policy and planning. Shame on the government for trying to wash their hands of their responsibilities.

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (2.43 pm): Now for some common sense. I rise to support the introduction of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. Let me provide a contrast: on the LNP side we have government that is big enough; on the

Labor side we have really big government. On the LNP side we have a reduction in red tape; on the Labor side we have an increase in red tape. On the LNP side we have common sense; on the Labor side we have nonsense.

On 20 September this year during a public hearing on this bill the following exchange took place between me and Daniel Gschwind, the CEO of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council—

CHAIR: Mr Gschwind, let me ask you: from a tourism perspective, one of the concerns that we seem to have from a lot of the submissions is the potential threat to a national park if it is opened up to commercial tourism and/or broader activity than what is currently allowed. I would be interested to hear your comments on that concern, because we had a fair few submissions that reverberate around that concern.

Mr Gschwind: As I said in my opening statement, when we seek use of national parks, it is on the basis that we understand that our customers value the natural attributes of what we have to offer. They do not want to go and see a national park that is on the brink of being destroyed and they certainly do not want to leave with a sense that they have contributed to the destruction of a national park. That is a fundamental market trend that we respond to. Our operators—the tourism operators and the 400 or so commercial operators who currently have permits to operate in national parks—are entirely committed to sustainable use and sustainable management, and not just as a glib marketing ploy but as a genuine commitment to look after the areas that they use because their very future depends on it. Operators who are unwilling or who are unable to adhere to those principles either soon go out of business or will be prosecuted because they are in breach of their permits, because the permits actually put a legal obligation on them not to do anything that undermines the park and that will continue to be the case. Tourism operators have a financial and legal incentive to do the right thing. As well they bring to it a moral commitment that they have expressed in a consistent way. I think that really cannot be underestimated and should not be downplayed at all.

We also know that internationally the value of genuinely pristine environments is increasing all the time, because not everybody around the world unfortunately does it as well as we do here. If we look at the Barrier Reef, for instance, we are now lauded as one of the most effective managers in the marine park itself. The marine park itself is recognised as one of the best marine parks in the world, even by UNESCO, and the IUCN has said that in a mission report last year. It is partly because of the interaction with the tourism industry in the marine park that that has been achieved. The same can be achieved in a terrestrial setting and is being achieved in a terrestrial setting.

There is no more protected area than those that are visited by tourists. Those areas are least likely to be threatened by other uses or by changes—and I am talking internationally here—in government policy. Those areas that are frequently visited by tourists who go there to enjoy their natural attributes are best protected.

During the last school holidays I took my family to Cairns to visit grandma and grandad. While we were there we went on a cruise to the outer Barrier Reef with Down Under Tours. What a fantastic company. Anyone from that area of town, please pass on our congratulations. It was very comfortable and well controlled, and there were plenty of well-trained staff and good food—not that I tasted any. They provided seasick tablets and lots of bags which I availed myself of. They protected the reef while we were there. If it looked like we were even getting close to the reef or putting flippers down, they would have people all over your tail. We enjoyed a fantastic day. My boys had never been out snorkelling to the outer reef before and they had a fantastic time. We went out in a glass-bottom boat and it was a really good experience. No-one left that day destroying anything in the national park and there were 130 people on the boat. Not a person did anything to that national park. This takes place every day on the Barrier Reef and in various national parks, providing employment and keeping local economies alive while attracting the tourist dollar. It is this model that we are now trying to facilitate.

Our first recommendation is that the bill be passed because this is a common-sense approach to preserving our environment while providing opportunities for our community to benefit from it, both for pleasure and employment. Further, the continued reduction of red tape is always welcome.

I want to address a fundamental issue regarding this act, and that is the cardinal principle. The Nature Conservation Act provides essentially for the conservation of nature only. The problem is that over 400 licences were given for some sort of activity in national parks and state forests. As soon as the first of these licences were issued, this objective was encroached upon. As the minister has wisely identified, 'If it looks like a duck, quacks like a duck and waddles like a duck, it is probably a duck and it should be called a duck.' If we allow this wide range of activity then we should recognise it instead of allowing it but pretending it does not exist.

I think the department's advice to our community is an excellent summary of the situation. It states—

The NCA covers a broad variety of issues relating to the protection and management of protected areas and wildlife. It is often assumed that protected area management is only about the protection of conservation values and in particular those values on national parks. While this is an important part of what the act provides for, it is not the only thing.

Currently, the object of the NCA is the conservation of nature. This narrowly defined object can create impediments for access to protected areas and the use of these areas for other activities, sometimes even to necessary management tools that may assist in the conservation of the values for which the protected area was created. The amendments broaden the object of the act to recognise the variety of activities already allowed for under the NCA. In particular, the bill amends the object of the NCA to explicitly provide for some of the most significant uses of a protected area such as for recreation and commercial outcomes.

Next I want to address the issue of tenure and management principles. On pages 16 and 17 of our report a table has been presented to better explain the proposed changes. I think these changes make a whole lot of sense. In his first reading speech, the minister said—

In the future, Queensland's protected areas will be divided into two main classes: national parks and regional parks. The focus of national parks and their management will be around the conservation of natural and cultural values.

...

The focus of regional parks and their management principles will be a broad variety of uses, including commercial and recreational purposes, while still having a focus on the natural and cultural values of the areas.

Further, at the public hearing, the department commented on reducing legislative and regulatory complexity, stating—

There is ... something to be said in a legislative sense by having two tenure categories that have clearly defined purposes and uses ... you can construct the legislation, when talking about tenure, as having two primary purposes that you need to provide for within the act and for regulations then to follow suit.

As I said, this just makes sense. I want to spend a few moments now addressing a few points raised by the deputy chair in her dissenting report. The first point raised is about the object of the act. The member stated—

The Opposition and the general public hold the view that the preservation of the natural condition of national parks must always take precedence over other activities.

There are a few fundamental flaws with this statement. First is the assumption that the opposition is the oracle of all wisdom and the sole voice for the Queensland public. This is profoundly wrong. Just over 18 months ago the LNP went to the people of Queensland, stating that we would open up forests and national parks. We are delivering on this promise in a very balanced manner. But do not take my word for it; let me again state what we were told by Mr Daniel Gschwind, CEO of the Queensland Tourism Industry. He said—

... when we seek use of national parks, it is on the basis that we understand that our customers value the natural attributes of what we have to offer. They do not want to go and see a national park that is on the brink of being destroyed and they certainly do not want to leave with a sense that they have contributed to the destruction of a national park. That is a fundamental market trend that we respond to. Our operators—the tourism operators and the 400 or so commercial operators who currently have permits to operate in national parks—are entirely committed to sustainable use and sustainable management, and not just as a glib marketing ploy but as a genuine commitment to look after the areas that they use because their very future depends on it.

Frankly, the statement made by the member has no merit. This bill will enable legislation that not only ensures protection of our most precious and important natural resources but also enables appropriate recreational and commercial activity. More importantly, the whole of Queensland had their say on this and they instructed us to bring in this legislation, which is being done today.

The opposition member's next objection was to do with tenure classes. It is unfortunate that in this matter the member seems to simply want to be objectionable for the sake of being objectionable. Her statement that 'the dramatic changes to protected area tenures are also highly problematic and entirely unwelcome' may be true if you are a screaming greeny or a Labor member of parliament, but if you are a rational thinking, normal member of society it is a load of codswallop and an affront to most Queenslanders. It seems to me that the Labor party has a serious conflict of interest in this matter as it has a track record of swapping votes for extreme green policy. I suggest that they are again positioning themselves in this debate to swap votes for policy. Unfortunately, the people of Queensland have already told us what they think and that is that Labor is out of touch.

The member continued—

While the government has suggested these tenure changes are designed to streamline the current tenure system they threaten to undermine existing protections. Unfortunately, the member must not have spent much time studying this bill. If she had she could not have come to that conclusion. The recommended changes actually streamline the process and make it much easier for Queenslanders to understand and comply with the different requirements.

I would now like to respond directly to the member for Rockhampton and his proposed amendment regarding the committee's recommendation No. 6. For the benefit of members, the committee made this recommendation to ensure that the authority of parliament was not being usurped. I am satisfied with the minister's explanation and, having reviewed the bill, I am satisfied that the chief executive in declaring a special management area, or SMA, within a national park is not able to usurp the authority of parliament. The reason for this is that under clause 116, section 17 of the bill, parliament in effect delegates to the chief executive certain and specific powers to manage national parks using special management areas. The chief executive must restrain their declarations within the parameters of that delegation as set out in the bill on page 88. The bill allows the chief executive to


declare a special management area over a national park, or part of a national park, including a national park (Aboriginal land), national park (Torres Strait Islander land) and national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land). The management principles for an SMA (controlled action) allow for: the manipulation of the area's natural and cultural resources to protect or restore the area's natural or cultural values and/or the continuation of an existing use of the area in a manner consistent with maintaining the area's natural and cultural values. The management principles for the SMA (Scientific) allow for specific measures to protect an area's exceptional scientific values and allow for a scientific study or the manipulation of habitat to control a threatening process.

This is not going away, as purported by the opposition. In fact, this is being strengthened to allow us to respond quicker and faster than was able to be done previously. The chief executive may declare an SMA by erecting a notice to be displayed at the entrance of the relevant national park or the part of the national park that has been declared as an SMA. The notice must state the specific activity that can take place on the area and a copy of the notice must be published on the department's website and a notice provided in the gazette. The bill specifies that the decision to create an SMA cannot be delegated by the chief executive.

Under normal circumstances, as a CEO of a company or organisation, I can delegate certain authorities to one of my directors or someone who reports to me. But unless I specifically state to them that they can further delegate that, they cannot delegate. So they must maintain the delegation. It is similar to the situation where someone comes to me and asks, 'Can I borrow your lawnmower?', and I say, 'Sure, you can borrow my lawnmower,' and then their mate comes to them and says, 'Can I borrow your mate's lawnmower?', and you say, 'Sure,' without permission from me. This bill states that we are delegating to the chief executive certain authorities to declare SMAs. We, the parliament, are giving that person that authority. That person cannot further delegate that authority, which means that he cannot or they cannot usurp the authority of parliament. I am satisfied with the minister's explanation.

As the minister has explained, this mechanism has been designed to allow for the management of national parks and enable the department to respond quickly if need be. The provision we recommended in recommendation 6 would, by nature, prove to be a lengthier process. I believe that it would be very difficult to defraud the intent of the bill in this instance, and I trust that our public servants within the department will act in good faith and with integrity. For this reason I cannot support the opposition's amendment with regard to recommendation No. 6 of our report. I think if the opposition listened to the minister—and now to me—they might do the honourable thing and withdraw their proposed amendment.

I say thanks to the minister and to his staff. This is brave legislation, but it is good legislation that takes a complicated structure and streamlines it and the processes associated with it. There are some excellent initiatives in this bill. I want to thank the committee members for their efforts. All took this task with the gravity it deserved. I want to again thank the dedicated secretariat led by Sue Cawcutt and ably assisted by Lee Archinal, Kathleen, Karl and Stephanie. Their efforts are appreciated. This is common-sense legislation and it is worthy of our support.

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.59 pm): It is a pleasure to rise to contribute to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 introduced into this House by the Hon. Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and member for Buderim on Tuesday, 20 August 2013. In simple terms, the objectives of this bill are to increase access to national parks and other public lands, achieve red-tape reduction and streamline legislative processes. As the minister said in his first reading speech—

This Bill will result in the most significant changes to the way that Queensland national parks and other protected areas are managed since the Nature Conservation Act was introduced in 1992.

In my role as the minister for tourism in our great state, I must commend Minister Dickson for his fine work in delivering these reforms and opening up Queensland's national parks for ecotourism opportunities and the enjoyment of locals and visitors alike. These reforms implement key actions identified by the tourism industry during the DestinationQ forums of 2012 and 2013. Nature and culture were key themes at both forums, and at the recent 2013 DestinationQ forum the tourism industry identified that in order to be competitive and successful over the next 20 years, we must preserve our natural assets. When referring to the act in his first reading speech the minister said—

It also fails to place enough emphasis on achieving recreational and commercial outcomes such as ecotourism in the management of protected areas.

This bill expands the objective of the Nature Conservation Act to include recreation and ecotourism opportunities in national parks and protected areas, all the while retaining the focus on conservation. After all, it is our wealth and variety of natural attributes and stunning landscapes that set us apart from many other destinations. They are an integral part of the Queensland experience; why would we wish to destroy them?

Queensland was a world leader in ecotourism. In fact, we may well have coined the phrase. But under almost 20 years of Labor, the lure of the green vote cost Queensland's ecotourism significantly. Pandering to extreme and minority views that would tie up our national parks and other magnificent natural treasures and lock people out of them while weeds and feral animals took control was akin to a death sentence for our ecotourism industry, not to mention the health of the very areas that Labor's overbearing legislation was supposed to protect. It is little wonder that their ecotourism plans lapsed years ago. They were too ashamed to have any because they had made it almost impossible for operators to gain permits or survive the suffocating red tape imposed by successive Labor governments. Labor do not like or understand small business; they never have and they never will.

Other countries benefit from well managed safaris and camping options such 'glamping' or glamour camping, even down to the terry towelling robe, so why shouldn't we? Being able to showcase our exquisite natural wonders and teach visitors to love and respect them as much as we do is an holistic and sustainable approach that should be encouraged. But what will those opposite do? They will oppose this legislation, labelling it 'awful'. They want more of the same: lock it up or rent it out to your mates for peppercorn rates. The member for Rockhampton even made threats to government members about their reelection chances because of this bill.

As I have said many times in this House, neglect of this proud and diverse industry, which is made up of so many small businesses, saw the goose that laid the golden eggs laying bricks. Under the Newman government we will breathe new life into our tourism industry and our parks with careful and watchful management so that our unique authentic character and cultural heritage will be preserved and enhanced for many generations to come. The LNP went to the election with a policy to open national parks for the enjoyment of all Queenslanders and to deliver improved access for both tourists and the wider community. The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) will result in our national parks and other protected areas being managed more effectively with a focus on the protection and appreciation of all of the values these certain areas contain. As the minister mentioned previously—

Whilst the conservation of nature remains, this bill includes three new outcomes provided under the object of the act: firstly, the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas; secondly, the use and enjoyment of protected areas by the community; and thirdly, the social, culture and commercial uses of protected areas.

The opportunities for Indigenous involvement are unlimited, and I am excited about future prospects. To this end I will be working with Minister Elmes and my assistant minister King to progress discussions and identify appropriate projects. Mr Dickson has spoken already of the close consultation that he and his department will undertake with respective Indigenous landowners. Despite the scaremongering from members opposite, we are not opening up national parks for widespread development. This bill will allow responsible ecotourism operators to benefit from promoting our state's wonderful natural assets. It is in the interests of these operators to ensure that our national parks remain healthy and unspoiled. 'Take pictures, leave only footprints' is a great message to promote to visitors; in other words, leave the park or protected area in the same or better condition than you found it.


Let's have a look at the opposition's track record in regards to ecotourism. It took seven years to approve Skyrail with the helpful assistance of federal Labor. Skyrail is a globally recognised attraction that provides visitors with a unique prospective and great interpretation of our magnificent wet tropical rainforest. At Springbrook Labor kneecapped a superlative destination—again in a World Heritage area—by buying up most of the accommodation on the plateau, shutting them down and planting trees. Think back to the Daintree fiasco: tourism resorts were halted; properties were bought up; and local state and federal government planning was used to tie any tourism proposal into so much green tape that developers were sucked dry of capital before they had even turned the soil. If I were to list all cases of Labor suppressing the ecotourism industry in this state, I would be here until midnight. There was a prevailing attitude that the private sector knows nothing about protected area management and conservation, despite the fact that Queensland ecotourism operators have won awards the world over for conservation initiatives. It is also despite the fact that the same private sector experts who write the national park management plans also work for tourism developers to

ensure that their projects are environmentally sustainable. It was despite the fact that Queensland operators led the way with the internationally renowned ecocertification program, which was the first in the world to gain accreditation from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and has comprehensive requirements to ensure excellent environmental practice.

In taking on World Heritage area management, governments commit to present World Heritage values. Yet far too often that responsibility was ignored by Labor or at most given lip service. Instead the tourism industry was shut out or shut down. According to the Auditor-General's 2010 report on the sustainable management of national parks and protected areas, the former government had management plans for only 17 per cent of protected areas, saying that it would take 30 years and \$60 million to complete them all. To streamline this process, this bill will make it a requirement that a management statement is developed for all protected areas, which is a much simpler planning document to prepare and in most cases is considered to adequately cover the relevant management issues.

At this point I would like to make it clear that this bill does not allow mining in national parks or protected areas. Mining areas which have been previously approved will be allowed to continue under approved conditions. In keeping with the Newman government's commitment to reduce red tape and regulation by 20 per cent by 2018, this bill will also drastically reduce a large number of tenure categories within the Nature Conservation Act. These categories create unnecessary confusion about how protected areas should be managed, and that is why this bill will halve the number of tenure categories from 14 to seven by merging five categories into two and abolishing four tenure categories.

The Newman government has set an ambitious goal to double overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020. To achieve this goal we need to develop new tourism experiences that recognise it is often our unique natural assets that draw visitors to our great state in the first place. Research shows that our parks are highly sought after experiences by international and domestic tourists alike. In fact, Australia's world-class natural beauty is a top five consideration when it comes to selecting a holiday. Queensland is best positioned to benefit from this given our unparalleled ecotourism competitive advantage, boasting five areas that are recognised on the World Heritage register and three of the 15 nominated national landscapes in Australia. It gives me great pleasure to support this bill.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (3.09 pm): The bill before the House, as we have heard, is about improving access to Queensland's national parks and other public lands while focusing on the protection and appreciation of the values of these areas, as the Minister for Tourism just outlined. Unlike Labor, who had that 'lock it up and throw away the key' mentality, this government believes that by allowing sensible, sustainable access to parks we are creating a new generation of nature lovers.

While broadening the object of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 recognises that protected areas are managed for a range of outcomes, not just the conservation of nature, conservation will remain the primary purpose. The bill also acknowledges that, currently and in the future, recreational, social, cultural and commercial outcomes are considered in determining how protected areas are managed. The bill also includes a number of provisions that reduce green tape and improve the act's enforcement and offence provisions in the interests of conservation. I would like to address its green-tape reduction intent first.

As Minister for Environment I am empowered under the act to prepare a conservation plan for any native wildlife, class of wildlife, native wildlife habitat or area that is, in my opinion, an area of major interest. The purpose of a conservation plan is to introduce a regulatory regime for the management and protection of a class of wildlife or a habitat. Likewise, I am able to require an applicant to prepare a conservation plan or meet the cost of its preparation.

The bill makes two amendments in relation to conservation plans. The first of these, and similar to the changes proposed for management plans for protected areas, is the removal of the requirement for two specified mandatory rounds of public consultation when making such plans. The policy intent is that consultation requirements for conservation plans will be aligned with those required for the making, review and amendment of regulations, which constitute subordinate legislation, under the act. In effect, this would mean that the extent of consultation would be determined by the extent of the proposed amendments, as determined by the regulatory assessment process that applies to the making of any regulation. As in the making of any regulation, the Office of Best Practice Regulation will assess the extent to which the proposal has implications for government, business or the community and provide advice on an appropriate process for

consultation. This can of course range from the requirement to undertake a full regulatory impact statement process, with extensive consultation, to a lesser process whereby consultation may only happen across government or with a targeted group of stakeholders, as appropriate.

The second amendment is to require that before I require a proponent to make a conservation plan or pay for its preparation I be satisfied that this is the best course of action—in other words, I be satisfied that, for example, the proponent would be the sole beneficiary of the authority to be regulated by the conservation plan.

The bill will also reform enforcement and offence provisions under the Nature Conservation Act. The bill creates a new offence for selling meat or other products sourced from dugong or marine turtle from commercial premises. It is currently unlawful to sell such products from both commercial and non-commercial premises; however, the bill introduces a new higher sanction for sale from commercial premises. For the purpose of the offence, 'commercial premises' essentially means an establishment such as a restaurant or a fast-food shop. This would include giving such meat or other products away at a commercial premise if the giving away constitutes part of the business operations at that premise. Meat or other products could include a whole dugong or marine turtle.


This provision is not meant to apply to trade undertaken on the basis of traditional custom not involving an exchange of money or not occurring from commercial premises. Moreover, it is not the intention of the Newman government that this amendment should infringe upon any recognised native title right. Legal advice sought by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is to the effect that the proposed amendment does not infringe upon a native title right currently recognised under the Native Title Act.

One of the other amendments is around proof of authority. Currently there is no provision for a conservation officer to establish his or her proof of authority after a power is exercised. In some instances it may be impracticable to establish proof of authority before exercising a power; for example, where a conservation officer is not in uniform and observes a camp fire in a protected area that they reasonably believe is a hazard and gives an immediate direction to put out that fire and then produces his or her identity card for the person's inspection. This amendment ensures that the use of powers is not restricted in circumstances when it is not practical for a conservation officer to produce his or her identity card before the power is exercised, provided the officer produces their identity card at the first reasonable opportunity. The amendment will also reduce the risk of evidence being excluded on the basis that authority was not first established.

Another amendment is around false and misleading information. The act currently limits the application of the provisions regarding providing false and misleading documents to those received by designated conservation officers. The offence of providing false, misleading or incomplete documents to a conservation officer is being broadened to an 'authorised person', incorporating the chief executive and employees of the department who are performing functions under the NCA for the chief executive. A significant portion of permit and licensing application processes are now conducted online rather than through a conservation officer in person.

In order to properly administer the NCA, the department must be able to rely upon the information provided to both conservation officers and authorised persons including employees of the department. Documents provided to employees of the department who were not appointed as conservation officers that were false, misleading or incomplete may not be an offence under the current provision. Inserting a new offence acknowledges the increased manner in which a person can provide information to the department, including online application, and places a greater onus on individuals to check information before it is passed on to an authorised person. This provides increased accountability for users of protected areas and permit holders.

Collectively, these amendments reflect the government's intention to not only improve access to protected areas and reduce green tape but also strengthen offence provisions and enhance the enforcement capacity within the act. I support the bill.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.16 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. This bill delivers on the Newman government's commitment to cut red tape and to ensure our national parks are effectively managed so that they are available for all Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy. This bill is about streamlining processes and embracing common sense in relation to management of protected areas in our state, and it is about providing better opportunities for Queenslanders and visitors to our state to experience our incredible national parks.

Key to this bill is the broadening of the object of the Nature Conservation Act to recognise that through protecting our protected areas we can achieve a range of outcomes for Queenslanders and visitors, not just nature conservation. This is a policy area which I have had a very strong interest in and one that has an enormous effect on not only our parks but also their surrounding areas. Springbrook National Park is within my electorate of Mudgeeraba. The Springbrook economy relies on the national park to bring tourists to their community and to their businesses. When I have visited Springbrook residents and have outlined the crux of this bill, there has been genuine excitement on the part of the residents. 'Finally, government is acting with people like us in mind rather than targeting us for extinction,' is a common phrase.

Springbrook residents have had much to fear from governments in the past, and I can assure the residents of Springbrook: this era is now over. You are no longer targeted and you are no longer under threat. I know that the minister is well aware of the problems they have faced in the wake of the \$40 million buy-up orchestrated by the previous government in cahoots with ARCS and Aila Keto under the guise of environmental protection. I know that the minister continues to work to bring the details of this plan to light, not only because it is right to do so and not only because it should be brought to light if our government is truly committed to open and accountable government but also because the residents of Springbrook have a right to know.

Opening up national parks to ecotourism allows the Springbrook community to share in the industry that is key to the economy that surrounds it. Tourism is at the heart of the Gold Coast economy, and communities like Springbrook should be able to share in that. Of course, promotion of visitation to our national parks not only adds to the experience for our visitors but also helps to support the communities that surround the parks. Whilst the clear goal of some is to put a big gate on Springbrook Road, lock it and throw away the key, we acknowledge that by allowing people to experience the amazing resource that is Springbrook National Park we secure its future and ensure the passion many have for its protection spreads throughout the broader community. Our national parks are an extraordinary asset that deserve our protection. The more people can experience them, the more likely they are to get behind their protection.

I have outlined in this place before the injustices done to the Springbrook community. The previous government believed that business, tourism and—seemingly—visitors were not compatible with the protection of our national parks. We believe that environmental protection need not operate by putting our national parks under lock and key. There has always been the green behind the gold, but it is easy for visitors to have in their minds that the Gold Coast represents only theme parks and beaches and forget about our stunning natural assets just a little bit to the west. I urge visitors to the Gold Coast and Gold Coasters alike to visit our national parks, especially the extraordinary Springbrook National Park, and experience something truly special.

This bill introduces new civil immunity provisions. These are simply common sense and sit comfortably within the concept of personal responsibility. There are multiple changes to the way we will streamline our national parks within this bill. The idea that the majority of our national parks have had no management plan in place is ridiculous. It is not only environmentally irresponsible but entirely economically irresponsible. The Queensland state government contributed close to \$1.5 million to the management of Springbrook National Park last financial year alone through salaries and operating costs, capital works and maintenance. I imagine that there are similar outlays on our national parks throughout the state. The Auditor-General's report in 2010 found that the former government had just 17 per cent of the management plans for protected areas in place as required by the Nature Conservation Act. It would have taken supposedly 30 years and \$60 million to complete them all. The introduction of management statements in the streamlining of management plans where more detailed planning is required as an alternative to the inefficient and costly processes currently in place will ensure that each national park is effectively managed.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to ensure that at this point certain things are put on the record—things like there will be no mining and there will be no logging or hunting in Springbrook National Park. There is no lack of clarity behind this point. As the local member I would not support it, the minister does not support it and the department does not support it. At a public hearing recently—and residents were invited to read the transcript—I asked Mr Jason Jacobi, Acting Deputy Director-General of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the following—


Just for the benefit of the hysterics on Springbrook Mountain—particularly those who do not live there, such as Gecko—I have consistently said that in the Springbrook World Heritage area there will be no logging, and there has not been any in Springbrook for over 30 years. There is no cattle grazing there, and the minister took action earlier this year for those areas

where cattle needed to have some grazing because of drought. We have also had the issue of the threat of CSG mining, and my understanding is there is no CSG on Springbrook Mountain anyway. Would you be able to just definitively say that none of those activities will be occurring on Springbrook Mountain?

Mr Jacobi replied—

I can conclusively confirm that there is no intention for logging, grazing or mining on Springbrook National Park.

So those trying to make out that the government does not strongly support the protection of our national parks are being dishonest. Trying to pull the wool over the eyes of residents may serve the purpose of some in the short term—those who peddle in untruths to serve their own purposes—but the residents of Springbrook are the most politically engaged I have ever encountered and will not readily forgive the dissemination of lies and exaggeration from anyone. When the sky fails to fall in you will be exposed and your integrity will forever be damaged in their eyes. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (3.22 pm): Today I rise as a member of the Health and Community Services Committee to speak in support of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 and report No. 31. I acknowledge the previous speaker, the member for Mudgeeraba, who speaks very strongly and emotively for Springbrook National Park. I welcomed the occasion to visit and I understand why she is so strong about access and protection of Springbrook National Park, and I thank the member very much for hosting me when I visited.

The objective of this bill is to allow commercial, cultural and recreational use of national parks and other public land. It is also to reduce red tape and to streamline processes. In April this year the House passed the first stage of amendments to the Nature Conservation Act 1992 which delivered reforms to support the Queensland government's commitment to reduce red tape and improve access to our national parks, particularly for ecotourism facilities.

Queensland's protected areas are a key asset—we all know that, we have heard that and will continue to hear that—for ecotourism, recreation, education and scientific pursuits. In addition, they are also key assets for the simple enjoyment of nature. They are there to provide opportunities for the appreciation and use of these areas so that people can connect with their environment, and by doing so we are ensuring a sense of ownership, husbandry and that their values are conserved into the future. This bill will serve to further enhance the existing access and enjoyment of our national parks in Queensland while providing a more flexible management framework for our park managers into the future.

The bill also introduces three new outcomes: the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas; the use and enjoyment of protected areas by the community; and the social, cultural and commercial uses of protected areas. This bill delivers on the Newman government's commitments to cut red tape and ensure our national parks are effectively managed so that they are available for all Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy now and into the future.

I want to address a couple of aspects of the legislation, and the first I will turn to is tenure. We have already heard about this but, at the risk of reiteration, I just want to make sure that the opposition is actually listening because it might actually learn something. Currently there are 14 different tenure types under the act, three of which have never been used. The new tenure structure not only streamlines the legislation but allows Queenslanders to more easily identify with their spaces. The management principles for the new tenures will recognise the important role that ecotourism, recreation and education play in the management of these areas. There are already activities that are occurring. National parks will be managed around the conservation of natural and cultural resources while recognising these opportunities for all in education, recreation and ecotourism.

Importantly, as we have heard the minister say at length, the cardinal principle for the management of national parks will remain unchanged. The current tenure structure under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Forestry Act 1959 is overly complex and, aside from those 14 tenures, three of which have never been used since the introduction of the NCA in 1992, it has resulted in unnecessary confusion around how protected areas should be managed. This bill will remove that confusion. Simplifying the tenure structure will significantly reduce the current legislative complexity and remove those tenure classes that have never been used, as we have heard, from 14 down to seven. Queensland's protected areas will be divided into two main classes—national parks and regional parks—and for me that is a very simple explanation. This will provide a clear distinction between the purposes of each of those tenure classes and the types of outcomes for which those areas are being managed. It is simpler, it is a simpler management framework for our park rangers and staff to look after and it will also make it, in turn, easier to educate the public on what the different tenure classes mean.

The bill reforms the protected area tenure structure under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to abolish those tenures that have never been used, grandfather tenures for future uses and combine tenures around like classes. Let me make it quite clear, and I also note and welcome the minister's foreshadowing of amendments to be moved in consideration in detail about clarifying resource use areas: resource use areas will only be able to be declared over regional parks at their time of gazettal. That was recommendation No. 7 from the committee in its report. Very clearly, let me say this again: there will be no mining, logging, hunting or open slather grazing in our national parks. It cannot get any simpler than that.

Mr Minnikin: Better try again!

Mr HATHAWAY: Okay. At the risk of trying again, very clearly there will be no mining, logging, hunting or open slather grazing in our national parks.

Mr Minnikin: One more time!

Mr HATHAWAY: No, that should be enough for everybody. I now turn to another issue raised throughout our consideration of the legislation—that is, public liability. I note that the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Bundamba, has submitted a dissenting report to the committee in which she states—

The Opposition is highly sceptical of the bill's provisions to reduce the number of protected area tenures, weaken the management planning process, and alter the state's liability for personal injuries that occur in the protected area estate.

The member for Bundamba also states in her dissenting report that the figures show about \$2 million has been paid out by the state for death and personal injuries in national parks over the last 20 years. Equally, she goes on to state that there is no evidence of an increase in personal injury claims but then goes on to identify that there are currently nine claims against the state totalling \$11.9 million. I am at a bit of a loss as to what she is actually trying to say. However, the committee notes that the explanatory notes state that there has been a dramatic increase in the last decade in particular in the liability of and compensation paid by the public authorities for personal injuries incurred on land owned or occupied by that authority. Even where signs provide a warning to the visitor, claims of negligence have been brought against the state.

The introduction of these new civil immunity provisions will support the government's commitment to improving access to protected areas. These provisions are necessary to reduce the potential risks of exposure of the state to large personal injury claims in circumstances that sit outside the state's control.

During the public briefing the committee heard that a risk assessment was undertaken by the state government based on its experience of increasing costs owing to claims of negligence against the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The committee heard from Dr Liz Young, the Director of Policy Reform of the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. She said that the department has been exposed to increasing risks over the last 10 years and the quantum has more than trebled. Dr Young stated further—

... issues such as having a sign but that sign not being clear enough have been raised and have been the basis of claims of negligence against the state. At least part of the basis for these provisions is to address that kind of concern.

The committee also heard from Mr Jason Jacobi, the Acting Deputy Director-General of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, who told the committee that provisions have arisen because of actions that have been taken by individuals against the state. Mr Jacobi stated further—

... regardless of how many signs the state erects to inform individuals of the danger, action is still being taken.

Personally, I do not want to see a sign hanging from every tree, because it defeats the purpose of having a national park. Mr Jacobi stated further that, where amendments—

... specifically address liability ... the state will remain liable and responsible for ... assets or structures or fixtures that it builds.


Mr Jacobi stated further—

... the amendments allow for greater flexibility and remove the need for the state to erect a sign at every location in a national park where there may be a possibility of an incident occurring, resulting in a proliferation of unnecessary signage all throughout our natural environments.

Let me be clear: the proposed amendments do not provide immunity for the state or an official from liability arising from the construction, installation or maintenance of a state fixture or state road that is defective other than because of a natural disaster; failure to give adequate notice of a defective state fixture or road other than because of a natural event; carrying out state management activity

such as programmed burning; injury for which compensation is payable under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003; or injury to which the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994 applied. So it does not remove any of those provisions. It does not give the state carte blanche to have a total disregard for public safety, but it provides some clarity and also potentially protects us from idiots.

In closing, I acknowledge the support of the secretariat. Indeed, they worked very hard on this particular legislation because it was quite complex. We have made it a lot simpler and I appreciate that. I would also like to thank all the submitters and the presenters to the public hearings. Of course, I would also like to thank the minister for not only introducing this legislation but also the efforts and work of his staff in briefing the committee on the legislation. Clearly, it is my view that this bill will serve to further enhance the existing access and enjoyment of our national parks in Queensland while providing a more flexible management framework for our park managers into the future. On that note, I recommend that the bill be passed.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (3.33 pm): I, too, am a member of the committee that reviewed this bill and made critical recommendations to improve the outcomes of the bill. The process of reaching those conclusions was very involved, as are many of the committee processes. That is the norm for legislation being considered now. It was an exhaustive process by virtue of the number of submitters and the detail that people had gone into. I say that with some hesitancy because of some comments that were made by the Deputy Premier during the last sittings of parliament regarding his view on the relative value of the committee process itself. But that said, I think the committee process in this case very much added to the content of the bill, which just goes to show how good it is.

As a committee, we took many submissions from a variety of sources, as has been detailed by all the previous speakers—individuals and groups who had strong views about national parks and who should conduct whatever in a national park and the land surrounding it. As a concerned citizen and a member of parliament, I was very interested to see what modifications to existing strategies and uses of national parks throughout the state were being made. The details of the legislation have been listed by a variety of speakers and I do not wish to go into any of those.

The primary aspiration and goal of the legislation is to manage our national parks honestly and practically. This fairly is in contrast to many years of policies that became increasingly bogged down in locking up areas in an apparent effort to defeat the quality versus quantity argument whilst being ignorant of the demands of what those declared park areas needed by way of management plans and the care that those areas needed. I certainly spoke to those bills, as did many present members of the government on exactly that issue. That said, national parks, whilst in part retaining their primary role of conservation of current forest to ensure that we preserve not only our biodiversity but also a perpetual component, also provide a window for citizens and tourists alike to see and interact with what they contain. This is the norm.

As one would expect, the diversity of submissions was a mixture of those who had strong beliefs about the limitation of human interaction with those forests to those who sought unlimited or near unlimited access with a healthy provision for giving them a permanent footprint in those forests. There is a clear objective of the minister and his legislative amendment to increase access to national parks and other public lands. It is no secret that the Auditor-General's report, which has been alluded to multiple times, stated that previously only 17 per cent of national parks had plans—although 70 per cent certainly did have plans as of about 12 months ago, but not much in the last 12 months. When the Auditor-General's report came out, it was absolutely terrible that, again, we were seeing the consistent finding of quantity over quality and a clear pattern of neglect in the locking up of those areas. This was a pattern of consistent neglect. Unfortunately, when you have these areas you cannot do that.

No doubt, the outcome of that process has led to what I think in part is an excessive response from the government—and you can understand parts of it. The key excessive objection that not only the member for Bundamba and I raised but also other members of the committee raised related to the issue of allowing provisions that will facilitate the desires of interested parties, which may include local councils, being able to challenge decisions made by the minister and the department with regard to the statements—rather than plans as such. Today, if I heard the minister correctly, he rejects that view of the draft management statements and plans. Having said that, I hope that we will not see too much. If I understood his speech today and his previous statements correctly, the minister confuses streamlining with the legitimate rights of affected bodies, which, I reiterate, include local councils in many cases. I remain unconvinced by some of what the minister has said. I will allude to why I have that view, but I would like to see how this legislation goes in practice.

I have been very interested in some of the detailed reports, which include extensive government plans that have been passed, and in some of what has been said. Interestingly enough, in the last two sittings of parliament we have had tabled some reports about the Gold Coast Broadwater. Everyone has their own little agenda. I have heard the issues relating to Springbrook and a variety of others. I will get to a couple of those. Certainly, in relation to the issue of the Gold Coast Broadwater, I have tabled all sorts of ecological data—all the research that has been done; enormous amounts of research, largely paid for by the government and the council; four major studies—and I am going to table the final two reports. One is the *Gold Coast Broadwater preliminary coastal and hydrodynamic investigations for cruise ship terminal options*—that is the hydrology study, which includes the seaway—and the other is the *Gold Coast Broadwater economic assessment and monitoring baseline report—Gold Coast City Council*.

Tabled paper: BMT WBM report titled 'Gold Coast Broadwater, Preliminary Coastal and Hydronamic Investigations for Cruise Ship Terminal Options', July 2013 [3892].

Tabled paper: Gold Coast City Council report titled 'Gold Coast Broadwater Economic Assessment and Monitoring', baseline report, May 2012 [3891].

Basically, those reports show that the idea of trying to put a cruise ship terminal—

Miss BARTON: I rise to a point of order. I not sure how the Broadwater Marine Project is relevant to this bill.

Dr DOUGLAS: There is a Broadwater marine park that is part of it.

Miss BARTON: Member for Gaven, I think you should allow the Deputy Speaker to make a ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Excuse me, member for Broadwater, I actually have the chair. It is okay. Member for Gaven, is the Broadwater project inside a national park or a state forest area?

Dr DOUGLAS: Part of it is in a national park.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow the tabling but I would ask—

Dr DOUGLAS: It is a marine park.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask you to come back to the bill.

Dr DOUGLAS: There has also been some discussion regarding the cardinal principle. Various speakers have stated that it is being retained. I do not dispute that it is. From listening to various submitters there was not always a sensitivity to some of those special qualities that key stakeholders were stating about national parks. I say that because there is a major national park in my electorate and two world heritage parks on my immediate western border. I know a little bit of these areas because I have had a lot to do with them over time. The two world heritage parks have the last remaining stands of arctic beech. For those who do not know, it is very rare timber. It is what people go to see. It is adjoining the McPherson Ranges. These parks have commercial operators on their doorstep and within them. I support both those businesses as outstanding examples of what can be done and what might be best practice in this industry. They are O'Reilly's and Binna Burra. Binna Burra has gone through some recent troubles. For those who may not know, it was one of the first in this area and is an outstanding example of how it can be done properly.

The Nerang State Forest is within my electorate and contains all sorts of activities. There is everything from the Kokoda Challenge, which is an annual event, mountain bike tracks and horse trails to mountain bike races and bird watchers. Children use it as a communal area where they meet up. Rather extraordinarily, right in the middle of it is a large quarry, which is absolutely critical to the Gold Coast economy. Seeing what is occurring in those areas it is very difficult to say that recommendation 6 is wrong. I do support the two types of SMAs, scientific and controlled. I think recommendation 6 is fair. Not all forests are the same, but this is a clear example where there is a lot of interaction—everything from major commercial operations, which are very sound and being run correctly and need to continue, to all sorts of lesser activities which are growing all the time and are probably good examples of how best to do it. That is not to say that it is entirely proper. I know that the minister is currently favouring the idea that we might have parts of the Commonwealth Games in there, but I would hesitate to say that we have also spent a lot of money on the Hinze Dam racetrack. I know that there are those who would say one might be better than the other but keep an open mind on it, please.

The issue of declarations and revocations without public consultation or parliamentary scrutiny is a difficult one. We always need to make sure that we have a capacity to allow people to make submissions and also challenge the issues because otherwise the capacity of local councils will be limited to make it more efficient and effective for everyone else—not just those who are going in and out of it or using it, but those living in collaboration or peaceful co-existence with it. It is like having a neighbour and making sure that you get on with your neighbours—even though parks are a bit bigger.

Interestingly, recommendation 7 restricts mining and geothermal activity on land formerly dedicated as conservation park. I think that reassures many people. I do agree that major ecotourism operators and ecotourism operations are an appropriate management tool in facilitating access to everyday Australians and tourists to national parks. I know that the minister knows of some examples, in particularly from his own past which is similar to mine. I am actually going to talk about those in a second. My father had a property in between the Obi Obi National Park and the Kondalilla National Park. He gave that land to the national park. We need to make sure that when we are facilitating access of everyday Australians and tourists to national parks we keep the connection between those groups and some of the objectives of the bill so that we do not cause a problem that we did not otherwise have. If the protective element of a management plan rather than a management statement may be delivered to effectively give those protections, as most informed people have said, then I think that should be recommended. I accept the removal of the two compulsory rounds of the committee consultation, which I thought was excessive. I think that one is probably fair. That allows for commercial and recreational use, but it has to be justified.

As I said, I had a fair bit to do with the forests of Obi Obi National Park and Kondalilla Falls when I was much younger. It taught me a lot about what you need to do when you are allowing people access into the forest. We had a lot of people coming and going. I know that the minister did have people who were staying in an operation he was running as a family business. What I learned from the idea of these so-called pristine national forests, which a lot of people do not really access all the time, is that there are certain types of uses and access to those parks that are reasonable and certain types that are not reasonable. I say so purely on the basis of what can occur in the forest as a result.

Fire was the ever present problem. I would have to say that injuries would remain as the other big one—I mean significant injuries in relation to people who are incredibly difficult to retrieve. When you are operating a family business there and in the middle of the night you are going to have to retrieve people in very difficult places that nobody else can get to, even helicopters, people feel that they have very strong legitimate rights. They feel like there has to be a plan, steps taken, rules and an application of those rules because people can lose their lives so easily and there can be all sorts of problems that there would not otherwise be. There are also terrible problems with people trying to capture native wildlife. It is extensive. That is not to say that within this bill these sorts of things are not being considered, but they are the everyday problems of what goes on in those forests. What tends to happen is that people who are surrounding those national parks often have to manage those problems in a practical way. To deny them the capacity to be consulted as to what happens is to deny a practical step which I would say is not a good way to go forward.


I can say something of those two areas. They parallel some of the areas on the Gold Coast where I live. These areas have unbelievable natural beauty and biodiversity. You literally turn a corner or climb a mountain and you are seeing the most amazing things. It is a great feeling to think that once in people's lives they get a chance to see this. The nature of this bill is to encourage ecotourism and ecotourism operators to get people to go into national parks. That is a very desirable objective. But it must come with some controls. We have to be careful about what is there and the people who are going there. It is all very well to think that it is all going to go perfectly all the time. Unfortunately, a variety of things happen: the weather changes, they only have so much time to go in and see it. There has to be an idea of the number of people who are in there. Sometimes it is numbers; sometimes it is access. You have to involve people who live in the surrounding areas in a very strong way because they add a lot to what is going on. They are the people who you ultimately have to rely on when things get tough.

I felt that in the bill there were things that we needed to talk about with regard to those issues. I am not necessarily saying that the minister or the department was not considering them. A desire to make things simple, and in certain cases streamline it in such a way that it gets out there, does not always get the result that you think you are going to get; you get an unintended consequence and then you have a problem that you have to try to manage. There is nothing worse than saying to

families who are stuck in difficult circumstances, or who drown in literally two feet of water or die of thirst when literally there is water within 200 metres of them, that you could have done something but you did not even know that they were there.

I think the legislation is largely reasonable, although there are some unreasonable parts to it, which I have highlighted. I think the minister and the department have an unrealistic fear of those who seek to participate in community consultation and I would urge them to try to improve that to the best they can. Mainly I am concerned about local councils having the capacity. I raised this with the committee chair, who is the Deputy Speaker in the House at the moment, because often councils have to carry the can for a lot of things. One of the things they often have to do is try to negotiate an outcome with the government that relates to things that are going on in the parks, so it is not always reasonable to exclude them. I think it is not reasonable, because really local government is a very important part of governing any developed economy. Critically, if you implement measures to try to defeat consultation, as I said, in fact you end up with unintended consequences. I am not saying that will significantly occur within this bill, but it could possibly occur and we have to try to avoid that. I do not think that really came up as a strong part of the submissions, but it was there in multiple areas, although probably people did not express it in those terms.

I thank the committee secretariat. I thank all the submitters. I think the chair did a very good job. It is difficult legislation, particularly when you are considering how you access national parks. I take on board some of the statements that were made by the Labor Party and its representatives as to what could have been done to make the bill better, and their concerns about it. Primarily, the problem degenerated into a situation where there was a pursuit of quantity over quality. Within the bill, to a large extent they have tried to address some elements of that. I am not saying they have done it with the grace and execution that they probably should have, but at least it may be a reasonable start and it may be that it can be built on in the future. I supported the recommendations if they were accepted in their entirety.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (3.52 pm): It is my pleasure to speak to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. As the member for Beaudesert, I represent a large number of national parks. Therefore, it is a special pleasure for me to speak to this bill. We went to the 2012 election with a specific commitment to open up national parks for the enjoyment of all Queenslanders. This bill delivers on that commitment to open up parks, to cut the red tape in relation to national parks and to ensure that they are effectively managed for all Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy.

The present bill has a single focus, which is on the conservation of nature. Queensland's protected areas are a key asset for a number of things, not only the conservation of nature but also ecotourism, recreation, education and scientific pursuits. Providing further opportunities for the appreciation and use of these areas so that people can connect with the environment is an important aspect of the bill. This bill delivers on a range of reforms to further that objective. It broadens the object of the Nature Conservation Act, recognising that they are already managed for a range of outcomes and not just the conservation of nature. That will remain the primary object, which is a very important point that everyone needs to remember. The conservation of nature will remain the primary object, while recognising the supplementary objectives as well. Those supplementary objectives will help to achieve our objective of opening up the parks.

The commercial use of protected areas is something that has been going on for a quite a while. The bill formalises that approach and also encourages their further use. I will mention some of the national parks that I represent. We have Queensland's first national park at Tamborine Mountain, the Witches Falls section. It was the first national park declared in Queensland in 1915. We have the Main Range National Park, Lamington National Park, the Border Ranges National Park, Moogerah Peaks National Park and Mount French. Essentially, from Beechmont in the east to Cunningham's Gap in the west, all of that section of the Queensland/New South Wales border is national park and is in my electorate.

This area has been enjoyed by generations and has been conserved by generations. They have looked after this land for over 100 years. Robert Collins was the member for Albert, I believe, from 1896 to 1899. Actually, he is my wife's great-great-grandfather. He was one of the initial advocates for the establishment of national parks in Queensland. In the 1800s he went to the United States and recognised the good system that they had established for national parks in conserving nature and for setting aside areas where nature would be conserved and where people could come to enjoy nature. We need to remember that the initial founders of national parks wanted people to enjoy nature. That is a really important point to remember.

When he was the member for Albert, Robert Collins took the governor of the day, Lord Lamington, to the ranges above Mundoolun near Tamborine Mountain. He showed the then governor the brilliant and beautiful scenery around Tamborine Mountain. It is reported on a website I was looking at earlier today that Lord Lamington disgraced himself because, whilst he enjoyed nature and the native flora and fauna, apparently he shot a koala and was quickly escorted off the campus. Eventually, after Robert Collins had left this place, the first act establishing national parks in Queensland was passed and in 1915 it was declared. Unfortunately, he did not get to see that. He passed away before it was declared.

Collins's contemporaries, the Laheys and the O'Reillys, carried the cudgels and established guesthouses around the mountains, which became part of those national parks. They established guesthouses for people to come to stay so that they could enjoy nature. That is what we are trying to do through this bill. We need to remember that they were the pioneer ecotourism operators and they have looked after that area for nearly 100 years. This year Binna Burra celebrates its 80th anniversary. National parks need to be opened up, enjoyed and visited so that people understand their value. This bill is a vehicle to continue the enjoyment and opening up of our national parks.

Let us not forget that the Labor Party neglected our national parks through nearly 20 years of mismanagement. The number of rangers has been depleted, the weeds have been allowed to proliferate and other assets within the national parks, which actually contribute to people's enjoyment of and encourage them to visit and learn the value of our natural assets, have been allowed to deteriorate through lack of funding and lack of care. They have been locked up and, as other speakers have said, the key has been thrown away. We need to look after that. This government has been left a national park estate in need of a lot of work and we need to continue with that work.

I mention the issue of wild dogs in national parks. There are issues around having wild dogs in national parks and cooperation between national parks and other departments within government to get effective baiting and management programs so that the natural flora and fauna is protected. That is an issue that we need to continue working on. I appreciate the correspondence the minister has had with me over the past months.

In particular I welcome the focus on ecotourism development which will come through this bill. In the recent Queensland budget there was an allocation put aside for the development of ecotourism facilities at Green Mountains, which is part of the O'Reilly's estate. It is great to see this government taking proactive steps, through amending this legislation and putting money into projects, to develop ecotourism in my electorate but in other parts of the state as well.


The cardinal principle—being the conservation of nature—is being retained. But in addition to that we are proposing the additional values of education, recreation and ecotourism. Those supplementary outcomes need to be consistent with the natural and cultural values of national parks.

There are a number of other reforms being made to the estate. In terms of streamlining the management planning processes for national parks there will be greater management flexibility through management statements rather than formal management plans, except in certain circumstances. That is a provision which should be commended.

I also want to touch on the provision around reducing the state's exposure to liability as a result of accidents in national parks. As a result of opening up national parks and encouraging people to enjoy them, there will be greater usage of the parks. I commend the amendments to reduce the state's exposure to liability arising out of accidents. I also point out that there are certain circumstances where civil immunity coverage will not apply. In particular, it will not apply where there are accidents or incidents in relation to state fixtures. Where the state puts up buildings in national parks or where there is a failure to give adequate notice of defective state fixtures or assets or where the state is carrying out a management activity such as the shooting or poisoning of animals or programmed burns civil immunity will not apply. Reducing the state's liability in line with opening up access to our national parks is a sensible move.

Having covered the main points in the bill, I am very happy to support it. I will be supporting the bill's passage this evening.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Can members please be cognisant of who is speaking as they move around the chamber. Several times this afternoon I have not been able to see the person speaking. I would ask you to please be cognisant of that and remember that there is always someone on their feet. I call the member for Gladstone.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. I have a letter from a constituent that I wish to put on the record. Before addressing that gentleman's concerns, can I congratulate the minister on making national parks more accessible. I do not have as many national parks in my electorate as perhaps others, but I do have Kroombit Tops and a number of forestry areas. Over the years I have seen in my electorate access to those areas deteriorate mainly because of a lack of supervision. National parks staff has been reduced quite significantly over the last couple of decades. So there is a lack of attention and care for those national park areas. I know there is a consequential cost, but even the basic access roads have been problematic.

Other speakers have talked about the management of feral animals. I think that is a critical matter in terms of ensuring the integrity of national parks is maintained. Feral animals and the damage they do is more problematic than human intervention.

Under the Labor Party the freedom to go horse riding in national parks was removed. I know in our area that the horse riders are, by their very nature, careful. They love the outdoors and loved riding through our national parks. They were also the eyes and ears for the department because they were often able to see changes, particularly negative changes, that needed to be dealt with. When they saw those changes they reported them promptly. This was particularly so where there was a good working relationship between the national parks staff and the recreational horse riders. Human interactions with national parks and forestry areas can often be positive rather than negative. I commend the minister for that.

I commend the minister for the increase in national parks staff. I have been to national parks in other states but not so much overseas. John and I have often gone to national parks interstate and seen how much tourism in national parks is capitalised on. I am not encouraging this, but in many other states people pay for a permit to get into national parks. There have to be several central points of access and there is a person at the gateway to those access points. They certainly capitalise more greatly on tourism in national parks in some of the other states.

Another amendment in this bill will reduce the state's exposure to liability. I do not speak of him very often, but I am going to model my husband, John, who, as most of our partners will, tells me what he thinks on a regular basis, particularly when I am a captive audience. I love him to bits.

Mr Johnson: John's terrified of you.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: No, he is not. He is a great believer in people taking responsibility for their own actions. In terms of a reduction in the state's exposure to liability on QPWS land, I would have to say that he would agree 100 per cent with the sentiments in the legislation. People need to be educated to understand that there is going to be a shift in liability. A not well-signposted or a not well-maintained path does not mean if a person stubs their toe on a rock they are able to sue the government because they did not move the rock. It should be quite the opposite. I will quote him, 'Give me a break. It's a national park. What do you expect? It's going to be rough and there's going to be stuff that you're going to trip over. Open your eyes.' I have done him justice.

We should not be silly. We should not have a lovely great path leading to an abyss so that people with littlies run along and get hurt. People should understand that if they are in a national park there will be some areas that are rough. Most national parks have indications of fitness levels or the roughness of the paths that people can use. They need to know if it is not wheelchair friendly or not friendly for people with mobility issues. If we have general indicators, whether it be signage or leaflets, then people will have a good understanding of the areas they are accessing. They need to understand that they are accessing national parks. They are native areas and there will be things that will not be polished and well presented. Indeed, that is part of the beauty of these areas.

There is another issue I would be interested in the minister's comment on. In this legislation there is a provision that the minister must publish a notice about a draft plan on the department's website as opposed to the current requirement for the notice to be published in the newspaper circulating through the state. That will also require education because people interested in these things are very much in the habit of looking at the *Courier-Mail*. I would hate to see those people who are interested miss out on an opportunity because they did not realise there had been a change.


With respect to my constituent Mr Colin Chapman, he wrote a submission to the Health and Community Services Committee. In the time available to me I would like to put it on the record. His submission reads—

I write to you expressing my concerns at the changes that are proposed by way of this bill. While I think that the Policy Objectives and reasons for them are commendable, I hold firm to the principle that National Parks are for the preservation and conservation of our fauna and flora and that there should be necessary legislation in place to ensure their protection.

While I agree that there is too much red tape, I am of the opinion that there should be more green tape to ensure the preservation of our National Parks for my children and grand children. I am in agreement that our National Parks should be more accessible to people but hold fast to that adage that we only take photos and only leave footprints.

1. I object to changing the Object of the Act from "conservation of nature" to "social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas". To make this change means that there will no longer be any areas set aside for the preservation of nature.
2. I express my concern as to why Wilderness Areas, World Heritage Management Areas and International Agreement Areas will be abolished. Is this the reduction in red tape? If so, how will the Qld Government be held accountable for the preservation and management of these areas?
3. I also express my concern about the introduction of a new class known as Regional Parks as this seems to more of a recreational park without the status of conserving nature. It would appear that the standards have been lowered.
4. I am also very concerned about abolishing the requirement to prepare management plans for all protected areas. While it has been costly and not much progress made on doing Management Plans for existing parks, I believe that Management Statements are ineffective unless supported by detailed management plans. It's rather like the government having a vision but no plan in which to implement that vision.
5. I believe that Government should engage the community more and be part of the planning process in the early stages of the decision making process and not after the event. This may not streamline the process but it enables legislation to be made that has the approval of the community. I therefore am concerned that there will be less consultation should this Bill pass in its existing form.
6. I also have a concern about giving more powers to the Minister. It allows for purely political and unchallengeable decisions about land use and access. If you must delegate power, give it to the Director General under policy guidelines.

The letter is signed by Colin Chapman, who is a well-respected gentleman in my electorate and is on a number of environmental committees. Minister, I do not believe that you want to see national park areas deteriorate and I do not believe that you want to see them lacking in protection. I do believe, however, that we need to allow families, particularly families and kids, to have access to these areas, that they be safe but also that those accessing these areas are responsible for their own actions and their own behaviours. So I look forward to the minister's summing-up. I take on board Mr Chapman's concerns and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (4.12 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. The objective of this bill is to amend the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and other related legislation in order to increase the accessibility of our national parks and other public lands through the significant reduction of red tape and through streamlined processes. I would like to begin by congratulating the minister and his department for the construct of the bill and also thanking the secretariat for their usual outstanding level of support and professionalism.

Specifically, this bill will amend the Nature Conservation Act in order to broaden the object of the Nature Conservation Act to provide for recreation and commercial uses within protected areas while ensuring that the focus remains on nature conservation. We believe that these amendments will also allow for the continuation of nature conservation, while allowing increased use and enjoyment of protected areas and increased involvement of Indigenous people in the management and protection of lands in which they have an interest. During a public hearing on 20 September, in response to one of my questions, Mr Harrigan, a traditional owner at Lakefield National Park said—

... a lot of Indigenous groups want to identify their areas and build up capacity on the tourism side of it.

He went on to say—

It will really put a lot of people back on country for work or working in management in terms of the day-to-day principles in managing the park.

I believe this legislation will provide overall better management of parks and also ensure a stronger, more respected engagement model with Indigenous people which will only enhance the social and the environmental outcomes for many areas. Today I will provide a few facts, evidenced by real-life examples, where private businesses or entities can and have partnered with governments all around the world to create ventures that fulfil the requirements through the combination of sustainable ecological and environmental outcomes, and economic benefits. I should commence by outlining that

this approach is hardly new and innovative. Many forward-thinking governments and organisations have partnered to establish ecotourism facilities all around the world. These projects concentrate on providing sustainable outcomes for the continued, long-term benefit of both the environment and the economic benefit of the communities that house those developments.

In June 2001, the Dominican Republic hosted the Workshop on Biological Diversity and Tourism, as part of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Santo Domingo. The workshop was convened pursuant to decision V/25, paragraph 2, of the Conference of the Parties in which the conference accepted the invitation to participate in an international work program on sustainable tourism development with regard to biological diversity, in particular 'with a view to contributing to international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable areas, including fragile riparian and mountain ecosystems, bearing in mind the need for guidelines to apply to activities both within and outside protected areas, and taking into account existing guidelines'.

Participants in the workshop were the United Nations Environment Program, or UNEP; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, or UNESCO; the Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network, or IPBN; and World Wide Fund for Nature, or WWF. The stated purpose of the workshop was to produce the guidelines for policymakers, decision makers and government or private sector stakeholders involved in tourism and biodiversity to contribute to conservation of the ecosystem, sustainable tourism within ecosystems, fair and equitable sharing of benefit, information and capacity building, and restoration of past damage.

An example of outstanding success in this area is the Jiuzhai Valley in China. The Jiuzhai Valley was formed in 1978 and was initially focused on anti-logging and restoration work. However, as tourism increased and education in China increased in importance, the park has through international collaboration embarked more on sustainable tourism development, community outreach and environmental protection. There has been over 70 kilometres of walkways and toilet and kitchen waste facilities constructed within the park environments, and all this has been internationally acknowledged as successfully increasing sustainable tourism and educational outcomes while having a negligible effect on environmental surroundings. The successes of this park have been recognised through the establishment of international partnerships with organisations such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature, UNESCO and a number of universities, and it has sister park relationships with Plitvice Lakes in Croatia; Yosemite, Yellowstone and Olympic parks in USA; and, importantly, Cradle Mountain in Tasmania.

The importance of the relationship and co-existence between commercial and environmental ventures was outlined by one of the submissions the committee received. Mr Daniel Gschwind, the CEO of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, stated—

... when we seek use of national parks, it is on the basis that we understand that our customers value the natural attributes of what we have to offer. They do not want to go and see a national park that is on the brink of being destroyed ...

He went on to say—

... tourism operators ... are entirely committed to sustainable use and sustainable management ... because their very future depends on it.

Through this and many other statements and submissions made to the committee, it is all too evident that there are many who look at this bill as being a great opportunity to grow our national parks, to provide sustainable futures to these parks and to ensure that the level of management is improved, because they become a financially viable proposition. Despite the alarmist statements and negative outcomes those opposite will no doubt espouse in the debate throughout the afternoon, the simple fact remains that currently Queensland is littered with examples of parks that are poorly managed, poorly maintained and increasingly overrun by weeds and pestilence. Through the injection of well-managed and sustainable ecotourism facilities, our parks will once again become the envy of the world and the foundation and source of a resilient tourism sector.

To this point, I have concentrated on the need and justification for change to the objective of the Nature Conservation Act 1992. As I outlined earlier, this amendment will also reduce red tape and streamline processes. The key area where red-tape reduction and streamlined processes are delivered is in the refining of the tenure types. This bill will reduce the current 14 tenure types to just seven. As stated within the explanatory notes, the department states that the management principles will be consistent with the values of the area, with national parks retaining a strong focus on nature conservation and regional parks having a greater focus on use for recreation and commercial purposes. As stated by the O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat and Kingfisher Bay Resort, the amendments do not detract from the conservation of nature and represent good housekeeping.

During the public hearing on 20 September, I listened intently to the presentation by Mr Ogilvie, representing the National Parks Association of Queensland. I have since re-read the transcript hoping that the argument he put forward may make a little more sense. Unfortunately, as my question to Mr Ogilvie indicated, I still fail to understand the arguments he put forward. More to the point, I cannot understand why he or the organisation does not see the amalgamation of national park, national park (scientific) and national park (recovery) into a single national park tenure as not being a great outcome.

My reckoning of the situation now is that, if the park is to include special management areas, the effective management and transition within the national park tenure is streamlined. The defined special areas can, once the need for management has become obsolete, revert immediately to the national park tenure. This will ensure that areas are more effectively managed within compressed time frames and can then remain within the tenure of national park. This simplified process eliminates the need for redefining of tenure type and the red tape associated with the processing of that change.

With the tenure restructure, there is a stated concern by many about the types of activities that may occur in national parks. I am thankful that the minister has outlined succinctly in his second reading speech that the activity types are, in effect, no different from those activities currently outlined. Throughout the discussion it seemed to me that the majority of people, when pressed, agreed with the majority of changes as proposed. It seemed, however, that the one area where there was concern for the manner in which this bill had been constructed was in the area of conservation parks and resource reserves and their amalgamation into the new tenure of regional parks.

Recommendation 7 of our report recommends that there is a level of assurance provided to ensure that areas previously within a conservation park could not have activities such as mining, geothermal activity and greenhouse gas storage activity permitted. During his second reading speech the minister outlined clearly that no parks previously known as conservation parks can be reclassified to include resource use and only new areas with the same parameters may be classified for resource use into the future.

Throughout the public hearings and our interactions with the department, a lot of discussion concentrated on the utilisation of management statements and management plans. I do hope that the assurances we have received regarding this process and the adoption of many of the recommendations within the committee's report will prevent any circumvention of process and public consultation, and we are seen to undertake processes that remain open and consultative. It is my firmly held view that the process will actually increase the effective management of our parks through the proactive and dynamic capacity outlined. It seems to me that a more effective and rapid response to situational or localised environmental changes will ensure that where the rubber hits the road there is a more effective and targeted response to our park management.

Another component to the amendment is the section aimed at containing the state's exposure to liability. The minister outlined during his second reading speech that the prime objective of this section is to provide park management with surety and certainty with regard to exposure to civil claims. As the member for Gladstone and other members have already outlined, as a result of these statements by the minister I feel most Queenslanders would agree that the state should not be held to ransom by individuals who embark upon activities that are inherently risky.

The element of the risk is exactly why many of us undertake—or have done so in the past—activities that excite and enthral us. Occasionally things can and do go wrong, but the onus in these cases should remain with the individual. My advice to them would be that, if they wish to undertake activities within our parks that have risks attached, they self-insure. They might be somewhat surprised to find that the premiums are quite excessive, which should ring an alarm bell or two. At the end of the day, if the insurance company was not willing to accept a risk, then why should the burden fall at the foot of the state?


There are a few other important areas of amendment that I would like to outline. The amendment to clause 75 is a small but practical change that will ensure that evidence obtained prior to a conservation officer or an honorary protector producing identification while gathering evidence will be admissible. As the previous minister outlined this afternoon, if an officer was travelling in normal civilian clothing and saw activities being undertaken that would put the park at risk, he should have the capacity to act and then follow up at a later stage with suitable identification.

There are other things that reflect our contemporary environment such as amendments to section 158 that will, in essence, account for our digital age and address lodgements that may occur online. The bill also extends references to guide-dogs, hearing dogs, assistance dogs or trainee support dogs to align with references in other legislation.

At the public hearing on 20 September Mr Stewart, from the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation, stated—

... the minister said, by engaging these people will actually make this the greenest government in Queensland's history, and I believe that he is actually accurate in what he is saying ... by actively letting them become involved in those areas, they will actually build a relationship with those areas and strengthen those areas.

It is with those words that I highly support this amendment bill. I look forward to the benefits it will deliver to the people of Queensland, witnessing the sustainable co-existence of tourism throughout our rich national parks and an improvement of our environment for generations to come.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (4.26 pm): In speaking to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013, I note that one of the policy objectives is to increase access to national parks and other public lands. The explanatory notes also state—

These amendments contribute to the Queensland government's commitment to open national parks for the enjoyment of all Queenslanders and to deliver improved access for both tourists and the wider community.

This is a very important issue. If we cast our minds back to when the Goss government had a 19-seat majority, one of the Goss government's policies, despite sacking thousands of railway employees, was to ban fishing in national parks. We have to acknowledge that, whilst this country has three million square miles, there are only certain areas that we can access, especially along the coast, and a lot of those areas are national parks. There was a big rising up of communities and fishermen who protested very heavily. There is no doubt that these important pieces of land need to be accessed. Any government that steps in and tells you that you cannot fish in a certain area without any scientific evidence whatsoever to appease a certain minority group for some particular reason should not be governing. I commend the minister for this bill because we need to be able to access national parks. Horse riders need to access national parks. This country was opened up and built on the back of horses. In country areas we do not have trains running at frequent schedules or massive shopping centres. In regional areas we have the bush, but a lot of that bush is state forests or national parks. If we cannot access those areas, what are the people in rural and regional Queensland who do not have many of these opportunities going to do?

The importance of this bill needs to be acknowledged. The bill increases access to national parks so that people have the opportunity of birdwatching, walking, swimming and fishing in national parks. That is what this country is about—the freedom and the right to access national parks to fish and to camp and, hopefully, as time goes by even the right to hunt. The explanatory notes state—

Specifically, the Bill will amend the tenure classes to:

- combine the national park, national park (scientific) and national park (recovery) tenures into one tenure class called 'national park';
- combine the conservation park and resources reserve tenures into one tenure class called 'regional park' ...

I believe—and perhaps the minister could clarify this—that graziers can only access that area which will be called 'regional park'.


It has been mentioned a few times that the minister has overriding powers and is able to override the chief executive. This is to be clarified also. I do not believe that access for grazing should be limited to just one particular area, which will be the regional park. In times of desperation or emergency, I believe there needs to be an ability to access those parks, whether it is a national park or a regional park, and there are a lot of national parks throughout this state. Hopefully the minister can clarify that. That access is very important in times of desperation. Looking at what came out of the royal commission into the fires in Victoria, it was stated that, had the national parks been managed properly and grazed, there would not have been so many deaths or as much mayhem and destruction. So there is room for co-existence in some way, especially when people are in dire straits or a bad fire area. Being able to access those national parks will prevent greater catastrophes from occurring. We see the rural fire brigades are out there fighting fires in those national parks, but those national parks are not being grazed. Some of the biggest issues that arise in relation to these fires are in the national parks, but they are not managed or grazed and the feedstock is not kept down.

The objectives of this legislation are very commendable and hopefully we can get feedback with regard to that. I have mentioned the fires in Victoria and they brought to light some of the problems that exist. We have problems with wild dogs, feral pigs and feral cats in those national parks. This is very important, too. People talk about how man is destroying the cassowary. People mention those animals I mentioned—the wild dogs, the pigs and the feral cats—but they also talk about the cassowaries being run over by cars or being killed due to the clearing of rainforest, which does not happen. There is a conservation movement that says that man is responsible for the loss of the cassowary. The reason the cassowary is going out on the road all the time is the rainforests are so thick that they find it easier and more accessible to go on the roads. That is why they are being run over.

Management of the national parks is so important. Likewise, what brings the native wildlife numbers down are the feral animals—the feral pigs, the dogs and, to some extent, the cat—and this is difficult to address. The scale of the operation to try to reduce the number of feral pigs and cats needs federal government support. There is an opportunity for the national parks to be opened up to hunting. I believe there is room. I am talking about controlled hunting, not blasting beside little townships located alongside national parks. There are places like the Staaten River National Park which is 4,000 square kilometres in area. We talk about noxious weeds that have been spread in national parks by the feral pig, but we also have a great issue with lantana, which is a toxic pest that has spread all through this state, that has taken over national parks. There has been a push to preserve this land, but at the same time there is also a great push to expand, as there has been in the past. However, it has also not been managed. If we are seeing more feral dogs and feral pigs destroying and causing havoc to neighbouring properties, it is no good spending multiple millions of dollars and wasting our money on expanding and growing national parks if we are not managing them. Honourable members have probably heard this before—and I have brought this up many times—when we see this problem there is also an opportunity for recreational hunters. They can go out there in their own time and at their own expense. There is an opportunity for those recreational hunters in some of these areas that are a breeding ground for the feral cats and feral pigs. I am talking about areas like the Staaten River National Park. That is 4,000 square kilometres that is locked up. There is an opportunity for them to access it in a controlled way. They can do it in their own way and at their own expense. They buy four-wheel drives and they buy camping equipment so they support the outdoor stores. There is an economy within itself. I think this is something that needs to be looked at and, likewise, addressed as time goes.

I appreciate that the agricultural minister is acknowledging this problem; I believe he is doing something in this area. As I mentioned before, I believe the scale of the feral cat problem is so large that federal government support is needed. In national parks and in waterholes—everywhere you look—you see a lot of dead native wildlife. Every day feral cats would kill a native animal or a native bird. All these things are brought to the attention of the House.

(Time expired)

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise today to support the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. Firstly, I would like to thank the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, the Hon. Steve Dickson, for bringing this bill so promptly before the House. I would also like to thank the Health and Community Services Committee, chaired by Mr Trevor Ruthenberg, member for Kallangur, for its input in reviewing this bill. I note that the committee recommended that this legislation be passed. It is important that I rise to speak to this bill, particularly as one of the prime purposes of this bill is to achieve red-tape reduction and to streamline legislative processes.

Our can-do government had a commitment to open up national parks for the enjoyment of all Queenslanders. We are opening up these beautiful areas of Queensland not only for our locals—even they could not use and enjoy these wonderful spaces in some cases—but also for our local, interstate and national tourists. In my role as assistant minister for regulatory reform, I am always very pleased to see a minister bring a bill before the House which moves towards our target of reducing red tape. In fact, this bill delivers on our commitment to reduce red tape and ensure our national parks are effectively managed so that they are available for all Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy.

There are a few specifics that I would like to touch on. First is the reform of the tenure structure in our national parks. It is obvious that the current legislation is overly complex. It has resulted in uncertainty, whether from the park manager's perspective or the visiting public—if they are allowed to visit—as to the purpose of the different tenure classes and that has the potential to create

impediments to the access of these lands. It is pleasing to see that we are not only reducing these tenures from 14 to seven—so halving the number of tenures—but also removing numerous duplications in the legislation that all sit around these tenure classes. Like so many other old rules and regulations that were set up by the previous government, there is also an opportunity to remove tenure classes that do not even get used. So there will be two main categories of protected area: a national park and a regional park. There will be a difference between the purpose of each of the future tenure classes and types of outcomes for which these areas are managed. As mentioned very clearly by other members of this House, in some case on numerous occasions during their time on their feet, there will be no mining, logging, hunting or open slather grazing in our national parks.

Irrespective of what those few who are opposite say, that is not the purpose of this bill. This bill will create a simpler planning framework for our park managers and make it easier to convey to the public what the different tenure classes actually mean.

An opposition member interjected.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I hear a member opposite saying that this is a lie. Well, excuse me, this is not a lie! Secondly, this bill streamlines management planning and reduces the legislative complexity of our national parks, protected areas and marine parks. The amendments will remove unnecessary and burdensome processes such as the requirement for two mandatory rounds of consultation on management plans. We are streamlining processes, and it is important for me to note that the purpose of this legislation is to enable the minister to better use the state's resources for all Queenslanders. Not only will this reduce cost, but these resource savings can then be injected back into our national parks so that they can be better utilised. We will deliver improved on-the-ground management, and quite simply this means more staff for many of the beautiful national parks across our state.

I would like to briefly touch on why this is so important. The better management of our national parks will clearly help all Queenslanders. If our national parks are better managed and the lantana cut down on the side of the roads, it stops the resource sucking from other areas such as emergency management. Our poor rural fires have to go and fight fires because the national parks under the previous Labor government had been left to rack and ruin for the past 20 years. The way that some of these national parks have been left is disgraceful, and I have some of them in my electorate. I am talking about places such as Bunya Mountains National Park, Queensland's second oldest national park; Crows Nest National Park; Ravensbourne National Park; Benarkan State Forest; Yarraman State Forest; and Jimna State Forest, where lantana grows the most. All of these are wonderful places for camping, bushwalking and escaping from it all, and they are so close to our larger regional centres that we can use them to draw people into our national parks and increase tourism and economic development for regions, particularly the electorate of Nanango. It is so important to bring bills such as this before the House to improve areas such as the wonderful Nanango electorate, and I cannot thank the minister enough for this bill. I have amazing national parks in my area which have been locked up.

Another element of this bill that I would just quickly like to touch on is that it will provide a more flexible management framework for our park managers. The bill also recognises the importance of the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas, of which there is a prime example in my electorate. The Bunya Mountains Murri Ranger and Elders Council project has led to a revival of the Indigenous presence and influence on the national and cultural landscapes of the beautiful Bunya Mountains after an absence of more than 100 years. This is a traditional gathering spot for all Indigenous people, who used to travel for miles and miles to get to the Bunya Mountains as a meeting spot. The Bunya Mountains Murri Rangers and Elders Council project was one of 88 finalists in the National Landcare Awards announced in Sydney in 2012 and it won the 2011 and 2012 national Leighton Holdings Indigenous Award. I can only encourage Indigenous groups such as this to help out with the management of the national parks, and I again congratulate the minister for a wonderful initiative.

In conclusion, of course the conservation of nature will always remain our primary objective while recognising that recreational, cultural and commercial outcomes are also important in determining how protected areas will be managed into the future. This is one area that we can only improve on, and this bill will improve tourism and resources in our wonderful state. We promised to deliver better infrastructure, and opening up our national parks is one of the ways that we can do this. I would encourage everyone who is listening in the House today to visit one of those wonderful national parks. The Jimna National Park has had an amazing upgrade to its toilets and camping

facilities, so it will be a beautiful spot once that work is completed. I again thank the minister and his department for such a wonderful effort in reducing red tape and regulation in the state of Queensland to benefit all Queenslanders and also increase economic productivity in many areas within the state. I support this bill.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.45 pm): I rise to speak to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). At the outset I would like to thank the minister for bringing this legislation to the House. It is fantastic to see that we have a government that finally wants to let people into our national parks so that Queenslanders and visitors from across Australia and around the world will be able to enjoy the wonderful natural assets that we have. I think that it is a great testament to this government that we are looking to open our doors, so to speak, to a whole raft of opportunities.

I am very blessed in the Broadwater electorate because I have a number of fantastic areas such as South Stradbroke Island that people can go and visit. Whilst the member for Cleveland is in the chair, I feel that I can say that South Stradbroke Island is the better of the Stradbrokes. I also have the Pine Ridge Conservation Park and the Moreton Bay Marine Park in my electorate. One of the great things about South Stradbroke Island is that it is so close to the mainland, yet when you are there you feel that you are a world away and you can escape the realities of daily life and enjoy a magnificent experience. I think the same can also be said of the Pine Ridge Conservation Park. I would note that the minister came and visited the Pine Ridge Conservation Park a couple of weeks ago, and we were able to show him exactly what we have in the midst of suburbia. I think it is sometimes hard to imagine that a mere 10 kilometres away—a hop, skip and a jump really from the city centre of the Gold Coast—we have this fantastic conservation park that has a real depth of history and is particularly important to the local Indigenous community. I have on many occasions enjoyed a walk through there myself, and I know that many others in the community have as well. It is also somewhere where you can go to just let go of the realities of daily life, and I think that that is one of the great things about national and conservation parks and other public spaces across Queensland: people can go and experience the world around them, open their eyes and they can really see the beautiful gifts that nature gives us.

I also have the Moreton Bay Marine Park, which of course traverses many electorates but does take up a significant part of my electorate in the terms of the Broadwater. One of the things that the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is particularly keen to do is increase accessibility and create destinations on the Broadwater. I think that that is in the same vein as what the minister is trying to do in terms of increasing accessibility and making sure that people really experience the beautiful things that we have. All of these areas in my electorate are home to amazing flora and fauna, and in many cases it is unique. I am not sure if I have mentioned it—and if I have, I am sorry—but particularly in the Pine Ridge Conservation Park there is a significantly large midden which is really interesting to see. It is amazing when you consider just how long that area of the world has been there and just how long that part of my community has been there, and it is really quite significant when you consider the history of it.

I think it is really important that we remember the importance of ecotourism for the Queensland community. The Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games touched on it in her contribution to the debate. One of the things she said was that we have a real market to tap into in terms of ecotourism. Queensland is a beautiful state and we have much to show off. I think we should take advantage of every opportunity we have to demonstrate the beauty of our great state. It is not just important particularly for Queensland. Coming from the Gold Coast, I think it is important to highlight how important ecotourism is for the Gold Coast. I know that, given her coastal roots, the Minister for Tourism is also particularly passionate about ecotourism on the Gold Coast.

I think it is also really important to remember—the member for Mudgeeraba highlighted this—that the Gold Coast, while it does have magnificent beaches, is not just about the beaches. We also have a magnificent hinterland. You yourself, Mr Deputy Speaker Krause, talked about Tamborine Mountain and some of those beautiful places we have on the western side of the M1. I think that is one of the great assets of the Gold Coast: you are a hop, skip and a jump from the beach or you are a hop, skip and a jump from the Gold Coast Hinterland. In terms of opening ourselves up to ecotourism, we offer ourselves so many more opportunities and we offer so much more to the tourism sector. I think it will be really important, in an increasingly competitive tourism market, that Queensland is able to offer all of these opportunities to visitors from right across Queensland, Australia and the world.

In terms of the accessibility that we are creating in national parks, I think this is a fantastic move. One of the things that I really enjoy doing when I get the chance is going out and seeing the beautiful gifts that nature provides. I would hope that over the coming years we can provide those opportunities for my future children and future grandchildren, so that they are able to enjoy the beautiful world we all currently enjoy.


I also want to highlight that one of the key objectives of this bill is to cut red tape. This is a key commitment of the Newman government. It is something that I quite often get really positive feedback about. In his contribution the member for Rockhampton said that it was just a line, that it is something people throw out there. With all due respect to the member for Rockhampton, I would hazard a guess that the people in his community are actually really excited about the fact that the government is cutting red tape. They were probably very disappointed by the fact that the Labor Party did not do it and that the Labor Party made it more burdensome for them generally. One of the things we have seen time and time again with this government is the cutting of red tape. I know that all ministers are particularly committed to it. I am very pleased to see that there are significant moves in this regard in this bill.

The only other thing I want to touch on is the amendments to civil liability. This is something that the member for Rockhampton mentioned in his contribution to the debate. I have to say that I am not quite sure I really understand the concerns of the member for Rockhampton. It seems to me quite reasonable when you consider what we are actually saying, that is, if the state government takes reasonable steps to maintain things like fences, barriers and signs, we are not liable if someone makes a stupid mistake. One of the things the member for Gladstone touched on was that her husband is a really strong believer in personal responsibility. I think that is something that everyone in this House should be a strong believer in. It is not the role of government to take responsibility for the mistakes an individual makes. It is the role of the individual to take responsibility for their own mistakes.

I highlight for the House the judgement made by the High Court in *Romeo v Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory*. Those with a legal background will know it well, I am sure. To give the House a brief précis, a 16-year-old girl went to a conservation park. She was drunk, she fell down a cliff and she was left paralysed. It is absolutely tragic—I do not think anyone denies that—but the High Court rightly held in that circumstance that there was no breach of duty of care because reasonable steps had been taken to maintain the state fixtures. I think it is important to note that that is what we are talking about here.

The member for Rockhampton talked about the legal doctrine of *volenti*. Yes, *volenti non fit injuria* is an important doctrine, alongside contributory negligence. We are not looking to weaken that in any way, shape or form. But before you can even talk about those things you need to have established a breach of duty of care. We are saying that if a state government has taken reasonable steps to maintain those areas then there is no breach of duty of care. I personally think that seems quite reasonable. Sometimes what we see with the Labor Party members is that they feel it is their responsibility to do everything for everyone. That is not how life should be. At some point, people need to step up and take responsibility for their actions and take responsibility for the judgement calls that they make.

I particularly support the amendments to civil liability that we are making here, because I think it is particularly important. At the end of the day, we are about delivering key services for Queenslanders. If we open ourselves up to liability because someone somewhere makes a stupid decision then that limits our ability to do really good things for Queenslanders, who want money for their schools, who want money for their roads, who want money for their hospitals and who want more police on the beat. At some point you need to make a judgement call, and I think the right call has been made here. I would hope that the member for Rockhampton could reconsider his opposition to the bill, because I think it is a strong bill. I look forward to seeing it pass the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (4.55 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The thrust of the bill, which I appreciate is to increase accessibility of national parks, is something I firmly believe in and support. There shall always be a tension between the needs and desires of people to preserve our natural environment and people being able to exercise their right to carry out activities and make commercial use of these parks. I think that balance has swung in favour of conservationists over many years.

In my part of the world, accessing these parks is a very important part of our lifestyle. I think there are a lot of anomalies in the way these parks are treated and in people's understanding of how they are operated and what sort of condition they are in, and this distorts people's views. Certainly, many parks have been a large burden on councils and have impacted our lifestyle in remote areas. There are so many anecdotes about national parks, but it is an issue councils constantly raise. I think there has been a silent encroachment on people's lifestyles in these areas. People's rights have been eroded. Over the years access has diminished. This has probably led to some apathy as people have been denied rights but they do not realise.


I am very happy to see a swing back in the other direction. That is not to say that we do not value some of those virtues of conservation, biodiversity and so on, but certainly that is not consistent with some of the national parks in my experience. Many of them just harbour vermin, weeds and feral pests and are not managed that well. It is farcical that privately owned holdings in some areas are in better condition than the national parks neighbouring them. The national park is often the problem when it comes to spreading weeds and pests. I am sure that is not the case in all instances—and perhaps that can be improved—but I just think that creates a lot of misunderstanding.

I commend the minister for his stand on this. I very strongly supported the stand he took on allowing emergency grazing on national parks. They are a resource that is there to be used. In the case of grazing there were some imperatives, and that resource was there to help us. It is not permanent; it is a stopgap measure. It is silly not to use it. There have been some enlightened views demonstrated by the minister. We are grateful to him for those decisions.

Generally, we are very supportive of the measures contained in this bill. We are concerned that the government does not support recommendation 6, overriding the concerns of councils in those cases. As always, we are very interested in having the rights of councils represented. I understand that that leaves it open to all comers to make it difficult for the minister to make decisions. I appreciate the contrast in the two interests there.

The minister can now prepare a management plan to override the chief executive relating to specific circumstances. I certainly welcome that in many cases. I think cattle grazing is a terrific example of that. I know that it is not a part of this bill, but a good case in point relating to the general thrust of this bill is cattle grazing. In some cases it might be valid to keep cattle off a park. But I think it has been said publicly that there is a lot of buffel grass in these parks that helps the incineration and that when they put a burn through these parks it burns more than it would have otherwise in its natural state. So it actually does it a bit of good. This is just another case where there are anomalies and misunderstandings of how these activities can affect these parks.

Again, the liability issue is a good thing to happen and I agree with the sentiment that people need to take responsibility for their own actions. This just enhances the government's ability to create accessibility, and parks officers are very supportive of that feature of the bill. Returning to the issue of national parks, anecdotally there are just so many stories and evidence of how there are misunderstandings. There is a big park in my electorate where they ended up switching the artificial waters back on. That sends a significant message that man's intervention in that country was identified as improving it, because when they switched the waters back on that allowed life to flourish in an otherwise desolate area. Man's intervention and interaction is not always a negative if it is controlled, and that is quite separate to educating people and people appreciating the environment that they are in. One of my very good friends in my electorate is, in my opinion, one of the best naturalists in North Queensland. His life mission is to educate people on the environment that they live in. I think that that is where the effort needs to be made, not in legislating people and smacking them across the hand every time they try to interact or use the environment. These parks are the property of the Crown and they are for the use of the people. This bill moves towards that, so in that way we are very supportive of it. I commend the bill to the House and am grateful to the minister for his efforts.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.01 pm): I also rise to support the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) and acknowledge that there were a large number of submissions made to the committee's inquiry, many of them expressing concerns about certain aspects of the legislation. This is certainly a matter close to the hearts of many people and I thank the committee for its time in considering the large number of voices who weighed into the public consultation process and commend the minister on his efforts in addressing those concerns expressed by interested parties. I want to assure my own constituents that there is absolutely no intent on any part of this government to water down the protection of our conservation areas. We live

in a wonderful part of the world and, although I might be a little biased, my electorate has some of the best natural assets in the state of Queensland. It is important that we protect and manage those assets responsibly, but at the same time we should not hide them from the world. I believe this legislation not only allows for the continued sound management of protected areas but also provides flexibility for the responsible enjoyment of these areas by Queenslanders and our visitors.

By broadening the objectives of the Nature Conservation Act, we are simply recognising a situation that already exists—that is, that protected areas are already managed for a range of outcomes. While the conservation of nature is and always has been the primary focus, we cannot ignore the recreational, commercial and cultural interests that have to be considered as part of the management of protected areas. This bill delivers on the Newman government's commitments to cut red tape and ensure our national parks are effectively managed so that they are available for Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy.

There are currently 14 different types of tenure in place under the act, three of which have never been used. Reducing the number of tenures to seven is a common-sense and practical measure that not only streamlines the legislation but also helps Queenslanders to identify with their protected spaces. For example, the legislation still allows the managers of protected areas to address specific needs and purposes such as controlled scientific research or recovery through the introduction of the new tool called special management areas. These outcomes are extremely important, but we really do not need three separate classes of national park to allow for them. How many average Queenslanders would understand the difference between a conservation park and a resources reserve anyway? By combining these into the one tenure called regional parks, it creates a much stronger identity while still retaining the cultural and conservation objectives of these areas.

The bill also streamlines and creates a more effective process for management planning, and I was surprised to learn that the Auditor-General's report in 2010 found that the former Labor government had just 17 per cent of the management plans for protected areas required by the Nature Conservation Act 1992. Thankfully, this government is taking positive action towards addressing these deficiencies in the process so that we can assure Queenslanders that our protected areas are being effectively managed. By making the process less resource intensive, we can not only ensure that all national parks are covered by a management plan or statement; managers of national parks can utilise those freed up resources to pursue their primary objective—the day-to-day requirement of looking after our protected areas.


On another issue related to the management and enjoyment of our protected areas, we definitely want Queenslanders and our visitors to enjoy our natural assets. However, we must also be mindful that there are some people who will take advantage of even the most minor incidents for their own personal gain. I am pleased to note that this bill includes civil immunity provisions that will minimise the state's exposure to the growing trend of large personal injury claims based on highly questionable and sometimes frivolous circumstances. However, at the same time we must take full responsibility for the sound and safe maintenance of structures such as bridges and the management of activities such as controlled burns and feral animal control.

In conclusion, here in Queensland we enjoy many natural assets that are the envy of the world. It is vital that we protect those assets but at the same time do not hide them away from the world. The protection of these assets and the economic benefits of enjoying them do not have to be conflicting interests, as some people believe. By passing this bill we can ensure that the managers of our protected areas can achieve all of their desired outcomes. Again, I might be a little biased, but I believe my electorate is one of the most beautiful areas in this beautiful state.

Mrs Cunningham interjected.

Mr BENNETT: I am sure because it is close to Gladstone, member for Gladstone. Some of the areas of note include the Capricornia Cays National Park, which incorporates Lady Musgrave and Lady Elliot, and of course we border the Great Sandy Strait, Littabella and Bustard Head. I am glad that Deputy Speaker Krause is still in the chair, because we were talking earlier about people shooting wildlife. I remind members that Bustard Head was named by Captain James Cook, who actually shot a bustard there to survive his journey. Then of course there is Deepwater, Round Hill, Sir Joseph Banks Conservation Park, 1770, which of course is the site of the second landing of James Cook—I think that trumps Lord Lamington, with all due respect, Mr Deputy Speaker—and Mon Repos is the largest concentration of nesting sea turtles on the eastern seaboard. I am excited about the possibilities that exist to enhance the lifestyles of my constituents and encourage visitors to come

and share what we have. I thank the minister and his team and the committee for its hard work and diligence in bringing this bill to the parliament. I look forward to seeing and experiencing the rewards it will bring for Queenslanders.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.06 pm): The problem that the member for Rockhampton has in coming into this parliament and making the ridiculous contribution that he did to this debate is that he carries with him the most outrageous legacy of the failure of the previous Labor government to manage Queensland's national parks properly. In coming into this parliament and criticising the Minister for National Parks for proposing sensible changes through the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 he has tried to rewrite history in terms of the incompetence—in some cases, statutory failure—of the previous Labor government to pay attention to the important conservation values of Queensland's national parks, and it was outrageous to hear the contribution of the member for Rockhampton during the second reading debate for that very reason.

My electorate of Hinchinbrook in North Queensland is two-thirds protected area estate. It is either Wet Tropics World Heritage area national park or state forest. What does that mean? That means that two-thirds of the physical area of my electorate returns no rates to the local government authority and, because it is protected area estate, there is no opportunity for expansion for our agricultural enterprises and there is no possibility of expansion of residential areas or commercial or industrial areas in my electorate. It is a double-edged sword. We are blessed with terrific, fabulous national parks and World Heritage areas that we absolutely delight in. They are part of our lifestyle in North Queensland and have been for decades. They are a pillar of our tourism industry, as the Minister for Tourism has outlined, and they are extremely important environmental and conservation areas. There is absolutely no doubt about that whatsoever.

But in representing two-thirds of the land mass of my electorate, they also represent no opportunity for the local economy and the local communities to be supported through the delivery of jobs. That is the reason the Minister for National Parks has been motivated to bring these extremely sensible and common-sense amendments to the Nature Conservation Act to this parliament.

I am delighted that some of the amendments in this bill will allow for limited commercial opportunities to take place in national parks. The national parks in Queensland, in places such as my electorate of Hinchinbrook, have been screaming out for these opportunities for years. We have outstanding candidates for low-impact ecotourism at places such as Wallaman Falls, which, at 268 metres, is the largest single-drop waterfall in Australia. My electorate is the start—or the finish, depending on how you approach them—of the great network of walks in the Wet Tropics World Heritage area in Far North Queensland. The people of my electorate are trying crying out for opportunities to access national parks for limited and sustainable commercial opportunities to provide job opportunities for families who live in my area.

I am sick to death of the sanctimonious nonsense that comes out of the mouths of people such as the member for Rockhampton and his associates opposite who deny sensible and common-sense opportunities for people in regional and rural Queensland to be able to use the natural assets that we have to generate jobs for families who live there. We have no intention—no desire—to adversely impact on the conservation value of these protected areas. But we need opportunities for our communities to grow. I will not have—I will not let stand—the type of ridiculous diatribe that we had from the member for Rockhampton in his contribution to the second reading debate go unchallenged, because I am absolutely sick to death of that type of attitude and the ignorance that it displays in the 21st century of our ability in Queensland to pursue low-impact and sensible commercial opportunities in the protected area estate.


Earlier I mentioned that the member for Rockhampton's principal problem is that he comes into this place with the legacy around his neck of the abject failure of the previous Labor government in respect of the management of national parks in this state. In March 2008, the former Bligh Labor government announced its intention to increase the size of the national park protected area estate in Queensland by 50 per cent by 2020. It wanted to increase the protected area estate from 7.6 million hectares to 12 million hectares by 2020. At the same time there was no commensurate increase in the resources made available to the department of national parks to accommodate the management of an increase in the size of the protected area estate by 50 per cent by 2020. Indeed, there was an abject failure on the part of the previous Labor government to provide enough resources for the existing protected area estate. That has resulted in the litany of complaints presented during this debate by several members of parliament—the pest weeds, the feral animals. It is an absolute disgrace that they are impacting on the biodiversity and conservation values that the national parks

are supposed to provide because they are not managed properly. Access to the national parks by communities in the form of low-impact commercial opportunities is only going to provide us with better opportunities to identify those problems and act on them. I commend the minister for bringing these amendments to the House to provide for these sensible opportunities, because they provide a way forward for us to have a modern management framework.

There has been some criticism by the member for Rockhampton about the change from management plans to management statements to be prepared. The contribution of the member for Rockhampton would have some credibility if there had not been the abject failure by the previous government to address its statutory responsibility to prepare management plans for national parks in the state in the first instance. As I mentioned before, in 2010 the Auditor-General tabled a report in parliament stating that only 98 of the 576 national parks in the state of Queensland had a management plan in place. Seventeen per cent of national parks in this state had a management plan—and management plans were statutorily required by the Nature Conservation Act! The member for Rockhampton's complaints would have some credibility if the previous government had bothered to meet its own stated obligations in the act. That is the rank hypocrisy and glib rhetoric that came from the member for Rockhampton during his contribution to this debate. I think it was completely outrageous.

In terms of that objective made in 2008 to increase the size of the national park estate by 50 per cent by 2020, I have to question the nature of that process to identify properly the conservation values that ought to be protected by national parks. Was it being implemented faithfully by the previous government in the identification of areas in Queensland to be included in future national parks to meet that arbitrary objective of increasing the size of the protected area estate by 50 per cent by 2020? National parks should meet a certain standard in terms of the conservation value that they are protecting. If we are going to set arbitrary targets to increase the size of the protected area estate by a certain amount by a certain time, are we going to compromise the ability of the department of national parks to successfully identify those areas of Queensland that require conservation? I think that is an excellent question, because what does it also say about the process for the identification of previous national parks in this state? It was undermining the process, it was undermining the importance of national parks in Queensland and, quite frankly, I am grateful that the Minister for National Parks, supported by the cabinet and by the government members in this place, is going to introduce some common sense into the management of our national parks in this state. They are extremely important. They are the cornerstone of our tourism industry. In North Queensland, where I am from, national parks are the cornerstone of our recreational opportunities.

I was desperately concerned about the efficacy of the management plan development process under the previous government. I am delighted that the minister will streamline those processes and make common-sense changes to those processes and I think that will be to the benefit of the people of Queensland.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.16 pm): I to rise to make a small contribution to the debate on the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. This bill amends the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Forestry Act 1959, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Marine Parks Act 2004. It also makes a number of consequential amendments to a range of other primary legislation.


This bill makes some of the most significant changes to the Nature Conservation Act since it was introduced in 1992. It is about achieving three outcomes: the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas; the use and enjoyment of protected areas by the community; and the social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas. The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill delivers a range of reforms that will provide better opportunities for visitors and the community to experience our national parks, consistent with the government's commitment to open up protected areas for international and domestic tourists and the wider community to enjoy.

As members would know, Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Marine Park comprise the largest part of my electorate. It swallows most of it up. I think legislation relating to civil liability insurance is some of the best legislation that has come before the House. I know there is one case that is before the courts at the moment, so I will not talk about it. However, I will give members an example of some of the stupidity that goes on in national parks. Recently, I was over at Fraser Island and a helicopter flew in at three o'clock in the morning to pick up a passenger. The next day I went to the ambulance station at Happy Valley to find out what had happened. I was told that at midnight a young guy at Eli

Creek tried to jump in the back of a four-wheel drive as it was backing up. He fell out and the driver ran over him. That is an example of some of the stupid things that happen in some national parks. It is not the fault of the national park rangers, or the signage or anything else around the parks that some accidents happen. I do not see why we should be held liable for some of the stupidity that goes on in some of these parks.

I agree with the member for Hinchinbrook that these parks should be opened up a bit more to ecotourism opportunities. Hervey Bay relies on the tourist industry. Over the years I have seen the Labor government slowly close down national parks. The top end of Fraser Island has been closed down. It is dreadful not to be able to see some of the beauty of our natural areas in these places. There is a big difference between the way the Northern Territory treats tourism in national parks and the failure of the former Labor government to promote ecotourism in Queensland. It is quite interesting to see the difference in the way the facilities at Katherine Gorge in the Northern Territory are managed and how they work with private industries to the way Lawn Hill is managed. Other areas that have developed ecotourism include the Kimberleys, the Bungle Bungles and the karri forests in the southern end of Western Australia. There are tree walks and night walks with animals. It is very beautiful. Queensland needs to catch up when it comes to ecotourism. We have been left behind through 20 years of neglect by the previous Labor government. We have to promote the beauty of Queensland. The other day I saw an opinion poll where Victoria leads where people want to visit. People want to see the Great Ocean Road and other parts of Victoria. We need to promote Queensland. The tourism industry is one of the Newman government's pillars of this wonderful state. It is one of our biggest industries and we have to promote that.

On Fraser Island we have the Sunshine Coast University learning facility at Dilli Village. There is the opportunity for universities to go into these areas to learn how to protect them. How can we do that if we lock them up and there are no management plans? How can we do that if we do not do what we are doing here? I support the bill before the House and thank the minister very much for it.

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (5.22 pm), in reply: First of all, I thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate on the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. I would like to congratulate the Labor Party; after over 18 months in opposition they have finally announced a policy in relation to national parks. Unfortunately, it is simply to oppose anything this can-do government does, proving that once again they are completely devoid of original ideas. If they ever return to government from struggling to have enough members for a netball team, Queenslanders can expect more of the same Labor failures. Their only hope is to sidle up to their green mates once again. I am sure this latest announcement is just the beginning of the rekindling of that old flame and relationship—let's do a deal!

The member for Rockhampton made a number of allegations in relation to this government's handling of hardship grazing on national parks. Once again, these are more Labor untruths designed to capture a headline. The department's capital works program has not been reallocated to grazing works. It is a matter of public record that the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing allocated \$500,000 for essential park infrastructure upgrades, including firebreaks, boundary fencing and fencing for conservation benefit. These infrastructure upgrades will benefit the management of the parks in the long term, beyond the grazing period. It is also incorrect to claim that all staff in the region have been redirected to grazing activities. One senior ranger has taken on a coordination role liaising with graziers, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and other stakeholders. All other staff are continuing with their core duties. I can categorically say that my office did not subvert the application process for the issuing of permits. All requests received by my office were referred to the relevant departmental officers for action and response. Nor were there permits simply being handed out on the ground. Each application for a hardship grazing permit was individually assessed to ensure that the applicant was a genuine hardship case, that the land requested was available for grazing and for the determination of an appropriate stocking rate. Further, each permit issued had its own environmental management plan and all permits were issued by the chief executive officer of my department as required by the act. This morning I announced that the hardship grazing on five national parks would not be extended beyond 31 December 2013. I am pleased to have been able to offer short-term assistance to graziers in need to avoid an animal welfare crisis by offering temporary feed and agistment. I am sure all Australians would back that.

The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 achieves a number of outcomes and furthers the government's election commitments. The amendments reduce red tape, open up protected areas to visitors and the community and enable our national parks and other areas to be managed more effectively. While this bill represents the most significant changes to the management of national parks since the introduction of the Nature Conservation Act in 1992, the act will retain its focus on conservation. Currently, the objective of the Nature Conservation Act is limited to the conservation of nature. However, it fails to recognise that the act already provides for a broad variety of uses of protected areas. The conservation of nature will still be the primary purpose of the act, as the member for Rockhampton would know if he had read the bill. The member for Rockhampton also seems to fail to understand that the Nature Conservation Act provides for more than the management of national parks. It provides for the management of all protected areas. In some of the other protected areas, such as regional park, it is entirely appropriate that a wider variety of uses be accommodated and acknowledged in the objectives of the act.

The cardinal principle of national park management remains unchanged. Those opposite would know this if they had read the bill. The other management principles are being expanded to recognise that the act also allows for recreation, ecotourism and Indigenous cultural values and resources. By allowing for greater ecotourism opportunities in parks, we will not only showcase Queensland's unique natural assets but also generate both awareness and revenue to provide for their greater protection into the future. The member for Rockhampton quoted from the *Courier-Mail* that I had said that I am unashamedly looking to make money in relation to ecotourism. Unfortunately, my quote was edited. The other half of it was that I am looking to utilise that money to manage our wonderful protected areas into perpetuity.

The former Labor government acquired national parks without providing resources for their ongoing protection. Our stage 1 reform of the act enabled landmark reform for ecotourism facilities on national parks in line with the government's election commitment to ensure that our national parks are available for Queenslanders and visitors to enjoy. It should be noted that under this reform any application for ecotourism facilities will still be required to comply with all other relevant federal, state and local legislation, including approval processes under development applications. I think that answers a few questions that were asked throughout this debate. Ecotourism is a sore point for those opposite because the Newman government is succeeding where Labor tried and failed. It tried to open up parks for ecotourism development but could not get a single investor for their expression of interest because it was not willing to provide operators with certainty. I will also mention that ecotourism was one of the themes put forward by the more than 70,000 people who contributed to the Queensland Plan as a driver of the Queensland economy. This bill will also significantly cut red tape by drastically reducing the large number of tenure categories within the Nature Conservation Act from 14 to seven, three of which have never been used since the act was created—not one blade of grass, not one piece of dirt—and those opposite know that very well.

In future, two main categories will be used: national parks and regional parks. These tenures have clearly defined purposes and uses outlined in this bill. This will reduce the confusing number of tenures and allow for Queenslanders to more easily identify with their parks and what the tenure categories mean.

Debate, on motion of Mr Dickson, adjourned.

MOTION

Newman Government, Election Commitments



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

That this House notes that the Newman government has breached its Contract with Queensland and failed to honour its election commitments.

At the 2012 election, the now Premier signed a pledge with Queenslanders entitled Contract with Queensland. It included five key pledges from the Premier with Queensland families. The first was to grow a four-pillar economy, which included a commitment that 'The LNP will reduce unemployment in Queensland to 4% in six years'. Under the first year of the Newman government, unemployment hit decade highs, peaking above levels seen during the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression. We now have 14,300 more people in the unemployment queue since the LNP took office, with the unemployment rate now at 5.9 per cent up from 5.5 per cent at the election. The first year of the Newman government recorded the worst result for jobs growth in more than two

decades. The last time jobs growth was this bad in Queensland was in 1990-91, when the Australian economy was last in recession. Now the Treasurer is fast back-peddling on the LNP's pledge with Queenslanders to lower unemployment to four per cent, saying it was only ever a 'stretch target'. What the hell is a 'stretch target'? When it comes to creating jobs, this Newman government has let Queenslanders down. Their result on jobs is an 'F' for fail.

What about their promise to grow the economy? Recently, the Treasurer boasted about the October quarter CommSec *State of the States* report. This report has lowered the ranking for Queensland's economic growth from second at the election to third now. The overall CommSec ranking for Queensland has only just recovered back to where it was at the election. Apparently, the Treasurer is proud of this slower growth. In the last financial year household consumption, dwelling investment, business investment and private investment were all weaker than in 2011-12, according to the Queensland State Accounts. This is all clearly detailed on Queensland Treasury's website. Back then, the Treasurer was calling an economy that had stronger domestic growth and investment a 'basket case' and a 'mess'. Now that the economy is recording slower domestic growth under the LNP, apparently it is 'great'. This financial year, growth is forecast by Treasury to slow under the LNP to three per cent, down from four per cent under Labor. When it comes to economic growth in their Contract with Queensland, so far it is another 'F' for fail. We all know what happened to the LNP's commitment to business, to increase the payroll tax threshold each year for six years. That is another fail in its pledge with Queenslanders.

The second pledge in the Premier's Contract with Queensland, captioned 'Our commitment to you', is to 'lower the cost of living for families by cutting waste'. The LNP's cost-of-living pledge included a promise to lower the cost of living for Queensland families by \$250 to \$330 per year, including lowering power bills by \$120 per year. So what has this Newman government done? It has increased taxes per household by more than \$1,000 for the average family of four, with a hike in insurance duty and an increase in the fire levy which has been extended to regional areas. What? Those opposite don't believe me? Again, this figure is from Treasury in the budget papers. The Newman government has hiked insurance duty by \$110 per year for the average household, up to \$215 in disaster-prone areas. Does the LNP want to do something to help out with insurance costs? It should axe its hike on insurance duty! And that does not include the bills that will hit regional businesses in the order of tens of thousands of dollars. The fire levy will cost households in regional Queensland an additional \$90 per year. What about electricity bills? In the first year, the LNP increased electricity bills by more than \$140 on average, despite its attempt at freezing tariff 11. This year electricity bills are recording their largest increase ever—

Madam SPEAKER: I am sorry, Manager of Opposition Business. Please pause the clock. I am going to reset the microphones as there is feedback in the chamber.

Mr PITT: This year electricity bills are recording their largest increase in Queensland's history at 22.6 per cent or \$268 on average. The Premier and Tony Abbott like to blame the carbon price and green schemes. However, this year's electricity price rise would be just three per cent—not nearly 23 per cent—if only the impact of the carbon tax and green schemes were factored in. These are the facts from the Queensland Competition Authority. The LNP does not like it when facts get in the way of a good story. What of the \$80 water rebate for people in regional areas, which was never delivered? The cost of living for the average family has increased by \$1,485 under the Newman government. The Newman government's pledge to every Queensland family to lower the cost of living by \$250 to \$330 has been fundamentally broken. Another 'F' for fail.

The third pledge in the Premier's Contract with Queensland was to 'deliver better infrastructure and better planning'. So far, the Newman government has lowered infrastructure investment by \$416 million in 2015-16 compared with the previous government, with investment \$1 billion per annum lower by 2016-17. The only infrastructure project that has been announced by the Newman government is a new office tower for the Premier and his ministers. In contrast, the previous Labor government embarked on the largest hospital building program in the nation. Over four years, we provided \$60 billion in new infrastructure, including upgrades and expansions to hospitals in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Mount Isa, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. Our priority was to invest in the health and education infrastructure needed to boost our economy and productivity into the future. This Premier is focused on ensuring that his own surroundings are as palatial as possible. With public and private infrastructure investment projected by Treasury to contract or fall over each of the next three years, this part of the LNP's pledge is also an 'F' for fail.

The fourth pledge in the Premier's Contract with Queensland is to 'revitalise front line services for families'. I almost do not know where to start on this one. This morning, the Premier tried to think of a front-line service he had revitalised. He stood there for what seemed like an eternity, trying to think of something, before quoting emergency department statistics from Ipswich Hospital. It must be the first thing that was in his book. There was no mention that this followed an investment by the previous state and federal governments of \$6.7 million for 12 emergency treatment spaces and six short-stay beds or the investment of \$122 million to accommodate another 84 beds. Meanwhile, this LNP government has been ripping funding out of that hospital. The Premier's hypocrisy is truly staggering. For the Newman government to sack around 20,000 workers, including around 800 nurses and 350 TAFE staff, and say they have 'revitalised front-line services' is a level of spin that Shane Warne would be proud of. Madam Speaker just disconnected me.

Madam SPEAKER: I apologise. I managed to turn off the member's microphone.

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, the feedback you are hearing is the feedback that their constituents are giving them on how they have failed Queenslanders. I say 'around' 20,000 workers because the Newman government has continually refused to detail the exact number of workers it has axed. It follows the Premier's pledge before the election that government workers had 'nothing to fear'. I will say that again: government workers had 'nothing to fear'. Let us move on to the Treasurer's promise, which was that there would be 'no forced redundancies'. What makes up that figure of around 20,000? How many forced redundancies would be in that? When it comes to revitalising front-line services, the Newman government has recorded yet another—what is it? 'F' for fail.


The final pledge of the Premier's Contract with Queensland is to 'restore accountability in government'.

Ms Trad: Ha!

Mr PITT: Hold your laughter, member for South Brisbane. This pledge includes commitments to have a 'war on waste' and to 'be honest and accountable'. When it comes to waste, this government has already sold seven office buildings for \$226 million below their value, with additional rent costs exceeding half a billion dollars. This means that the LNP is on track to waste more than \$750 million of taxpayers' money on the Premier's new office tower. On the numbers, this is arguably worse than Health payroll implementation issues and is a waste of taxpayers' money by design rather than omission, but less than the dubious headline figure parroted by the one-trick-pony health minister. This also follows some pretty vicious and public attacks by the Premier on the head of his Health payroll inquiry. The Newman government is also spending \$3 million per year to rent empty office space. We have had \$4.3 million spent on a self-promotional newsletter for the Premier and \$4.6 million on a Queensland Plan. We will have to wait to see if it delivers any outcomes. I will not go into the taxpayers' money provided to KFC for rubbish bins. That names just a few examples of Newman government waste.

As for promising to be 'open and accountable', we have already seen that this is a government for the big end of town. It is a cash-for-service government, not a fair government for all Queenslanders. Worse still, it is a cash-for-legislation government. This government has raised a remarkable \$8.5 million through political fundraising over six months, while promising to outsource and privatise public services. Queenslanders should examine very carefully those donations. Let us not forget that the Premier stood by the member for Redcliffe and asked Queenslanders to vote for him. He vouched for him for months and months and months. Of course, later on he wanted nothing to do with him and distanced himself, as if somehow the member is now contagious.

When it comes to all five of the Premier's pledges in his Contract with Queensland, the LNP has categorically failed. Not one of the Premier's election pledges in his Contract with Queensland has been met. This is an arrogant, unaccountable, loose-with-the-truth government that has breached its Contract with Queensland and has fundamentally broken its election commitments. The reason those opposite are feeling uncomfortable is they know that their seats are going to be up for grabs at the next election. Quite rightly they should be worried, because the government will get it from both barrels when people realise exactly what promises it has broken. Can-do government? I don't think so!

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (5.39 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Manager of Opposition Business, the member for Mulgrave. In rising I want to take up his last point about the government members being uncomfortable and feeling a sense of discomfort about their

litany of broken promises. The speaking list for tonight's debate—normally the 5.30 debate is led by those of the calibre of the member for Ipswich West as opposed to the Premier—is probably indicative of the fact that they are feeling a little bit vulnerable and tender about their track record in terms of breaking their promises to the Queensland people.

As the member for Mulgrave has outlined in great detail, there has been a litany of broken promises and betrayals by the LNP state government, led by the member for Ashgrove. As the Manager of Opposition Business has pointed out, we have the four per cent unemployment rate, which is now not a promise but a stretch target.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms TRAD: What is a stretch target, I do ask you? Campbell Newman and the LNP promised to also—

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, I ask you to refer to members in the chamber by their appropriate titles.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Speaker; I apologise. The Premier and the LNP also promised to cut the cost of living and said that Queenslanders would see an overall reduction in the cost of living. Instead, what we have seen on average is a \$1,000 per household increase in charges and taxes and an electricity price hike of over 22 per cent—a record increase. The LNP promised front-line services would be safe and then it closed schools and sold nursing homes. They also promised that public servants would have nothing to fear and then went ahead and sacked 17,000 of them.

This is a government that is so blinded by its own arrogance that it genuinely believes it can get away with breaking the promises it made to the Queensland people. On the campaign trail in 2012, Mr Newman repeatedly promised the people of Ashgrove that he was a protector of the environment. 'Trust me,' he said. 'I was a green Lord Mayor,' he claimed. But during his time as Premier Mr Newman has voted for tree-clearing legislation that will see over two million hectares of native vegetation at risk.


The Premier told this House repeatedly and wrote to the Australian Conservation Foundation saying that he had no plans to mine uranium. Then 10 days after signing that letter the Premier backflipped, opening up, without any evidence or analysis, our state to the environmental and economic risks associated with mining uranium and transporting yellowcake throughout regional communities. The Premier and the LNP promised and continue to claim that they will balance the needs of our environment with continued development. But at every turn, from coastal protection to the unprecedented opening up of national parks, this government has put the interests of its big developer mates ahead of our environment.

Let us look at their Contract with Queensland. One of the big promises was better infrastructure and better planning. Here in South-East Queensland what is the most critical piece of infrastructure needed for the future growth of our state? It is Cross River Rail. What did the LNP promise? They promised to get the deal done. On 24 May this year the transport minister went on ABC radio and promised to strike a deal. He said—

I'm continuing to lobby both Labor and the Coalition over the next four months to do the right thing by Queensland, to back cross-river rail in a genuine partnership with this State Government.

But what did the LNP actually do? They rolled over. The Premier, the transport minister and the LNP trashed the best opportunity Queenslanders would ever get to build Cross River Rail in order to get Tony Abbott in the Lodge. It was an expensive trashing of an infrastructure project. It is one that will be the dismal legacy of those members opposite. But with such a massive majority and fuelled by their own arrogance they think they can walk away from the promises they made to Queensland voters. The Premier thinks he can just get away with it.

I have no doubt that Queenslanders will send a clear message through the ballot box that this is simply not good enough. Putting the interests of their big donor mates ahead of ordinary, everyday Queenslanders will be revealed and the LNP and the Premier will just not get away with it. Queenslanders are not mugs.

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (5.45 pm): I move—

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

'is delivering on its Contract with Queensland and is honouring its election commitments.'

I invited scrutiny and accountability when I sought election. I welcome this evening the opportunity to talk about our Contract with Queensland. Here it is. It is here in black and white. As I go through it very quickly this evening I can demonstrate quite easily that, in contrast to the rhetoric, nonsense and name-calling we have heard from those who have just spoken, we are delivering.

What was Labor's record? It was debt heading towards \$100 billion; problems with our hospitals that were stifled with bureaucracy, failure, corruption and misappropriation; police with a lack of resources and support—as we now know bikie gangs were getting out of control; chest beating by Anna Bligh, Peter Beattie and Cameron Dick as they never dealt with paedophiles and sex offenders; schools swamped with red tape and bureaucracy; no accountability and voting, for example, to exonerate Gordon Nuttall—I should have pointed that out to the member for Bundamba earlier today; and red tape stifling industry.

Our Contract with Queensland is a very simple, clear action plan. There are five pledges there. The first one is to grow a four-pillar economy. Tourism is nine per cent up on average. There has been a 30 per cent increase in Chinese visitation and massive tourism investment dollars coming into this state. There is a stand-alone department of agriculture which is progressively investing in R&D, in biosecurity measures, in the revitalisation of the agricultural colleges and encouraging young people to go back on the land. With resources we continue to slash red tape and approval times. I suppose the member for South Brisbane would say that that is somehow wrong—that that is the big end of town—perpetuating her negative view of the world and class warfare. We are doing it with proper consultation. The construction sector is on the way, thanks to the great work of former assistant minister and now Minister Ian Walker. We see many great projects going on right now.

Let us have a look at some of the other pledges. In terms of the cost of living, we have abolished the \$7,000 stamp duty slug on the family home. We have frozen family car registration. We have worked to reduce water prices in South-East Queensland. We are dealing with the terrible legacy that we have been left with in the electricity industry. For public transport, the fare increases have been halved and discounted weekly fares have been introduced. There is still work to do. The Treasurer will talk more about the cost of living.

In terms of better infrastructure and planning, there is a \$1 billion contribution to the Bruce Highway. We now have a proper action plan and a commitment from the new Abbott federal coalition government. The Royalties for the Regions program is being delivered. We have one rail corridor for the Galilee coal development. The school maintenance backlog of \$300 million is being addressed and new schools are being built. Planning authority has been handed back to local councils—in other words, we are empowering local communities.


Let us talk about front-line services. The member for Mulgrave could not have been listening again. I said very clearly that we have the best performing EDs in the nation. Look at what is going on in Ipswich. We see that in the news today. The dental waiting lists have been slashed. There are better emergency services. We have doubled the patient travel subsidy. We have implemented the Mums and Bubs program in maternity services in communities across the state. Waiting lists have been cut.

In terms of schools, we have seen the introduction of independent public schools, discipline reforms and the Great Teachers = Great Results program, which sees better funding for improving the skills of teachers. We have cut red tape by getting rid of Schwarten's bureaucracy called QBuild that muzzled schools and was expensive.

In terms of police, there will be 1,300 more front-line police on the beat over the next four years and tougher sentences on weapons, assaults on police, hoons, criminal bikie gangs and sex predators. But Labor is too weak to implement such things.

Turning to open and accountable government, it is now illegal to lie to parliament again. The member for South Brisbane better be careful with that one. There is also the publishing of minister diaries, the open data initiative, better value for money and the ongoing work we are doing to reform the whole apparatus of accountability in Queensland—the CMC, the Ombudsman and all of those things—and we are doing it in a proper, open and accountable way.

This government is delivering on its contract. We are proud. If they want to talk about this document and debate that, we are very happy to debate it because we have a great story to tell. In fact, I think we have to get out there and work harder to sell the story because there are great things happening in this great state.

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (5.50 pm): Can I thank the Premier as well. I am certainly very happy to rise to support the amendment to the motion moved by the Premier and, of course, to completely disabuse the people of Queensland of the falsities being spread by the opposition over there. Madam Speaker, when you talk about a contract, when you talk about a breach of a contract, it is something that you need to do with clean hands. The law requires you to come forward and say, 'I am accusing you of something but, Your Honour, I have clean hands. I myself am not at fault.' So when you consider the ridiculous motion put forward by the opposition this evening, let us have a look at whether the opposition come to this matter with clean hands. Let us see whether they have not—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. Let us see whether they have not themselves committed a fundamental breach with the people of Queensland. When we do that we need to look back at recent history, because undoubtedly the Labor Party's record is one of broken promises and not clean hands. They shamelessly said anything before the election in 2009; in fact, they shamelessly said anything before the 2012 election. Thank God they were not elected because there would be more broken promises from the Labor Party.

What did Andrew Fraser say to Madonna King on 13 March 2009, eight days before the 2009 election? Madonna King asked, 'Yes or no, are there any assets you are planning to privatise?' Andrew Fraser answered, 'No ... We don't have any plans.' Then they broke their promise not to repeal the fuel subsidy. Let us look again at what they said: 'Make no mistake about it. We'll be delivering a fuel subsidy scheme. It will stay in place.' That was Andrew Fraser on 16 January 2009. And they broke their promise on electricity prices by saying privatisation would not raise the cost of household power bills. And what did they do? What did the former Premier promise? 'Nobody will be worse off.' What was the result? A 60 per cent increase in the cost of electricity over five years and the loss of control over being able to do something about it and their then Treasurer wrote to the Australian Energy Regulator and said, 'We want to charge more. We want you to increase the value of the assets.' So when you ask the Labor Party whether they come to this with clean hands, they have to say they do not. They broke every aspect of their contract with Queenslanders in 2009 and they were rewarded for it.

Then look at what we have said we will do. We have said we will show Queenslanders that we are a can-do government and that we are serious about delivering a brighter future. We promised to grow a four-pillar economy, to lower the cost of living, to deliver better infrastructure and planning, to revitalise front-line services and to restore accountability in government. I will focus on the cost of living, because what was the very first bill introduced by the Newman LNP government into this parliament? The cost-of-living bill—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, those on my left!


Mr NICHOLLS: And it was the second bill passed, after it went through a committee, by this government. And what did it do? The average family saw about \$330 reduced from their taxes and charges as a result of that bill. What were we facing at that time? Queensland families had seen under Labor a \$700 increase in household power bills.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

Mr NICHOLLS: Queensland was the most expensive state in Australia to own a motor vehicle and tolls were increased by 30 per cent on the Gateway Bridge before they flogged off the Gateway Motorway. So what did we do? We reduced it. We froze car registration for three years—not even a CPI increase. We reintroduced the principal place of residence concession, saving families over \$7,000 when buying their house. We introduced the \$80 subsidy for fuel purchases. The Minister for Transport has promised in relation to public transport fares, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, to reduce the increase in those fares by 50 per cent, has increased travel through the use of the weekly go card ticket and has introduced savings such that a regular commuter from my electorate of Clayfield will now save around \$430 on transport. We are delivering on our contract.

(Time expired)

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (5.55 pm): I support the motion. I do so knowing what we were offering the public when we went to the election. As a former National Party then LNP member and long-serving member of the standing policy committee of the party, I had detailed knowledge of the policies that we took to the election. Furthermore, I knew what stakeholder consultation had occurred in the generation of those policies, and it was extensive. The current Premier threw out all of those policies and he has gone on post election with his own ad hoc policies that increasingly lend themselves therefore to base populism—read the latest sex offender and inappropriate bikie legislation—and less rational and considered information leading to careful legislation that would stand the test of time.

Premier Campbell Newman's bad legislation will invariably have bad outcomes. The Premier's desperate last throw of the dice electorally to try to at once polarise the otherwise uninformed public and join with them in contrast to his real role of standing between them and the judiciary—his new enemy—says it all. This Premier neither understands his role nor adds anything to the betterment of society by virtue of his being the first amongst equals in the executive and of government. The Premier is by default part of the problem rather than part of the solution. No amount of cheer squad, right wing, extremist comment from selected journalists, nor the ill-informed backbench who I urge to go and find out what is really going on, will change any of that.

Speakers have addressed a number of issues previously. Items 3 and 5 of the Premier's pledges are those I wish to specifically address, and I will speak to examples because it is the detail of these policies that tells you how bad it is. I wish to specifically address and use the example of the new Gold Coast University Hospital, which is a major example and a major expenditure of government. The Premier's jingoistic statements earlier do not tell you anything about what is really going on. I have tabled very detailed information to date as to what is going on that the health minister has refused to respond to. I started detailing it at the estimates committee hearing.

The most recent was the compelling detailed mortality and morbidity data, which strangely the regional hospital board members—wait for it—were not supplied with by the hospital CEO and board chair. That hospital-collected data, which is your own data, shows that there was a fourfold increase in reported deaths in 2012-13—that is the impact of your policies—and a 20 per cent increase in those patients suffering a permanent disability, if one takes into account that the health minister unilaterally suspended major elective surgery and elective joint replacements eight months ago. His local representative, the CEO, has recently stated that the near miss rate was acceptable and that half the deaths were suicides. What does that mean? It means that neither he nor the minister do not really know that they do not know, and they do not know because the policies they are putting in place are rubbish—absolute rubbish. In terms of the prime reporting system, which is used to report near misses, the CEO has made sure that he can find out who is making those reports. In other words, near misses are not being reported and they probably represent a much higher figure.

That tells honourable members about what is going on because of silly policies. We did not go to the election on these policies. The public never voted for this nonsense. They thought they were getting themselves a responsible, capable group of people running their hospitals, and hospitals are 25 per cent of the budget. To add insult to injury, that hospital opened with 350 beds fewer than was originally planned. It was supposed to have 750.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Dr DOUGLAS: So it has only got 400. Where is the accountability and honesty? I will table the proposal from Clive Palmer to buy the existing hospital.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 17 October 2013, to the Minister for Health, Hon. Lawrence Springborg, from Mr Clive Palmer regarding the Southport Hospital [\[3893\]](#).


He put forward this proposal because we do not have enough beds. That tells honourable members of the impact of this government. That is why this pledge is a load of rubbish. Members opposite do not follow it. It is absolute garbage.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members will cease interjecting. The member for Gaven has the call.

Dr DOUGLAS: At least some former members have got a spine and they decided to do something. They have decided that they are going to look at all this nonsense that has been going through and they are going to change it. That means they are going to get rid of the LNP at the next election. Those opposite should all start thinking about what they are going to do when they do not have a job after the next election. I put it to them that when they go to elections with policies and they then chuck them out, the end result will be that they will get chucked out.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.00 pm): That is an extraordinary act to follow! We come back to this: just imagine if the member for Gaven actually got his hands on power. Imagine what it would be like in this state—an extraordinary situation. Even worse, imagine if Labor still had its hands on power. Let us not forget what they were planning to do and the best insight to that is what they did when they were in government. That is why it is so pleasing to talk about our Contract with Queensland. We can talk about what we have done in office in 18 months and it is important to talk about what they did over the many, many years in office. We have heard the comments already from Labor members, the comments in which they rewrite history and want to disguise and forget what they did. Tonight we get the opportunity to talk about what we have done in comparison to what they did. As the Treasurer so rightly mentioned a bit earlier, let us not forget that Queensland was the most expensive state in which to own and run a motor vehicle. The best example of that was the registration fees. Over the last four years of the Labor government, rego went up 30 per cent. The contrast was us keeping to our election promise to freeze family car registration for the first term of government. Rego went up 30 per cent under Labor in their last four years and what we have done is freeze family car registration. Here we have Labor—

Ms Trad: Have you put the credit card surcharge up?

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection from the member for South Brisbane, who is defending the fact that Labor put rego up 30 per cent over the last four years.

Ms Trad: I am not!

Mr EMERSON: She is not defending it! There you go. Thank you. I take that interjection. She is not defending it!

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister will take his seat. What is the point of order?

Ms TRAD: He is misrepresenting me. I was asking about the credit card surcharge on the rego.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The member will resume her seat. That is not a point of order and—

Ms TRAD: I find it personally offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for South Brisbane about the standing orders. I was about to rule—and I did start to rule—that your request was out of order. If you are offended by something then when I ask in terms of a point of order, 'What is your point of order?', you need to straight away say that you are offended by the comments rather than ramble on and, at the end of it, tack it on. The minister has the call.

Mr EMERSON: Let us go back to the comments we just heard that the member cannot defend Labor's 30 per cent increase. Finally—they did it over and over—there is a moment of truth from Labor; they cannot defend their 30 per cent increase in rego. It was a disgrace. We have kept to our election promise to freeze family car registration and, hopefully, we will get some more truth from Labor over the next couple of minutes.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr EMERSON: Premier, I believe that people can change their ways. So let us hear the truth now. Will they now defend their 15 per cent fare increases year after year? Will the member for South Brisbane, the shadow minister for transport, now defend those? Will she say, 'Yes, it was the right thing to do,' or will she finally fess up and say, 'No, it was the wrong thing to do'? We have kept to our election promise to halve Labor's planned fare increases while introducing our free trips after nine journeys. That shows the real difference between what Labor was planning to do—and let us not forget that before the 2009 election they did not mention one word about their plan to increase fares

by 15 per cent year after year after year. There was not one word about it. Then the moment they got elected they brought in their plan. The LNP will not go back to the bad old days of Labor and 15 per cent fare increases. We have kept our election promise.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection again from the member for South Brisbane. I could not quite hear what she was saying, but I assume she was again defending Labor's policies.

Ms Trad interjected.


Mr EMERSON: The reality is that I think those 15 per cent fare increases are indefensible, but clearly that was always Labor's plan: to increase fares by 15 per cent. Let us talk about those other aspects of what they said they would do and what they never did. In the case of some of those most basic things such as flashing school lights at schools, they talked year after year after year about bringing them in and what did we see? We saw a few trials and then nothing. We have introduced flashing school lights across the state. I am sure members here across-the-board and not just LNP members—I am almost loath to do this, but I encourage people to put their hands up if they have received flashing school lights under this policy, something that we introduced that Labor said they were going to do. They broke their contract over and over again. They broke their contract.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, the minister has the call.

Mr EMERSON: Labor repeatedly broke their contract. They could not tell the truth before the election. They broke their contract in government. We have kept to our policies and it was amazing to see tonight the member for South Brisbane saying she cannot even defend Labor's policies.

(Time expired)

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.06 pm): Tonight it is very clear that we are debating here a solemn pledge and a solemn contract that the LNP government and, in particular, the Premier made with each and every Queenslanders throughout this state. As the Premier stated quite clearly, he made five clear pledges: to grow a four-pillar economy—and the LNP has said that it will reduce unemployment in Queensland to four per cent in six years. How is that going? For some strange reason, I do not recall it saying anywhere in this pledge to Queenslanders that they were going to sack 14,000 Queenslanders. There was not one word before the election that 14,000 jobs were going to go. What we have seen over the last week has been more cuts. More jobs have gone from RoadTek, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and tourism—more jobs are going. After Christmas some Queenslanders are going to face a very bleak future because this government does not believe in the dignity of work. This government does not believe in growing an economy to generate jobs. That is what this side of the House believes in: jobs, jobs and jobs.

Let us go on to what else other Queenslanders will think at the time the next election comes around. What did this government promise they will do? This LNP government said that they would lower the cost of living. Now Queenslanders face electricity price rises that they have never seen before, 22.6 per cent. People out there are struggling. People out there and families are struggling to make ends meet. They are struggling to find out how they are going to make ends meet.

Honourable members interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The third is to deliver better infrastructure and better planning. We all know about the one building, the piece of infrastructure that the Deputy Premier is smiling about over there. Yes, it is 1 William Street, a brand-new executive building for the Premier and his ministers. Where is the funding in the regions? Where is the growth in the regions? Where are the jobs to be generated in the regions?

Queensland is a diverse state, but where is the funding in Cairns, Mackay, Townsville, Rockhampton, Emerald, Longreach, Charleville and the Gold Coast? The development which is happening is basically development that was started under Labor. The expansion for hospitals was started and was delivered under a Labor government—

Honourable members interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Order! Members will cease interjecting!

Ms PALASZCZUK: In terms of 'revitalise front-line services for families', all we have seen is job cuts and cuts to services. Nowhere are people feeling it more than in our hospital system. They are going to hospitals to receive services, and all this government wants to do is cut the staff, cut the nurses, cut the doctors and make it harder for people to get the treatment that they need and that they deserve.

How can I resist 'restore accountability in government'? What we have seen over the past two weeks has been a complete disgrace. This is a government that does not understand the separation of powers and that tramples on the judiciary in this state. This is a Premier who resorts to name calling. This is a government that does not care about families and does not care about people. This is a government that wants to take us backwards to the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era. This is a government that has not learned from its past history.

As the member for Gaven was saying, at the next election Queenslanders will have a choice. They will look at this contract very closely and ask, 'Did this LNP government deliver for Queenslanders?' Do you know what Queenslanders will say? 'No, they did not deliver at all!' They may sit here and name call and interject, but at the end of the day they need to realise that families out there are hurting, and they are going to remember what this LNP government has done to them—

(Time expired)


 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to support the Premier's amendment. The Newman government is delivering on its Contract with Queensland and is honouring its election commitments. Today I am lost for words at what we have been hearing from those opposite, because obviously misinformation is being espoused from over there and it is just completely wrong. What we have heard from a range of ministers over on this side of the House is that this government is a government that has the strength of its convictions to deliver on its election promises. We have promised to build a four-pillar economy, we have promised to lower the cost of living, and we have promised to deliver better infrastructure and better planning. We have promised to revitalise front-line services for families, and we have promised to restore accountability in government.

Also within our contract is the clear statement that we will cut red tape and regulation by 20 per cent, and we are making huge gains in this area. For a long time industry, business and communities have been calling out for a government that is accountable and gets rid of onerous red tape and regulation, and this is what we are talking about. We are looking to get out of the way of businesses and tourists and opening up our national parks so that people can use them. It is safe to say that our actions and the reforms that we have implemented in the past 18 months or so since we have been in government show that we are serious about our commitment to the people of Queensland. We have already implemented or are currently implementing more than 440 specific red-tape reduction initiatives. Instead of introducing reams of regulation and creating more processes and forms like the previous Labor government, we are getting out of the way of businesses so that they can get on with the job. We will continue to do so because we understand that time equals money and complying with unwarranted and unnecessary red tape comes at a cost. By reducing costs we are increasing the productivity and competitiveness of industry. We are improving the viability of our community and not-for-profit organisations, which all leads to dollar savings for families across Queensland.

I have heard the members opposite speak absolute mistruths in relation to services provided by our hospitals. Within our contract we are helping rural Queenslanders by doubling the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme—that is one thing that the members opposite probably do not appreciate because they might have specialist doctors to which they can go—but we made a contract with our rural and regional constituents to boost the travel subsidy scheme to make access to health services more achievable. We have reduced the waiting times in our emergency departments, and in wonderful rural hospitals like the Kingaroy Base Hospital we have put in more services. We now have a rural surgeon who is able to treat more of the elderly and people who need simple surgery within the electorate so they do not need to travel. This is saving money for Queenslanders. This is what we promised to do, and that is why we have gone to the election with those promises.

I also heard what the shadow Treasurer said, and it is clear that over the next three years economic growth is set to average four per cent. By comparison, the state's economic growth averaged 2.1 per cent in the last years of the former Labor government. The most recent economic data also indicates that our targeted plans to boost the four pillars of the economy are having an effect. It is clear that we are delivering for Queenslanders because it is a great state—

(Time expired)

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.17 pm): A constituent recently contacted my electorate office confused by the plethora of new signs she saw at the Ipswich Hospital asking, in her words, 'if she had private health insurance'. I table a copy of the brochure accompanying these new signs.

Tabled paper: Queensland government brochure titled 'Do you have Private Health Insurance?' [3894].

It is titled *Do you have Private Health Insurance?* It says—

√ No cost to you

√ Discounted excess

√ No out of pocket expenses

Across our free public hospital system patients are increasingly being asked and almost badgered—in some cases repeatedly—during and after admission about their private health status. Administrative positions called patient option liaison officers, or POLOs, have been created to increase 'own source' hospital revenue in an effort to reduce the impact on state budget cuts. These cuts to staffing and services have been in the guise of efficiency requirements.

My constituent does not have private health insurance, as is the case with many pensioners and families on low incomes who simply cannot afford the premiums. After reading the Ipswich Hospital brochure, I could reassure her that her Medicare card was all that she had to have to access public hospitals in Queensland. That was all she really needed: a Medicare card. But on further investigation I found that co-payments are increasingly required, so what she needed was not only a Medicare card, but a credit card—and if not that, cash! My constituents are already struggling with co-payments required by GPs and co-payments required for essential PBS subsidised medications.

Recent research has shown that out-of-pocket expenses for health care are rising in Australia, doubling over the past decade. My electorate has one of the highest rates of unfilled prescriptions in Australia. People are struggling to access basic health care when and where they need it. So much for revitalised front-line health services! This represents another bad, broken election promise by this LNP government.


When the federal government flogs off Medibank Private to the highest bidder, the public will face both a loss of budgetary revenue and pressure from private insurance companies to sell products tailored to individuals. Such a process will eventually disadvantage low-income earners, the chronically ill and the elderly. This stealthy Americanisation of both health financing and our hospital health service delivery system is the real agenda of the Newman government's Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland.

Minister Springborg has yet to come clean on the scale of privatisation of our public hospitals in Queensland. This is what it is about. What we are talking about here in Queensland is people having to go to hospital with not only their Medicare card. Our pensioners and our low-income earners will be disgusted to find out that there are now billing officers in our public hospital system. They have told me today that people will have to pay for their pharmacy. They will also have to pay for their bandages. They will also have to pay for other consumables in the hospitals. So our public hospitals already have billing officers in place. They have told me that they will take cash, EFTPOS, Visa or Mastercard. They are not sure whether they will take American Express.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Stop the clock. Unless the member for Bundamba is prepared to table those items, I ask her not to keep using things as props. The House has given a certain latitude. Unless you are going to table them all, I suggest you do not keep using them as props.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you for your advice, Mr Deputy Speaker. So these billing officers are saying to me that they will take cash or credit card—Visa and Mastercard. They were not sure whether they would take American Express and some of them had not even heard about Diners Club. That is where this state is going.

Under Labor, a Medicare card was all you needed in Queensland to get top-quality health care. Under this government you need cash and a credit card. It is an absolute disgrace.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.22 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the member for Mulgrave and to support the amendment moved by the Premier. Certainly I welcome the opportunity to talk about the government's performance measured against the Contract with Queensland that we took to the last state election.

Sadly, after 20 years of Labor administration in this state, those opposite left the state of Queensland in a terrible mess, both financially and administratively. Regulation and the political selection of which industries the Labor government supported resulted in an economy that was narrowing and lacked diversity.

I am not prone to quoting prominent figures from the other end of the political spectrum, but on this one occasion I will stray. I say to members sitting opposite: it's the economy, stupid. It is the economy. As the Premier has often said throughout the state of Queensland, you cannot provide the education services, the health services, the other services to those people who are most needy in our community if you do not have a strong economy that is providing jobs in communities right across the great state of Queensland. That is something fundamental that this state Labor opposition is hiding from. In coming into this parliament and moving this motion, those opposite are hiding from the fact that their legacy is debt, deficit, regulation and inefficiency.

It has been a great pleasure to be a minister in this government responsible for a portfolio that focuses on economic development and new opportunities for the economy, to provide for Queensland jobs right across the state, particularly in regional and rural areas of this state. It is there where we have invested a great deal of our time, including assisting landholders in particular who were swamped by red tape left behind by a centralised bureaucracy out of touch with commercial realities for people on the land.

In the first 12 months we have aggressively pursued reforms to unlock the productive potential of our land and water resources that were successfully locked up by those opposite. We have recognised the importance of agriculture to regional and rural economies by reducing red tape and green tape associated with the former government. We have achieved this by amending the Water Act to simplify processes for the issuing of water licences. We have reformed the Vegetation Management Act to allow for farmers to increase productivity and yields and sustainably expand agricultural production as one of the four pillars of our economy. We have released water from water resource plans in North-West Queensland. We have simplified the lease renewal process, which did not remove the threat of resuming land for national parks.

The member for South Brisbane made disparaging comments about the efforts of the Minister for National Parks to open up national parks. We were just debating that earlier this afternoon. The terrible betrayal of the comments by the member for South Brisbane is that the former state Labor government left the state of Queensland so broke that it could not afford to manage national parks properly.

In the area of resources, we have sought to provide new opportunities for that part of the economy in this state—by re-establishing opportunities for uranium mining in Queensland, by providing a commercial framework for the development of the shale oil industry and by providing a \$30 million contribution in the last state budget for a future resources program to support the exploration industry, \$7 million of which was announced last week for projects that were generated in consultation with the industry. Those exploration activities will provide the jobs of tomorrow for Queenslanders, particularly in regional and rural areas of the state. The future of jobs for Queensland lies squarely with the orderly expansion of the resources sector, along with the other three pillars that we have identified.

Cost-of-living issues were canvassed by members of the opposition. I have here the state budget Concessions Statement, which details \$5.2 billion worth of concessions afforded to Queenslanders under the Newman government—an excellent example of the way we are helping Queenslanders manage cost-of-living issues, so disparagingly referred to by members of the opposition. I oppose the motion and support the amendment. So should all members of this House.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 48—Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dowling, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Johnson, Kempton, King, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rice, Shorten, Smith, Springborg, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Sorensen

NOES, 9—Byrne, Judge, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 48—Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dowling, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Johnson, Kempton, King, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rice, Shorten, Smith, Springborg, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Sorensen

NOES, 9—Byrne, Judge, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes that the Newman government is delivering on its Contract with Queensland and is honouring its election commitments.

Sitting suspended from 6.37 pm to 7.40 pm.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (7.40 pm): I advise the House that the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Education and Innovation Committee report on the Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013 by 30 January 2014.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3630, on motion of Mr Dickson—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (7.40 pm), continuing in reply: I welcome the member for Rockhampton's comments regarding the independent expert advice in acquiring protected areas. If only the former government had thought to do such a thing! It gazetted sporting ovals so that children needed to fill out eight-page permit forms to play on them. It acquired viable accommodation and grazing businesses, wineries and dairies. But that is okay because this common-sense, grown-up government is conducting a scientific review of these protected areas gazetted by the former government since 2002. The review will determine the best future use for these areas to ensure that they are managed effectively, not just locked up and left to fall into disrepair. On a related note, I am glad that the member for Rockhampton has raised the issue of the Springbrook buyback program and the Noosa Parks Association lease over the Double Island Point lighthouse. These are the perfect examples of how the former Labor government locked up vast tracts of national park estate to appease its green mates. As we have heard from the member for Mudgeeraba, the former Labor government's secret deals at Springbrook have devastated the Springbrook community by locking up the park and other lands which supported it, all without a management plan or any kind of public consultation. Gee whiz! The Minter Ellison report reviewed the processes that led to these agreements and found that either the documents that showed due process did not exist or that due process was not followed. We know that Aila Keto was a great friend of former Labor Premier Peter Beattie and it is no surprise that these secret deals occurred under the cover of darkness, because that is the Labor way.

If the member for Rockhampton believes that he has documents relating to these questionable deals, I urge him to come forward. The member for Rockhampton claimed that forest reserves, a tenure created to support the former government's forest transfer processes, is a required tenure and that without it no forest will become national park. Those processes were another deal done for Greens preferences with Aila Keto once again prominently featured. But the reality is that forest reserves were not required to effect this process. It is more smoke and mirrors and stacks of regulation from the Labor Party. We are a grown-up, can-do government. If an area is identified as suitable to become national park, it will become national park—not a forest reserve, then something else and then something else before finally becoming national park. In stark contrast, this bill focuses

on our national parks and other areas being managed more effectively. Greater flexibility will be provided through the introduction of special management areas, which allow a particular section of national park to be allocated for scientific or other management related activities.

We are also streamlining the overly prescriptive management planning processes that led to the former Labor government preparing management plans for only 17 per cent of protected areas. We are rectifying this appalling legacy by not only making management plans easier to make and keep up to date but also allowing for management statements where a full management plan is not required. Already this government has demonstrated its strong commitment to effective park management by ensuring that all our national parks are covered by a management plan or statement.

The member for Rockhampton has stated incorrectly that only 17 management instruments have been completed since the LNP came to government in March 2012. The correct figure is over 190 management instruments have now been completed since the LNP came to government. Those opposite, both when they were in government and now in opposition, are determined to destroy our national parks by allowing them to fall into disrepair and run rampant with feral pests and weeds. A number of members touched on this feral animal problem in our protected areas which, under the former Labor government, was allowed to grow and devastate our native wildlife. By managing our protected areas more effectively and ensuring that they are good neighbours, we will deliver cohesive and coordinated responses to these problems.

At a time when the government wants to encourage the public to use our parks, we are also being exposed to record levels of personal injury claims. With \$11.9 million of claims on foot and half a million dollars in legal costs racked up already, this government has decided to take action. My department looks after 1,300 protected areas with a land mass larger than 60 per cent of the world's countries. It is simply impossible to anticipate every risk in every hectare of our protected area estate. To provide certainty to park managers and to ensure that Queensland taxpayers' money and resources are not tied up in litigation, this bill provides for civil immunity to the state and other authorised persons. The measures will not provide civil immunity coverage in all circumstances. This government is of the view that there are some things that it should be responsible for managing, such as structures including bridges, constructed lookouts, or controlled burns. The amendments make it clear that, in undertaking these management responsibilities, the state's exposure to claims of negligence will remain unchanged.

I thank the member for Kallangur, as the chair of the committee, for his work in the consideration of the bill and his comments during this debate, particularly around special management areas provisions and the amendments proposed by the member for Rockhampton. The member for Kallangur also highlighted that ecotourism industry industries will benefit from enhanced national parks through these changes and that tourists neither want to see nor contribute to the destruction of our national parks. Rather, by viewing these special areas, tourists will become the strongest ambassadors of our environment.

I would like to thank my colleague the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games for her comments. It is great to be able to work with her to make Queensland a world-leading ecotourism destination by 2020. I also thank my cabinet colleague the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection for his comments regarding the bill's effect on green-tape reduction for both of our portfolios. I thank the member for Mudgeeraba, as a member of the committee, and for her heartfelt contribution to the debate on this bill on behalf of the Springbrook community in her electorate, who were directly affected by the former government's questionable deals to lock up national parks. I thank the member for Townsville, as a member of the committee, and for reiterating the government's commitments for the benefit of the Labor Party, which were also reiterated by the member for Nanango. Just in case it has not sunk in yet, there will be no mining, no logging, no recreational hunting or open-slather grazing in national parks.

In response to the question asked by the member for Dalrymple, I can confirm that open-slather grazing is not able to be authorised under the act following 31 December 2013. However, there are a number of other lands managed by QPWS that can be made available for grazing where appropriate, including the new regional park tenure, state forests and unallocated state lands. I thank the members for Beaudesert and Ferny Grove for their roles on the committee in considering the bill and for outlining their families' heritage. I would also like to thank the members for Nanango and Broadwater for their contributions to this debate and their support of the bill.

It was a pleasure to launch the QPWS planned burn guidelines in the electorate of the member for Broadwater recently. I am pleased that she outlined in this House today some of the values that that wonderful place has to offer. I will just touch on briefly the speech made by the member for Burnett, in particular his comments about the wonderful Mon Repos turtle facility, which is run by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. We are just coming into the turtle season now. The bells have been rung, so the member for Burnett's electorate will be a great ecotourism hot spot over the coming months. I encourage everybody to go and see this majestic spectacle of nature.

I would like to thank my cabinet colleague the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines and member for Hinchinbrook for his common-sense response to the member for Rockhampton's ridiculous incomprehension of the bill and rewriting of history. The minister is a great advocate for the protected areas in his community and I look forward to continuing to work with him to ensure that they are protected well into the future.

I thank the member for Gladstone for her congratulations on opening up access to our national parks and particularly thank her husband John for his support of the civil liability amendments. National parks are indeed rugged, natural places and this is part of their beauty and attraction. Visitors to these places need to be aware of the risks associated with this type of landscape and ensure that they arm themselves with all the information available.

I would also like to touch on the member for Gladstone's comments regarding the horse-riding community and the extra sets of ears and eyes that they provide for our rangers in identifying management issues and discouraging unauthorised activities. I recently spoke to the horse-riding fraternity of Queensland at a forum at the State Equestrian Centre at Caboolture on exactly this topic. By working hand in glove with the horse-riding recreation and ecotourism sector to identify new opportunities we will be creating great friends of the parks as well.

These amendments represent another step in our commitment to streamlining legislation, cutting red tape and improving access to our national parks so that Queenslanders and visitors alike can appreciate all that our spectacular national parks have to offer. This bill is the latest step in the government's commitment to ensure our national parks are managed effectively and preserved into the future so that in 30 years time this government will be known as the greenest government that this state has ever seen. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 55—Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Johnson, Katter, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Pucci, Rice, Seeney, Shorten, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Wellington, Young. Tellers: Kaye, Menkens

NOES, 8—Byrne, Judge, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 138—

Mr DICKSON (8.02 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr DICKSON: I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 8 (Amendment of s 7 (Provisions relating to operation of Act))

Page 16, line 8, 'section 96E'—

omit, insert—

sections 96E, 96F and 96G

2 Clause 14 (Replacement of s 96E (Protection from liability))

Page 18, lines 15 to 28, page 19, lines 1 to 34, page 20, lines 1 to 32 and page 21, lines 1 to 29—

omit, insert—

96E Protection of State officials and the State from liability

- (1) A State official is not civilly liable for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence under this Act.

- (2) If subsection (1) prevents a civil liability attaching to a State official, the liability attaches instead to the State.
- (3) Also, the State or a State official is not civilly liable in a designated proceeding for an act done, or omission made, in—
- (a) the performance or purported performance of a function under this Act; or
 - (b) the exercise or purported exercise of a power under this Act; or
 - (c) the management or operation of a State forest or timber reserve.
- (4) This section is subject to section 96G.
- (5) In this section—
- damages** includes any form of monetary compensation.
- designated proceeding** means a proceeding for damages based on a liability for personal injury, damage to property or economic loss resulting from personal injury or damage to property, and, for a fatal injury, includes a proceeding for the deceased's dependants or estate.
- personal injury** see the *Civil Liability Act 2003*, schedule 2.
- State official** means—
- (a) the Minister; or
 - (b) the chief executive; or
 - (c) a forest officer; or
 - (d) a public service employee or another employee of the State; or
 - (e) a person acting, on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses), under the direction of a person mentioned in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d).

96F Protection of plantation officials and licensees from liability

- (1) A plantation official is not civilly liable for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence under this Act.
- (2) If subsection (1) prevents a civil liability attaching to a plantation official, the liability attaches instead to the plantation licensee who employed the official when the act was done or the omission was made.
- (3) Also, a plantation licensee or plantation official is not civilly liable in a designated proceeding as defined under section 96E for an act done, or omission made, in—
- (a) the performance or purported performance of a function under this Act; or
 - (b) the exercise or purported exercise of a power under this Act.
- (4) This section is subject to section 96G.
- (5) In this section—
- plantation official** means—
- (a) a plantation officer; or
 - (b) an employee of a plantation licensee;
or
 - (c) a person acting, on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses), under the direction of a person mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).

96G Exception to protections against designated proceeding

- (1) This section applies if, other than for this section, an entity would not be civilly liable for an act or omission because of section 96E(3) or 96F(3) (the **protection**).
- (2) The protection does not apply to liability—
- (a) arising from the entity's—
 - (i) construction, installation or maintenance of a relevant fixture, or a road, that is defective other than because of a natural event; or
 - (ii) failure to give adequate notice of a relevant fixture, or a road, that is defective other than because of a natural event; or
 - (iii) carrying out of a non-exempt activity; or

Examples of a natural event—
a storm, flood, period of heavy rain
 - (b) for an MAIA injury incurred by the entity as an insured person; or
 - (c) for an injury for which compensation is payable under the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003* (the **WCA**) incurred by the entity in the entity's capacity as an employer.

- (3) For subsection (2)(c), the following is immaterial—
- (a) whether compensation for the injury is actually claimed under the WCA;
 - (b) whether the entitlement to seek damages as defined under section 96E for the injury is regulated under the WCA.
- (4) In this section—
- compensation** see the WCA, section 9.
- defective** includes damaged or destroyed.
- insured person** see the *Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994* (the **MAIA**), section 4.
- MAIA injury** means a personal injury as defined under section 96E to which the MAIA applies.
- non-exempt activity** means the following—
- (a) if the entity is the State or a State official, an activity (a **programmed activity**) that is the programmed—
 - (i) shooting or poisoning of animals;
 - or
 - (ii) burning or poisoning of vegetation;
 - (b) if the entity is a plantation licensee or plantation official—
 - (i) a programmed activity conducted by or for a plantation licensee; or
 - (ii) an activity related to plantation forestry.
- relevant fixture** means a building, structure or other thing constructed or installed by or for the following—
- (a) if the entity is the State or a State official—the State;
 - (b) if the entity is a plantation licensee or plantation official—a plantation licensee.
- Examples—*
- a lookout or boardwalk
 - a stairway
 - a fence or other barrier
 - the following and anything else used for a recreational purpose—
 - a flying fox ride or zipline ride
 - a rope or swing over a river or waterhole
 - a ramp or jump on a mountain bike trail
 - an anchor point for rock climbing
- road—**
- (a) generally—see the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*, schedule 4; and
 - (b) if the entity is the State or a State official—includes a State-controlled road as defined under the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*, schedule 6.

3 Clause 17 (Amendment of s 31 (Public notice of draft plan))

Page 22, lines 18 to 20—

omit, insert—

- (3) Section 31(3), '28 days after the public notice is given'—

omit, insert—

20 business days after the notice is published

- (4) Section 31(5)(b), '28 days'—

omit, insert—

20 business days

4 Clause 20 (Amendment of s 36 (Public notice of draft amendment))

Page 24, lines 4 to 6—

omit, insert—

- (3) Section 36(3), '28 days after the public notice is given'—

omit, insert—

20 business days after the notice is published

5 Clause 20 (Amendment of s 36 (Public notice of draft amendment))

Page 24, lines 18 and 19—

omit, insert—

(6) Section 36(7)(b), '28 days'—

omit, insert—

20 business days

(7) Section 36(6A) and (7)—

renumber as section 36(7) and 36(8).**6 Clause 24 (Amendment of s 4 (Object of Act))**

Page 28, line 25, 'interest;—'

omit, insert—

interest under Aboriginal tradition or Island custom;

7 Clause 116 (Amendment of s 17 (Management principles of national parks))

Page 87, lines 24 and 28, after 'cultural'—

insert—

resources and

I table the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper. Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013, explanatory notes to Hon. Steve Dickson's amendments [\[3895\]](#).

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 138, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 139—

**Mr BYRNE** (8.04 pm): I move the following amendment—**1 Clause 139 (Replacement of pt 4, div 3A (Regeneration plans for national parks (recovery)))**

Page 96, lines 7 to 30, page 97, lines 1 to 30 and page 98, line 1—

*omit, insert—***42A Definitions for div 3A**

In this division—

prescribed activities means the activities of a kind, or for a purpose, mentioned in section 17(1A) for which the special management area was declared.

prescribed national park means—

- (a) a national park; or
- (b) a national park (Aboriginal land); or
- (c) a national park (Torres Strait Islander land); or
- (d) a national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land).

42B Declaration of special management area

- (1) The chief executive may, by gazette notice, declare a prescribed national park, or part of a prescribed national park—
 - (a) as a special management area (controlled action) to allow activities of a type, or for a purpose, stated in—
 - (i) section 17(1A)(a)(i); or
 - (ii) section 17(1A)(a)(ii); or
 - (iii) section 17(1A)(a)(i) and (ii); or
 - (b) as a special management area (scientific) to allow activities of a type, or for a purpose, stated in section 17(1A)(b).
- (2) The gazette notice declaring the special management area must—
 - (a) identify the limits of the area to which the notice applies; and
 - (b) state the prescribed activities that may be carried out in the special management area.
- (3) The chief executive must publish a copy of the gazette notice on the department's website.
- (4) The gazette notice is not subordinate legislation.

- (5) However, the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, sections 49 to 51 apply to the gazette notice as if it were subordinate legislation.

Note—

These provisions deal with the tabling in, and disallowance by, the Legislative Assembly of subordinate legislation.

42C Notice of declaration of special management area

- (1) On the declaration of a special management area under section 42B(1), the chief executive must erect or display a notice at the entrance of the prescribed national park, or part of the prescribed national park, declared as the special management area.
- (2) The notice must—
- (a) be easily visible to passers-by; and
 - (b) identify the limits of the area to which the declaration applies; and
 - (c) state the prescribed activities that may be carried out in the special management area.

42D Ending declaration of special management area

- (1) The chief executive may, by gazette notice, end the declaration of a prescribed national park, or part of a prescribed national park, as a special management area.
- (2) On the ending of the declaration of the area as a special management area, the chief executive must—
- (a) remove the copy of the gazette notice published on the department's website under section 42B(3); and
 - (b) remove the notice erected or displayed under 42C(1).
- (3) The gazette notice is not subordinate legislation.
- (4) However, the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, sections 49 to 51 apply to the gazette notice as if it were subordinate legislation.

Note—

These provisions deal with the tabling in, and disallowance by, the Legislative Assembly of subordinate legislation.

42E Declaration of resource use area

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

Tabled paper: Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013, explanatory notes to Mr Bill Byrne's amendment [[3896](#)].

The objective of the amendment is to give effect to recommendation No. 6 of the Health and Community Services Committee report No. 31 into this bill. Currently, the bill allows for the chief executive to declare a special management area within a national park. This will alter the management principles of that area and essentially override the Governor in Council's decision to declare a national park. That is a breach of the fundamental legislative principles. The amendment would require the chief executive to properly gazette the declaration of a special management area, which would then be subject to the disallowance provisions of the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*. This enables the parliament to consider any declaration of a special management area and potentially disallow such a declaration if it endangers the conservation value of the land.

Make no mistake: the opposition opposes this legislation and does not see any necessity for the removal of tenure classes and the introduction of special management areas. However, we have had a count on this and we know that this bill will pass. In fact, it has already passed the second reading. Therefore, we think it is important that we give the parliament the ability to disallow a unilateral decision by chief executives to override the management principles of national parks. The minister could have moved an amendment to this effect himself and given effect to recommendation No. 6 of the committee report. Unfortunately, he has seen no reason to do so, so the opposition is doing it for him.

I call on the committee members who made this recommendation to join with me in supporting this amendment. I suggest that the members for Kallangur, Townsville, Mudgeeraba, Beaudesert and Ferny Grove put their money where their mouths are and vote in favour of parliamentary scrutiny. I have heard the cat on the hot tin roof explanations tonight for why they will not be exercising the right to support their own recommendation. I read these explanations, these second-reading revelations of supposed new-found clarity, in support of the minister's position as a failure of the committee in its examination of the bill. After a full review through the committee process, the majority of committee members now admit that they got it wrong. What else did they get wrong? I suggest probably everything.

Let us be truthful: if LNP members vote the way they recommended, they would be forced to walk the LNP plank. I would accept an explanation that if they do not vote with the opposition they would be expelled from their party—that is, if they followed what they recommended.

Mr DICKSON: The government does not accept this amendment. Special management areas, SMAs, have been designed to enable flexibility in managing national parks and allowing for required management actions to take place. The committee's recommendations are clear: an SMA, by gazette notice, with the opportunity for a disallowance by parliament, will result in lengthy administrative processes. That is not considered appropriate for a decision that relates to management and operational decisions for protected areas. Such a process also has the potential to delay the declaration of an SMA and the implementation of critical management actions. Each type of SMA will have a clearly defined management principle set out in the Nature Conservation Act and these principles are currently subject to review by the Legislative Assembly as part of the bill.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 9—Byrne, Cunningham, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

NOES, 52—Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Johnson, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Pucci, Rice, Seenev, Shorten, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young. Tellers: Kaye, Menkens

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Byrne) negatived.

Mr DICKSON (8.17 pm): I move the following amendment—

8 Clause 139 (Replacement of pt 4, div 3A (Regeneration plans for national parks (recovery)))

Page 98, lines 2 to 6—

omit, insert—

- (1) A regulation may declare a regional park, or part of a regional park, as a resource use area.

Note—

Section 27(1) does not apply to a regional park, or part of a regional park, that is a resource use area.

- (2) However, the regulation may only be made at the same time as the regulation first dedicating the regional park.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 139, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 140 to 152, as read, agreed to.

Clause 153—

Mr DICKSON (8.18 pm): I move the following amendment—

9 Clause 153 (Insertion of new pt 12, div 5, sdiv 2)

Page 106, line 20, 'is taken'—

omit, insert—

despite section 42C, is taken

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 153, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 154 to 175, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (8.19 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. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (8.19 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

G20 (SAFETY AND SECURITY) BILL

Resumed from 20 August (see p. 2603).

Second Reading

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (8.20 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I start by thanking the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. On 22 October the committee tabled its report which included 10 recommendations. The government has considered these recommendations and prepared a response. I table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 41—G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013, government response [[3897](#)].

The government supports recommendations 1, 4 and 5 of the committee. The government does not support the remaining recommendations.

I now turn to address each of those recommendations. Firstly, the committee recommended that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support for this important bill. Secondly, the committee recommended that clause 18 of the bill be amended to remove unnecessary duplication between the criterion involving damage to property and the definition of a violent disruption offence. This clause relates to lawful assemblies.

The government does not support the committee's recommendations as the proposed amendments would have the effect of making a protest unlawful in circumstances where wilful damage was done with the specific intention of disrupting the G20 meeting only. The government's view is that the commission of any offence involving the unlawful damage to or destruction of property by a person participating in an assembly should render the assembly unlawful for the purposes of the bill, regardless of whether there was a specific intention to disrupt G20.

The committee also recommended that 'examples and non-examples be added after clause 18 of the bill to aid in the interpretation of what would and would not constitute a disruption to the G20 meetings'. This government does not support this particular recommendation. Whether a person has disrupted any part of the G20 meeting will depend on the full circumstances of that particular case and the nature of the particular G20 event. The phrase 'disrupt any part of the G20 meeting' should be defined by its ordinary meaning and examples are not required.

The committee's fourth recommendation was that I engage in further discussions with the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Legal Aid Queensland to investigate the establishment of a G20 legal hotline. I am more than happy to discuss the establishment of a G20 legal hotline with the Attorney-General in support of this recommendation.

The fifth recommendation of the committee was that the Queensland Police Service take steps to ensure that appropriate interpreting services are available during the G20 meetings. The government and the Queensland Police Service recognise that there may be an increased demand for interpreting services during the G20 period. In supporting this recommendation, arrangements will be made for the QPS G20 Group to advise the translating and interpreting service of the potential increased need for their services during the G20 period.

Recommendations 6, 7 and 8 of the committee recommended the inclusion of notes in various clauses of the bill to direct the reader's attention to other related provisions. The government has carefully considered these recommendations but does not support the inclusion of the notes in these

clauses. The government's view is that the bill and explanatory notes clearly outline the powers and responsibilities under the bill and the provision of further notes will not substantially enhance understanding.

The ninth recommendation of the committee is that clause 51(3) of the bill be amended to require the commissioner to give written notice of a decision under clause 51(2) to a person who made written submissions, as soon as reasonably practicable. The government considers that the principles of procedural fairness are sufficient to ensure decisions made by the commissioner under clause 51(2) will be made and notified without unnecessary delay.


Finally, the committee recommended that clause 51 be amended to require the Commissioner of Police, in his notice given under clause 51(1), to include written reasons as to why a person has been included on the prohibited persons list. The committee noted that the requirement should be subject to similar exemptions in the bill including where providing reasons may damage Australia's national security interests or international relations or place the safety of an informant in jeopardy.

Whilst the government notes the concerns of the committee in relation to providing reasons to a person about the person's inclusion on the prohibited persons list, the government does not support this recommendation. The prohibited persons list is intended for persons who pose a serious threat to the safety and security of the G20 meeting or G20 delegates. The list is likely to include persons of significant international concern. A person would qualify for inclusion on the prohibited persons list in only limited circumstances. The commissioner will for most decisions consider confidential information and intelligence reports, and he would therefore be exempt under the bill from providing reasons. Accordingly, the committee's recommendation to amend clause 51(1) would have limited practical value.

I would like to foreshadow that I intend to propose two amendments to the bill relating to the Criminal Code during the consideration in detail of the bill. These amendments have been circulated in my name. The amendments are to section 320, which is the offence of grievous bodily harm, and section 340, which is the offence of serious assaults. These sections were amended by the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) Amendment Act 2013 to insert mandatory minimum periods of imprisonment for certain offenders. An offender who is a participant in a criminal organisation and who harms or assaults a police officer who is acting in the execution of their duty is liable to a minimum mandatory term of imprisonment of one year to be served wholly in a correctional services facility.

The amendments circulated in my name insert the words 'a minimum of' to clarify that the mandatory sentence is the minimum mandatory sentence that the court must impose. The court is not fettered if it wishes to punish above the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment but within the applicable maximum penalty. The amendments avoid the possible interpretation that the mandatory sentence is the only sentence the court may impose. The amendments reflect the government's intention when it introduced the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) Amendment Act 2013, as reflected in the explanatory notes to that act.

Can I briefly take the opportunity to emphasise how important the 2014 G20 meeting will be for all of Queensland. This event will bring to Queensland the most important political leaders in the world and showcase our magnificent state to the international community. This event has been fairly described as the biggest international meeting Australia has ever hosted, with an expected 4,000 delegates and 3,000 media representatives. Such a significant event will come with a large amount of scrutiny and a responsibility to ensure it is properly managed. The security of delegates and the community is a critical part of meeting that responsibility. The eyes of the world certainly will be watching how Queensland rises to the challenges associated with hosting the G20 event. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (8.29 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate about the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. From the outset let me indicate that the opposition will be supporting the bill. Australia is privileged to be a member of the G20 group of nations. The former federal Labor government understood the strategic and economic advantages of hosting the G20 for Australia. They should be congratulated for securing the right to host the forum and should be further commended for selecting Brisbane and Cairns as their host cities. What a great opportunity to showcase this great state on the international stage.

The opposition understands the important decisions that are made at these meetings, and the opportunity to develop relationships with our strategic partners sets a framework for economic benefit and job creation into the future. The former federal government, in securing this bid, understood the

quiet diplomacy required of the Prime Minister to promote the strategic interests of our nation. This has been demonstrated over the years through the UN, ASEAN, APEC and the G20, with Australia punching well above its weight.

The current Prime Minister must rise to the challenge as host of the G20 meeting in Brisbane because his performance to date has left a little to be desired. Turning up late to the opening address by the Indonesia president at APEC was simply not good enough. Prime Minister Abbott's next foray into international policy was not much better and was even criticised by Norman Ornstein from the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute. He described Mr Abbott's performance as violating basic principles in diplomacy for trying to score domestic political points against the former government which he believed had the potential to damage Australia's important relationship with President Obama. Mr Ornstein said—

Perhaps you can chalk it up to a rookie mistake. But it is a pretty big one.

It is about time that the Prime Minister started to act like a statesman if that is at all possible.

Mr Minnikin: Look at the polls this morning.

Mr BYRNE: They do not like it, do they?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BYRNE: It is a fact. I am not making up these words. That is exactly what was said. Australia, Brisbane and Cairns will be front and centre in the world's media spotlight. What an opportunity for Queensland to promote itself. The police minister carries serious responsibilities on his shoulders to protect so many VIPs, and I genuinely wish him well in that enterprise. Hopefully, the minister will be invisible during the event proper because any necessary appearance will likely denote some sort of failure in his responsibility to manage the safety and security of world leaders or other internationally protected persons such as the IMF chief. I would hate to see any situation that might cause Queensland to be painted in the world's eyes as some sort of backward Third World rock show. I hope Queenslanders' trust is not misplaced because there is no tolerance for error on this issue.

Today we are debating the measures required to ensure the safety and security at the G20 and whether they are enough to protect delegates and other international visitors and, at the same time, allow our state to be portrayed as the safe and relaxed place that we all know it is. I, for one, at this stage think the balance is about right, although I would perhaps have gone further in some respects. I would note that the opposition is not privy to the detailed security and intelligence briefings available to the government, and neither should we be. We simply assume these briefings to be extensive and thorough and fundamentally inform this bill. The minister's oversight is vital to the success of the operation as is his role to balance the sometimes conflicting responsibilities of ensuring security, welcoming our visitors, promoting the very freedoms we take for granted and promoting them to the world.

I acknowledge the concerns of the Queensland Law Society, the Caxton Legal Centre and other interested parties concerning the implications for everyday citizens who might be affected by this legislation. I especially note their concerns about people from non-English speaking backgrounds. I note that this concern has been acknowledged by the committee as well as by the Queensland Police Service. I am sure that appropriately qualified interpreters will be made available. I acknowledge the concerns of stakeholders that other innocent people may unknowingly find themselves within the boundaries of the declared areas and become subject to the legislation. The potential for a person innocently heading home to be arrested is very low and we should have faith in their common sense and police training prevailing.

On balance I am somewhat surprised that some of the offence provisions have quite light sentences attached and I consider the boundaries of the restricted and declared areas to be minimalist given the scale and importance of the security operation. The Queensland Police Service, of course, can still use the provisions of the Criminal Code if required if an offence is serious enough. I am confident in the manner in which the Queensland Police Service has gone about its duties so far in balancing the contrasting needs of personal freedom and the ultimate event security. I am confident the Queensland Police Service has listened to the concerns of stakeholders and is trying to facilitate peaceful protests at the G20 because the last thing we want to see is a repeat of some of the mistakes of past G20 conferences like Toronto. We also have to understand that some of these groups may travel simply to cause trouble. We must have sufficient legislation available to deal with these silly people.

In the early stages of the G20 bill stakeholders were concerned about the opening hours of courts during the G20. Some were concerned about the court being closed on the Friday public holiday and broader access to courts over the weekend. The committee heard during a public forum in relation to the G20 bill that the Queensland Police Service has successfully negotiated for the Magistrates Court to be open for the public holiday and the weekend of the G20 to deal with any persons arrested for breaching the G20 legislation. The Queensland Police Service stated that they were hopeful that the Supreme Court might be open during the G20 and negotiations were ongoing with the Chief Justice. The Queensland Police Service indicated that they would not presume or dictate to the Chief Justice what the Chief Justice should or should not do. The Labor Party understands the important role that the courts play in keeping checks and balances on legislation passed by the government. The Queensland Police Service obviously understand the need for checks and balances and understand that they should not place pressure on judges and magistrates. I congratulate the Queensland Police Service on being reasonable and measured in their dealings with the judiciary, unlike the current government, which believes the judiciary is another target to try to extract some sort of political advantage.

Committee recommendation No. 3 requests that the minister list examples and nonexamples of what would or would not constitute a disruption to the G20 meetings under the bill. I note the Queensland Police Service has recently expanded the external engagement team to negotiate and facilitate the G20 event with community members. The external engagement team is not only advising those wanting to come to the event to protest but also engaging with local businesses and residents. This team is well placed to outline what type of behaviour is acceptable to interested groups. I commend the government for engaging these professionals early to ensure the smooth running of the event. I advise any person who intends to try to make a point at the G20 to work with this team to ensure their group is fully aware of the law.

The definition of disrupting the event is rightly broad to cover many different types of behaviour. We know that highly motivated groups will try to find a loophole in any list that is promulgated. So I am comfortable in having a broad definition in the act. As Australians, we must challenge ourselves to be engaged in world affairs and embrace this and take every opportunity to work hand in hand with our friends and partners in order to make our contribution resonate. As Queenslanders, we must also strive to put aside petty competition with the southern states and rise to fulfil our potential as a centre of excellence in many fields. The G20 offers an opportunity to showcase this great state, and I wish the government every success in enabling this as a successful event.

This is where my comments would have ended had we not received the minister's amendments today. The amendments circulated in the name of the police minister are simply an attempt to fix another bungle by the Attorney-General. How many mistakes can one minister make before the Premier finally has had enough and decides to find a more qualified person for the role? He will not because this government is arrogant. Look at what he said in this place this morning. They try to pull the wool over the public's eyes, spruiking the legislation's successes in the morning and then we debate these additional amendments late into the night in an attempt to avoid the nightly news. What are these amendments about? They are required as a result of a simple drafting error of the rushed bikie legislation that was debated last week—

Mr BLEIJIE: It was supported by you!

Mr BYRNE: I know we supported it, but I am saying you rushed it through when you did not need to—

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Order! Attorney-General, I warn you under standing order 253A. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The drafting error had the consequence of requiring a judge to sentence an offender to a year in jail if the bikie assaults a police officer causing permanent or serious injury. Grievous bodily harm currently has a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison, and these amendments fix up the mistake to allow for bikies to be sentenced to a minimum of one year up to the maximum allowed. The amendments also allow for a bikie to be sentenced to more than one year for a serious assault on a police officer as a result of the same drafting error being replicated in that section of the Criminal Code.


The opposition said there would be mistakes because of the Attorney-General's rush to grab a headline. This proves that the Attorney-General spent more time leaking information to newspapers and running the spin cycle than actually reading the legislation so that he could protect police officers. This is professionally embarrassing and clearly the only person who is responsible—

Mr DEMPSEY: I rise to a point of order just in relation to relevance. The shadow minister actually voted for supporting tough action and supporting the police, and now he is talking about something that is irrelevant. I am just asking for relevance in relation to getting back to the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would ask you to address the bill. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I am doing so. This is all about the amendment to the legislation recently rushed through this House. This bill that the police minister is running is a Trojan horse to fix the mistakes made by the Attorney-General. The opposition said at the time that there would be mistakes because of the Attorney-General's rush to grab the headlines. This is again more evidence of the focus of the Attorney-General. In the view of the opposition, the Attorney-General has failed once again. That is twice that amendments have had to be moved to fix these bumbles. Imagine how many other unidentified holes are in this legislation that will only be exposed when the courts start testing the legislation. We have already seen bail applications take days as magistrates attempt to interpret the intent of the Attorney-General. Good luck with that! That the Attorney-General now requires the police minister to move amendments to fix the mistakes that he made is embarrassing. I can understand why he is in the House tonight, and the Attorney-General should be old enough to now admit that he cannot draft legislation. He should accept responsibility, admit that he got it wrong, take it on the chin and stop hiding behind the police minister.

The Leader of the Opposition moved amendments during consideration in detail of that original bill calling on the Attorney-General to conduct a review of this legislation. I again urge the Attorney-General to consider this option. The appointment of a retired judge to review the act to identify all the remaining loopholes created by rushing this bill through the House without appropriate scrutiny of the parliament could be of great benefit. By commissioning a judge, the opposition believes a large amount of money may be saved in instructing lawyers during the inevitable court challenges to come.

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (8.43 pm): This bill's significance will be tested within a relatively short period of time. Ordinarily the strength of a bill will not be known for years, but the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013 will have its strengths and weaknesses tested in Cairns on 20 and 21 September 2014, which will be the forum of the finance ministers, and on 14 and 15 November 2014, when the world's leaders—representing 85 per cent of the world's economy—will assemble in Brisbane. Without argument, this G20 summit will be the premier forum of the world's leaders whose interactions, statements and stated directions will be a blueprint for the world's economy for at least the following 12 months and probably significantly longer.

There will be benefits and detriments not only for Brisbane and Cairns but also for the city surrounds, including Ipswich. My city of Ipswich will also receive benefits and detriments, but in respect of the importance of this world event by far the benefits will outweigh the detriments, and I expect that will be across-the-board. The benefits include the exposure of Queensland to the world. This will happen in many ways, but mostly through television media relaying throughout the world the many assets we enjoy, including the friendliness of our people, our lifestyle balance, the closeness of our Great Barrier Reef, our beaches, tourism attractions and the advancement of our economy, which is of a world standard. Above all else, we will showcase our ability and resourcefulness to ensure that Queensland can host a world event and that we have the resources, the personnel and resolve to ensure that we can impart safety to those who come to our shores.

There are detriments. We will be asking businesses to bear the cost of one public holiday. Hopefully, businesses will receive financial gain through the increased exposure of Brisbane and Cairns to the world's mobile population. The short-term detriment will involve businesses making decisions whether to close or remain open for business. Holiday rates of employee remuneration will of course be a factor; however, on balance we will be asking our businesses to do what they do almost every day of their working lives: make an informed decision whether to stay open or otherwise. The public holiday on Friday is a strategic and complex event to insure that motorcades of the world's leaders are provided with speed, safety and security, which will involve both our visitors and our citizens. This will ensure that on balance this movement of motorcades throughout Brisbane and Cairns will be uneventful.

I now turn to the safety and security issues addressed by this bill. Recent past events have taught us that both international and national forums are the targets of special interest groups. These are groups which have agendas, and each group in varying degrees will do what their group feels is necessary to get as much exposure through the world's media as is possible. Each special interest group will have a message which is central to that group's existence and goals. Messages have many objectives. Spreading the group's message is the primary goal, but that is just one; secondary agendas are also present. It may be the recruitment of new members, attracting new moneys to the cause or just consolidating their existing money sources and retention of members. Global media influence has grown exponentially. There is ample evidence supporting the growth of worldwide media attention. It is a phenomenon that is trending upwards, but I am stating the obvious.

What may not be obvious is the observation of Griffith University professor Timothy Legrand, the author of *Global influence on national crisis management*, who observed that the concern about special interest groups is their intent to ramp up the devices and manoeuvres which will draw attention to themselves and to their cause. Attempting to do so will certainly involve innocent bystanders. For the security personnel engaged in the safety of our dignitaries and their people, it may not be distinguishable or obvious as to what group or section of demonstrators is causing the mischief. Examples of the arduous task of ensuring safety and security I will now detail, because it is this experience upon which this bill is based.

The fourth G20 2010 Toronto summit revealed shortcomings in security when authorities were confronted by organised global mobile demonstrators. Protesters at Toronto began their campaign a week before the summit, the height of which occurred when the conference was underway. A bank was firebombed by anarchists before the commencement of the summit. They promised or taunted security forces that they would be heard at the summit. Naturally, the security forces prepared for the worst, having to speculate as to what anticipated security threats they expected. The protest organisations included organisations which we admire such as Oxfam Canada and the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. Other groups represented issues such as poverty, gay rights, capitalism, globalism and Indigenous rights. These groups for the most part presented their message by peaceful protests; however, infiltrating these peaceful demonstrations were the black bloc movement, which were readily identified by their black clothes. The black bloc members targeted local businesses by damaging their windows. They then moved to set alight police and media motor vehicles. This resulted in the arrest of 1,100 protesters. Who knows how many peaceful demonstrators or anarchists were caught up in those 1,100 people? Peaceful demonstrators were kettled for hours while security forces screened the crowds for these black bloc anarchists causing so much of a disruption to the Toronto summit.

In 2009 the G20 London summit precipitated the build-up of protestors in the days leading to and during the event. Again, the issues were numerous and varied, while not dissimilar to those of Toronto. Most of the protests were conducted peacefully, though there were protestors whose agenda was to invite media attention by whatever means. Some 35,000 protestors marched on the streets of London to further their stated causes, mainly as groups banded together for the common cause. What followed was protestors squatting on the ground and the kettling of protestors. Unfortunately, there was a break-in at the Royal Bank of Scotland branch which involved injury to police officers and the death of a bystander. At the peak of protests about 250,000 people joined the protestors, but there were other protest movements in the area of London. Without embellishment, the security resources were stretched.

Protestors from the Space Hijackers group were arrested for impersonating police officers. They were in a blue 100-tonne armoured vehicle. Their attire consisted of blue boiler suits and riot helmets. It is extremely difficult for our security forces to come to grips with what Professor Legrand indicated. That is, the rules on which Toronto and London were based will not apply to Brisbane. There will be new manoeuvres and tactics we cannot yet describe.

Does it get worse? With the break-in of the Royal Bank of Scotland, upon entry to the bank protestors looted office equipment and papers. They threw smoke grenades, chairs and eggs. Media interest consisted of photographers and film crews documenting the wilful destruction. It is reported that at least £40,000 in damage was inflicted on this bank. That is leaving aside all the shops in the vicinity of the summit area whose windows were broken and which were looted. There were reports of agents provocateurs, who served the whole purpose of instigating violence. Again, that fortifies the fact that our security forces have to deal with something which, clearly, is unknown.

Returning to the opinion of Professor Legrand, it can be expected that anarchists will employ more devious and dastardly tactics for the purpose of disrupting the summit—provoking security forces, damaging property and causing injury. I comment upon the amendments. It is not within the realms of protest that a one-year minimum jail sentence is inappropriate. It is clearly appropriate and it is an appropriate amendment.


This bill anticipates what is likely to happen. The security measures are proportional to the perceived threats. The provisions of this bill are not extreme. I know from the public briefing with the informed members of the Queensland Police Service that the penalties decided upon were less than those employed in Western Australia for the 2009 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, which we commonly refer to as CHOGM.

The bill has bipartisan support. However, there was a public hearing at which submitters were able to present their views. I have already commented on the submission made by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, and I fully appreciate their views. I understand the submission by the CCIQ and accept their submission as having logic and reason about it. But on balance—that is the issue—and taking into account the multitude of unknowns, it is appropriate and responsible for government to err on the side of caution in enacting the public holiday and in effecting the measures which will be enacted. Of course, there will be short-term and long-term benefits to businesses which hopefully will and should offset this detriment. I thank the Queensland Law Society for putting forward the submissions they did as well as for attending the public hearing.

The committee's report details its response to all submissions, although the reversal of the onus of proof is one matter that ought to be commented upon. It has been suggested to me that a person who has been shopping, has purchased eggs and is returning home through a declared area may have those eggs confiscated. I would be very surprised if the eggs were not confiscated, to be quite frank. The law never, ever operates in a vacuum. There are film crews, camera men and women, smart phones and the capability of voice and video recording which today is a scenario that pervades our society. If a person is in the possession of eggs in a declared area, one could expect—and it would be so obvious—for those eggs to be confiscated. That is just a minor example of the sorts of problems and issues that will confront our security officers.

The law needs to respond to a dynamic society and situation. The G20 summit invites miscreants to disrupt proceedings, and if bystanders are injured then it is collateral damage. But it is upon our security forces to ensure they are protected as much as they are able. I thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety for giving our report due and measured consideration. I thank him for his comments. I also wish to place on record the input of my committee into the scrutiny and consideration of this bill. It fulfils the task of my committee to make these recommendations.

In summary, on balance—with all respect to the member for Rockhampton—this is quite clearly an appropriate piece of legislation for something that our security forces are yet to anticipate. It is a bill that is both measured and appropriate and I support it.

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (8.56 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. In November 2014 Queensland will welcome world and financial leaders to Brisbane and Cairns for one of the world's premier economic summits, the G20. However, events like the G20 have been known to come with the destruction of public property, violence, riots and the all-too-famous rent-a-crowd. By bringing together some of the most powerful leaders in the world, the G20 will place Queensland front and centre on the world stage and serves as a wonderful opportunity to promote Brisbane in the global arena.

G20 nations account for 85 per cent of the world economy, 80 per cent of global trade and two-thirds of the world's population. The focus of the G20 is on allowing these nations to discuss ways to strengthen the global economy, reform international financial institutions, improve financial regulation and discuss key economic reforms needed in each member nation. The fact that an important event such as the G20 is being held in Queensland is testament to the confidence world leaders have in Queensland's citizens and the government.

The presence of the world's most powerful leaders also comes with the responsibility to protect against threat to the personal safety of those attending the event and residents of the whole city. For many years, and especially since 2001, the threat of a terrorist type attack on Australian soil has been present in the minds of our intelligence services, police services and supporting agencies. One of the greatest threats to the peaceful nature of our community during the summit may not come from foreign terror organisations but could, rather, come from home-grown anarchists. An often used quote by security and defence specialists is, 'We have to be lucky every time. They only have to be lucky once.'

In 2007, with the APEC summit, and in 2011, with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, our police agencies and security services, in conjunction with elements of the Australian Defence Force, successfully protected heads of state from around the globe. This was achieved with a well-resourced protective force that was supported with the appropriate legislation that empowered them to get the job done.

This bill is as much about protecting world leaders as it is about protecting residents, because rent-a-crowds do not think twice before needlessly destroying private property and businesses. This bill is also important to ensure the harmonisation of local business and industry throughout the course of the summit.


In all facets of society, most residents are honourable and abide by the law; however, there are those who seek nothing more than an outlet to cause anarchy and mayhem. Like our most heinous criminals, these offenders care little for our laws, bar when it comes to their own rights—the very rights they seek to deprive law-abiding citizens of.

When the media breaks a headline titled 'G20', some may remember the civil disobedience, destruction and violence of previous summits—images of historic London landmarks, serene Canadian towns and once peaceful streets that were stifled with demonstrators who, whilst employing black bloc tactics, tore away the social fabric of communities. To protect our residents from both domestic and foreign threats, we must enact legislation that allows our officers on the front line the appropriate tools to deal with potential threats before they evolve into a serious or harmful situation. The damage bill in cities across the globe in the wake of these protesters can place a heavy financial burden, not to mention creating a physical scar, on the host cities. In one day alone during the 2010 Toronto G20 summit, protesters caused \$750,000 worth of damage and saw over 40 businesses within the Toronto CBD vandalised. Do we want this anarchy on the streets of Brisbane? Do we want Queen Street Mall turned into a battle ground? There is only one answer: no, we do not.

Many demonstrations of this calibre often see such tactics as black bloc being implemented. Black bloc is a tactic for protests and marches where individuals wear black clothing, scarves, sunglasses, ski masks, motorcycle helmets with padding or other face-concealing and face-protecting items. There is no other reason a protester would engage in a demonstration in this manner other than to commit criminal offences whilst concealing their identity, ultimately hindering any chance of prosecution. The G20 summit will undoubtedly be a test on the resources and skills of our Police Service and other law enforcement agencies. However, knowing well the exemplary level of professional dedication to their duties, this will be a test that the service and her officers will comfortably achieve and will become a great success story in the operational history of the Queensland Police Service. The Queensland Police Service is the most professional law enforcement organisation in the country and our government's continued commitment to revitalise our Police Service by targeted recruiting of over 1,100 new officers as well as redeploying support officers to the front line, investment in new airborne capabilities and the economy of management of social media means that our state's ability to fight crime has evolved with the modern times and demands. With these resources and the legislation contained within this bill, the QPS will be in the best possible position to face the challenges that arise from an event with such notoriety.

It must be known that attacks on innocent bystanders, businesses, homes and police will not be tolerated. We will not let a handful of rabble-rousers or anarchists destroy our beautiful city. Responsible, good governments do whatever they can to provide safe communities. Responsible, good governments protect the residents within those communities. Based on the track record of other host cities, Brisbane must be ready to deal with every scenario, and as a government we intend to live up to our responsibility and obligation to the people of Queensland. We must not let Brisbane be added to the list of cities that these social degenerates have trashed, leaving a considerable cost of damage in their wake. This bill creates temporary provisions that allow police officers to prevent offenders from disrupting the good harmony and order of our community. Despite the rhetoric from the opposition, this is not a bill that will deprive Queenslanders of their civil rights but, in fact, protect them. This bill also serves as a sign of faith in our Police Service. When a police officer is appointed or commissioned and assigned to a station, they are placed in a position of great trust—a position that protects and serves our community in some of the most challenging of situations. The bill will create special authority that enables law enforcement officers from interstate and regional partners who are assisting in the event the authority to carry out their duties and play an active role in supporting the security operations throughout the summit. This will ensure that local police units throughout Queensland will not be operationally impeded and that residents of communities like Logan will continue to have a firm and responsive police presence.

This legislation will not infringe on the privacy of civilians during the summit. Respectful practices will be implemented when our officers are dealing with the community. An individual's personal circumstances such as gender and religion will be treated with the utmost respect at all times. Officers with linguistic skills will be deployed throughout the defined area and will be ready to respond to any challenges that may arise quickly and with minimum fuss. The powers and responsibilities outlined in this bill will not be a permanent fixture, with many of the provisions expiring at the conclusion of the summit. These are special times and they require special measures—measures that will not outlast their necessity. The G20 will provide valuable experience to various elements of the Queensland community as we prepare our state to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games. I commend the efforts of the Minister for Police and Community Safety for his ongoing commitment to improving our state's law enforcement capability. With support from his ministerial and departmental staff, the minister has brought about some of the most pivotal changes in developing the police and community safety sector—an achievement the minister and his staff can be immensely proud of. I look forward to welcoming the world leaders to Queensland and seeing a new age in relations with our regional and global partners being established. With the successful execution of this prestigious event, the world will see why Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. I support this bill's passage in the House.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (9.04 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. As the member for Rockhampton outlined, the opposition will be supporting this legislation. I think it appropriate in my contribution to acknowledge that this would not have been happening in Brisbane and in Australia had it not been for the efforts of former Prime Minister Julia Gillard and the federal Labor government. As the member for South Brisbane, I have a special interest in this debate. This is obviously because the majority of the events associated with the G20 summit in November next year will be occurring within my electorate. As a result, my community will experience more of the benefits as well as more of the drawbacks of hosting the G20 than any other community.

A robust legislative framework to manage an event as important and as large as the G20 is a necessity. The logistics of the event will be complex and there is no room for error. We will be front and centre on the world stage and Brisbane's reputation as an emerging world city will be on the line. But I am confident that we will rise to the occasion, because Brisbane and Queensland have a proud record when it comes to hosting events of global significance. We successfully hosted the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane in 1982 and no resident of Brisbane of the right age could forget World Expo in 1988. These two events have given Brisbane a lasting physical and cultural legacy. Not only did they place Brisbane on the map; the infrastructure they left behind is still used today. QEII or ANZ Stadium at Nathan has served Brisbane well since the Commonwealth Games as a major sporting facility that continues to host important events and the old World Expo site has transformed into South Bank. South Bank is the most vibrant and exciting cultural centre in Australia. It is a major tourist destination in its own right, and I am sure that the impressive nature of the facilities there were part of the decision to locate the G20.

Queensland is also no stranger to hosting important political summits or visits from world leaders. We successfully hosted CHOGM in 2002 at Coolumb and most recently Brisbane hosted the Queen and Prince Philip when they visited in 2011. So the G20 is another fantastic opportunity to showcase Queensland to the world. I take this opportunity to say that one of the things we can also showcase is our ability to hold a carbon-neutral G20 summit. That is a request—a campaign—that has been spearheaded by Business South Bank. It is very keen, as the local business representative group, to see the G20 summit as the first carbon-neutral event. It would be great for the government to come on board with that effort.

As members know, Brisbane and Cairns will host the leaders and financial ministers meetings respectively. These events will bring thousands of visitors to Queensland and to Brisbane and Cairns in particular. The leaders of the world's 20 largest economies as well as scores of diplomats, public servants and journalists will descend on Brisbane and Cairns. I know that the businesses in South Bank and all of South Brisbane will be looking forward to hosting the G20. It will bring a lot of exposure and business to an area that has suffered in recent weeks from the closure of some high-profile restaurants. Of course, the hosting of an event of this magnitude also has some drawbacks. There will be a significant degree of disruption to the lives of residents and visitors to the area. I know that many people in my community will be concerned about that, and I share those concerns. A number of parents from Brisbane State High School have expressed concern to me about the end-of-year events that normally take place within the South Bank precinct and whether or

not they will have to be reorganised. I will be working with the police and the event organisers to ensure that accurate information for residents and visitors is disseminated as widely as possible and that the inconvenience is minimised. On that point, I want to extend my thanks to the Minister for Police and Community Safety for providing me with a dedicated briefing in relation to the G20. I think that his task force has been particularly professional and very keen in its outreach to the local South Brisbane community in terms of ensuring that it has accurate information that it can use to make arrangements for late next year.

I must also mention some of the new powers that this bill grants to police for the duration of the G20 summit. Police will be given powers to declare a person a prohibited person and exclude them from the declared areas. Search powers are also being increased and police will have the power to detain a person for the duration of the G20 summit. I am encouraged to hear that a cooperative agreement has been struck with the Chief Magistrate to open the Magistrates Court on the G20 public holiday to deal with any cases that may arise, as has been articulated already by my colleague the member for Rockhampton.

We are all familiar with scenes from previous G20 summits where protesters have not been handled particularly well. I sincerely hope that police have learned the lessons from those previous summits, particularly the Toronto summit, where we saw mass arrests. I support the right of citizens to demonstrate peacefully and I am sure that there will be some demonstrations associated with the G20. In fact, I understand that the task force is working very hard to balance the personal liberties of individuals to make a political statement and ensure that the summit is conducted in as secure a way as possible. Peaceful protest, though, is a two-way street. It requires maturity from both protesters and police to ensure that people can have their voices heard. Nobody wants to see violence from protesters or police. So I call on both parties to be respectful and cooperative at all times. The early indications are that this will indeed be the case. I am confident that the G20 will be a success and that we will distinguish ourselves once again on the international stage.

I note that the minister has also circulated amendments to be moved during the consideration in detail to amend the Criminal Code, as has already been touched on by my colleague the member for Rockhampton. I feel some empathy for Minister Dempsey, the Minister for Police and Community Safety, who has again been asked to move amendments to fix legislative bungles by the Attorney-General. At the last parliamentary sitting the Attorney-General introduced three bills at 2.30 pm on Tuesday. Those bills were declared urgent, meaning that there was no scrutiny, no accountability and no consultation. At the time the opposition warned the Attorney-General that that was a mistake. The Attorney-General moved amendments to fix one of the deficiencies in the bill highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition.

Without proper scrutiny by the committee, more problems were always going to come to light. This is the case with so much of the legislation introduced by the Attorney-General. He tried to impose a mandatory penalty for the offence of evading police and when the Supreme Court found that it did not operate as he intended, he made the poor Minister for Police bring amendments into this House to fix the problems. Then when the Attorney-General introduced industrial relations laws designed to impose restrictive conditions on trade unions—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, I have been listening to the member. She is completely irrelevant pursuant to the standing orders and I ask that you pull her into line.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! There is no point of order. Member for South Brisbane, I would ask you to adhere to the bill.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am addressing the pattern of behaviour in terms of the amendments being introduced to correct deficient bills.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, it has nothing to do with the bill before the House and I ask that you rule on relevance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am addressing the amendments that have been tabled in the House for debate tonight.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms TRAD: Yes. The Attorney-General's rushed legislative agenda, which forces debates on bills in short time frames with little or no consultation or public scrutiny, ultimately results in embarrassing gaffes like this and ensures that it is committed on a regular basis. That is why consultation is necessary. That is why we have the committee system. Consultation leads to stronger, clearer and more effective legislation.

I turn to what the Minister for Police and Community Safety has been asked to fix. Let me be clear: the amendment that is being put before us today to be debated in consideration in detail is to fix another problem that the Attorney-General has created. And what exactly is that problem? The laws that were passed at the last sitting imposed a mandatory term of imprisonment when a member of a criminal organisation commits grievous bodily harm or serious assault of a police officer. That mandatory term was one year's jail. That meant that the term can be only one year. No matter how serious the grievous bodily harm or the assault was, the sentence could be only one year. So instead of being tough on crime, as the Attorney-General and Premier say they are, they were, in fact, limiting the capacity of the court to impose a sentence any greater than one year. This is a very basic statutory interpretation. If the act says 'must', there is no discretion available at all. 'Must be imprisoned for one year' means must be imprisoned for one year.

I have said before in this House that it was Mark Twain, the American author, who famously said—


To succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence.

It has been noted widely and publicly that the Attorney-General is a man in a hurry to succeed. It is clear that he has both the necessary qualities to succeed, according to Mark Twain, and he has them in abundance.

Mr DEMPSEY: Madam Speaker, again back to relevance. We do not need more dribble.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member has the call.

Ms TRAD: Thank you. Madam Deputy Speaker, I will just repeat: it is clear that the Attorney-General has both of these qualities in abundance.

 **Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (9.15 pm): Unlike those opposite, I will try to keep my comments to the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. The G20 leaders summit, to be held in Brisbane on 15 and 16 November next year, will mean far more for Queensland and for Queenslanders than an extra public holiday in 2014. Rather, the G20 leaders summit will be the largest peacetime security operation that Queensland has ever seen. It will attract up to 25 world leaders, including US President Barack Obama, seven heads of international organisations, 4,000 delegates and 3,000 domestic and international visitors. This influx of people into our great state will give a tremendous boost to our economy and increase the profile of some of our outstanding local businesses. This is a unique opportunity to showcase what Queensland has to offer on an international stage and that includes the skills and competences of our Queensland Police Service.

Unfortunately, existing Queensland legislation does not provide police officers with sufficient powers to deal with the level of security that is required for the G20 meetings and associated events. This bill is needed in order to ensure that all delegates, visitors and our community are safe and secure throughout the various events. The G20 leaders summit is a special event and, accordingly, our Queensland police officers need special powers in order to provide top-level security. The existing Police Powers and Responsibilities Act is simply inadequate to deal with an event of this scale and magnitude. Of course, given the extent of powers that this bill proposes to give our police officers, it is rightly appropriate that this bill be stand-alone legislation that will cease to operate at the end of the G20 period. As such, I fully endorse the fact that this bill, should it be passed, will expire on 15 November.


The safety of world leaders and delegates, many of whom are internationally protected persons, is obviously paramount. In addition, the safety of members of the public must also be considered. World events such as the G20 meetings also bring with them the increased risk of terrorism and the potential for acts of civil disobedience. More routinely, additional measures will need to be in place to regulate traffic and pedestrian movements to ensure that all routes to the G20 meetings are free flowing and unimpeded.

Many of the amendments—expanded powers to search vehicles and people; the discretion to close roads, railways, private entrances and waterways; and restricting access to certain areas—simply align with the expectations of the international community and reflect the global significance of these events. Other changes, most notably the presumption against bail for certain offences

committed during the G20 period, will no doubt be objectionable to certain civil libertarians, as it effectively allows for the detention of a person who has not yet been proven guilty of an offence. Nevertheless, I believe that this amendment is a necessary temporary circumvention of the rights of an individual. To me, it is a matter of common sense to ensure that a person intent on disrupting the G20 summit cannot automatically be granted bail so that he or she can continue to carry out these acts.

The fact that this bill will be enforced for only the duration of the G20 meeting is an in-built safeguard to prevent the abuse of these powers. The exceptional public safety issues justify the awarding of these extraordinary powers to the Queensland Police Service and other security entities.

The effect of the G20 summit will be felt throughout Brisbane and not simply because Friday the 14th will be a public holiday. The G20 summit will be a once-in-a-lifetime event. I thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety, the Hon. Jack Dempsey, for introducing the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. The bill will allow the men and women who make up the Queensland Police Service to provide world-class security for the global leaders and delegates who will visit our great state for the G20 leaders summit. It is a great honour for Queensland to have been nominated as the primary venue for the G20 leaders summit and I am confident that the passing of this bill will ensure that the security measures are appropriate for such an important occasion. I support the bill.

 **Mrs RICE** (Mount Coot-tha—LNP) (9.20 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013. I commend the Minister for Police and Community Safety on his thorough consideration of this legislation. In November 2014 Brisbane and Cairns will host the G20 leaders summit. The summit will not only put Queensland on the world stage but also provide an important opportunity for Brisbane and Cairns to host key business leaders and leaders from the world's biggest economies. This is an exciting chance to showcase what Queensland has to offer to an audience of up to 25 world leaders, seven heads of international organisations, 4,000 delegates and 3,000 domestic and international media. As the Treasurer and Minister for Trade is particularly conscious of, images of our beautiful state will be broadcast across the world and we want to leverage off the opportunity this presents. He is also keen to promote business and trade relationships with key decision makers so that Queensland businesses and the economy benefit from this event in the long-term.


With a summit of this scale it is imperative that the Queensland government provides a safe and secure area for visitors, businesses and residents. Fundamentally, the need for this bill is because existing Queensland legislation does not provide police officers with sufficient powers to deal with the level of security required for the G20 meeting. As Deputy Commissioner Ross Barnett has said, the G20 leaders summit will be the largest peacetime security operation Australia has ever seen. The QPS has established the G20 group to plan and execute the security arrangements around event and accommodation venues as well as motorcade routes.

Deputy Commissioner Barnett has been clear that it is not the intention of QPS to lock down Brisbane or Cairns. However, some businesses and residents in and around the restricted areas can expect impacts in the lead-up to and during the G20 events. This impact will be determined by the level of threat to the community that exists in the lead-up to the events. Having said that, I know that the Minister for Police and Community Safety has been working with QPS for some time now to consult with businesses about security arrangements during the summit. Specifically in relation to Brisbane, this community engagement has been an important part of ensuring that residents and businesses are prepared for the necessary security restrictions that will take place during the summit. The external engagement team has been interacting with all levels of the community to ensure everyone is aware of security impacts they may face. The team will communicate key messages to businesses, residents, community groups and issue motivated groups as QPS plans develop. As a result, I suspect there is little in the G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013 that will be particularly surprising.

The bill will provide police officers and appointed persons special powers to effectively manage the security at the summit venue and its surrounding areas, but it is also important to note that the legislation will expire at the end of the G20 period. The main components of the bill include the establishment of security areas and motorcade areas. These areas will have different levels of public access. The bill also includes the provision of additional police powers to search, powers to prohibit or exclude persons from security areas, powers in relation to prohibited items and the creation of specific offences under the bill. The bill has been prepared to ensure safety and security, but it is intended to ensure minimal disruption to the public.

There are three types of security areas: restricted areas, motorcade areas and declared areas. Restricted areas, such as the meeting venues and accommodation hotels, will be leased in their entirety by the Commonwealth. Public access to these areas is prohibited. For example, although trains will not stop at South Brisbane Railway Station due to it being within the G20 meeting venue restricted area, train travel past the station will not be impeded. Also the boundaries of some accommodation restricted areas encroach across busy roads such as at Alice Street outside the Royal on the Park hotel. However, the bill allows for the police forward commander at each venue to reduce the boundaries of the restricted area back to the accommodation venue boundary. In the main, this will occur and thus traffic will not be impeded from using these roads. The boundaries will only be extended out across the roads in the event of a serious threat risk such as a violent protest at the hotel. Motorcade areas will only be closed to the public during the period when the G20 motorcade is using them and will be immediately opened to public use after the motorcade passes through. Members of the public can go about their business as usual in a declared area and prohibited items can be possessed in a security area so long as the person has a lawful excuse for their possession. If people have any concerns they would like to discuss, police appointed liaison officers will be available.

The bill also amends the Holidays Act 1983 to include a public holiday in Brisbane on Friday, 14 November 2014 to ease the impact on the city for residents in the Brisbane City Council region. In closing, the G20 summit really does provide an incredible opportunity to showcase our wonderful state to an extraordinarily large international audience. In doing so we must ensure that we provide a safe and secure area for visitors, businesses and residents. As the minister has said, the remarkable skills of our police officers will be on show to the world as they provide security for global leaders and delegates. I am pleased that the government has shown its support for the QPS in this way and I know that this summit will be a huge success.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.26 pm), in reply: I thank members for their contributions to the debate on the bill. It is clear that the majority of members appreciate that hosting the 2014 G20 meeting will be an extraordinary opportunity to showcase Queensland to the rest of the world. This bill will ensure that our great state is showcased at its best.

I will now address some of the specific issues raised by members in the context of the debate. The member for Rockhampton mentioned in his speech that I have a big responsibility to make sure that the bill is implemented properly. I am confident that the QPS will act professionally and responsibly in providing security to G20 participants and the wider community. I am happy to progress this bill knowing that this government has given our police officers the tools to provide the level of security needed for this meeting. The member for Rockhampton endorsed the bill and stated that it achieved the right balance between allowing for individual rights and freedoms whilst providing security for this event. On this point I agree with the member. I do, however, disagree with his comments about the amendments I propose to raise in consideration in detail. These amendments are not a bungle. These amendments emphasise the intention of the government. These amendments will clarify that the penalty is not for a set period but merely an indication of the mandatory minimum period for imprisonment for these offences.

Clearly, this is important legislation. The bill will equip our Police Service with the powers and processes necessary to ensure the safety and security of G20 events, G20 delegates, members of the public and property during the course of the G20 meetings. The Commonwealth government and the international community are relying on Queensland to provide a safe and secure environment for the G20 meetings. The bill will allow our state to achieve that whilst also ensuring minimum disruption to members of the public.

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 102, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

Mr DEMPSEY (9.29 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr DEMPSEY: I move the following amendment—

1 After clause 102

Page 74, after line 13—

insert—

Division 1A Amendment of Criminal Code

102A Code amended

This division amends the Criminal Code.

102B Amendment of s 320 (Grievous bodily harm)

Section 320(2), after 'be imprisoned for'—

insert—

a minimum of

102C Amendment of s 340 (Serious assaults)

Section 340(1A), after 'be imprisoned for'—

insert—

a minimum of

I table the explanatory notes to that amendment.

Tabled paper: G20 (Safety and Security) Bill 2013, explanatory notes to Hon. Jack Dempsey's amendments [\[3898\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 103 to 110, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JM DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.30 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. JM DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.31 pm):

I move the following amendment—

2 Long title

Long title, after 'to amend'—

insert—

the Criminal Code,

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 10 September (see p. 2877).

Second Reading



Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.32 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I table a copy of the Queensland government's response to report No. 33 prepared by the Health and Community Services Committee on the bill.

Tabled paper: Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 33—Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, government response [\[3899\]](#).

I note that the Health and Community Services Committee recommended that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its consideration of the bill. In its report, the committee requested clarification about the type of information a health professional will be required to provide to the chief executive under a proposed regulation about a maternal death. It is expected the regulation will require health professionals to provide demographic information about the woman who died and information regarding the circumstances surrounding the woman's death. Health professionals will also be required to provide relevant clinical information, such as details of any antenatal care the woman received and any factors associated with the death of the woman that could have been avoided. Relevant stakeholders will be consulted prior to the making of the regulation regarding this new requirement. This information has also been included in the tabled Queensland government response.

The Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 amends six health portfolio acts. The key policy initiative in this bill is the establishment of the Maternal Death Statistics Collection in the Public Health Act. The number of maternal deaths in Queensland is low, historically numbering between 16 and 25 deaths per year on average. Data regarding maternal deaths has been collected informally in Queensland for more than 20 years. The Maternal Death Statistics Collection will formalise the arrangements for collecting information about maternal deaths.

Submissions to the committee noted that the definition of 'maternal death' used by the World Health Organisation was not adopted in the bill. The World Health Organisation defines 'maternal death' as the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of the end of a pregnancy. This is irrespective of the duration or site of the pregnancy, for example, an interuterine pregnancy or tubal ectopic pregnancy. The WHO definition does not include death from accidental or incidental causes. The definition of 'maternal death' adopted in the bill incorporates the WHO definition, but goes further to include late maternal deaths. Late maternal deaths include the death of a woman up to one year after the end of the pregnancy. Data about late maternal deaths can provide insight into the ongoing physical and mental health of new mothers. It includes information about deaths resulting from suicide, drug related deaths and deaths that are the result of domestic violence. The Maternal Death Statistics Collection will not record information regarding so-called near misses.

I note in its report the committee invited comments regarding national harmonisation of legislation and data collection regarding maternal deaths. It is my understanding that maternal death quality committees in other Australian jurisdictions, as well as New Zealand and the United Kingdom, all investigate both maternal deaths captured by the World Health Organisation definition as well as the late maternal deaths. I am advised that currently West Australia is the only Australian jurisdiction that does not investigate late maternal deaths. There may be some minor variations between jurisdictions in how maternal deaths are defined. However, the National Maternal Mortality Advisory Committee has developed the national maternal death report form. Use of this form to report and collect information regarding maternal deaths ensures data collected across Australia is comparable. The information in the collection will be used by the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council to undertake a review into the death of a woman and identify risk factors that could be minimised or avoided in the future. The review of each maternal death can shed light on any policy, practice or system changes that may be required to support women during and following pregnancy.

The council has also worked closely with the Statewide Maternity and Neonatal Clinical Network to develop the Queensland maternity and neonatal clinical guidelines program. This network does fantastic work in that field. Indeed, not only is it Australian leading but also it has been recognised by jurisdictions across Asia for the useful information it is providing to clinicians and they are looking at adopting some of the work done here in Queensland. The guidelines promote evidence based clinical care and aim to improve patient outcomes and the care of mums and bubs in Queensland. The Maternal Death Statistics Collection will help to plan obstetric health services to prevent or minimise maternal mortality in Queensland.

The bill also amends the Health Legislation Amendment Act 2011 to stop the introduction of a model food business rating scheme. The Health Legislation Amendment Act was to amend the Food Act to insert a head of power to create a state-wide voluntary food business rating scheme. The intent of these amendments, together with amendments to the Food Regulation, was to provide a framework for food business rating schemes that local governments could choose to adopt. These amendments were scheduled to commence in October 2013. However, it is considered these provisions add to the regulatory burden, particularly on local government.

In keeping with this government's commitment to reduce the regulatory burden and red tape by 20 per cent by 2018, the bill will repeal these provisions before they commence. As members may be aware, food business rating schemes have successfully been introduced in both Brisbane and Logan, ahead of the commencement of the provisions in the Food Act. The success of these schemes provides that Queensland does not need a mandatory food business rating scheme. Once the amendments are removed, local governments will still be able to introduce a food business rating scheme if they so wish. It is important to note that the repeal of these amendments will not impact on existing schemes and will not prevent the introduction of new food business rating schemes.

Removing the model food business rating scheme provisions also does not impact on the requirements under the Food Act. Businesses will still be required to ensure safe food handling standards and licensed food businesses will still need to have an accredited food safety program in place. These amendments merely intend to stop the food business rating scheme provisions from commencing.

The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act to include new provisions which will enable the transfer of land and buildings between the department of health and hospital and health services. These amendments support the government's intent to decentralise decision making and improve the management of infrastructure and assets across the Health portfolio. Land and buildings can currently be transferred by agreement with a hospital and health service.

Enabling transfers via a transfer notice will provide a more efficient mechanism to transfer land and buildings, particularly where large numbers of properties are involved. Whilst the immediate focus of these amendments is to enable transfers between the department of health and hospital and health services, this legislation also allows for transfers between hospital and health services should they be required in the future. The department of health is currently working with hospital and health services to transfer legal ownership of land and building assets, with a view to most transfers being completed throughout 2014.

The bill also amends the Transplantation and Anatomy Act to make a number of operational changes that have been identified by those involved in the day-to-day use of the act. The definition of 'senior available next of kin' is being modernised to explicitly recognise step relatives, adopted relatives, foster relatives and relatives through surrogacy. The amended definition also explicitly recognises people who are considered relatives under Aboriginal tradition, Islander custom or under the cultural traditions of their particular community.


Amendments to the act will also facilitate the more efficient and effective operation of the act by clarifying the requirements about a person's views on organ donation. In 2012 there were 78 organ donors in Queensland—the third highest number of donations in Australia and a record number for Queensland. The Organ and Tissue Donation Service is hosted by the Metro South Hospital and Health Service and includes DonateLife Queensland and the Queensland Tissue Banking program.

The amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act will ensure contact with the family of a deceased person will be able to be progressed more efficiently and effectively. Families will remain central to the donation of a loved one's organs and tissues, and these amendments will ensure those people who administer and use the legislation have certainty and they are acting in accordance with the requirements of the act.

Finally, the bill amends the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act. The QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute has a long and prestigious history dating back more than 65 years. It is internationally recognised for the quality of its medical research, which is aimed at improving health and wellbeing and preventing and curing disease.

The QIMR Act was passed in 1945. While it has been amended significantly since it was passed, there are aspects of the act that are somewhat dated, particularly in relation to the effective operation of the organisation. The amendments in this bill provide for staggered appointment terms of council members and a limit on the total time a person may sit on the QIMR council to 12 years. The bill also removes the requirement for QIMR to seek approval from the chief executive of the department of health to enter into agreements and arrangements with research partners. The amendments will support the contemporary role and functions of the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and enable it to remain a strong and independent organisation into the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those stakeholders who provided submissions to the Health and Community Services Committee and for their interest in and support for this bill. Again, I thank members of the committee for their studious oversight of the bill and the recommendation that it be passed by the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (9.45 pm): The opposition does not oppose the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 but does have significant reservations about the underlying intent of clauses 8, 9 and 10 of the bill. The opposition acknowledges the importance of implementing the national health reforms developed under the Rudd and Gillard governments to empower local management of hospital and health services. We are, however, concerned that the proposed amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 will be used to facilitate the disposal of assets without due consideration of the long-term needs of our public health system.

The hasty sale of public assets in the name of 'fiscal repair' may limit the ability of future governments to meet the needs of growing Queensland communities. The Newman government was not elected to sell our schools and hospitals or to outsource government services to private providers. This is not the meaning of revitalising front-line services that the LNP sold to voters prior to the 2012 election. The people of Queensland were, quite frankly, sold a pup.

The stated policy objectives of clauses 8, 9 and 10 are to enable land and buildings to be transferred between the department of health and hospital and health services and between services by way of a transfer notice made by the minister and published in the *Government Gazette*. The explanatory notes state—

While land and buildings could be transferred by agreement, the use of a transfer notice enables:

- transfers to be done efficiently, particularly where large numbers of properties are involved;
- the Minister to direct the transfer of land and buildings within the Health portfolio in accordance with Government initiatives such as the Blueprint; and
- land and buildings to be transferred as future circumstances may warrant, such as on the completion of capital works.

The explanatory notes further state—

... the transfer notice provisions to be inserted in the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* may breach fundamental legislative principles by failing to have sufficient regard to the institution of Parliament, insofar as the power to transfer land and buildings is exercised by gazette notice rather than by regulation.

In his introductory speech the minister stated—

The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to ensure that hospital and health boards are able to assume responsibility for the land and buildings under their control. As stated in the *Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland*, it is proposed that current and future infrastructure development, assets and capital work projects be tailored to suit service delivery to local communities.

The existing transitional provision in the Hospital and Health Boards Act enabling the transfer of land and buildings between the department of health and hospital and health services expired on 30 June 2013. The bill inserts a new suite of provisions into the act to enable the transfer of land and buildings at any time between the department and HHSs, and between HHSs. These amendments are consistent with the government's intention that the decentralisation of health care will be strengthened by giving hospital and health boards greater control over key aspects of decision making in their HHS.

As members will be aware, local hospital and health services were created in July 2012 to implement the national health reforms of the Rudd and Gillard governments. There are 16 HHSs with defined geographic boundaries and a 17th being the Children's Health Queensland HHS with a broader mandate. With the creation of the HHSs, the central office of Queensland Health reverted to a system manager role with many state-wide functions delegated to HHSs or closed.

Earlier this month, somewhat belatedly, the hospital and health services tabled their first annual reports. It came as a shock to many HHSs that they have been forced to record a profit in their first year of operation. These annual reports also report a surplus, or rather an underspend—apart from Wide Bay, which has reported a balanced budget. This is a very unusual result and the commentary by the board chairs indicates that a surplus was a ministerial requirement.

Underspending the allocated operational budget is not something most people would accept as reasonable, especially when there are many people waiting for urgent health care. I must admit that I was staggered to be informed of the extent of this underspend in such circumstances. In 2012-13 our hospital and health services were forced to show an overall profit of nearly \$160 million. How can the government justify this when there are 30,000 people waiting for surgery and nearly 200,000 people waiting for specialist outpatient appointments? The majority of these outpatients are effectively on the waiting list to get on the surgery waiting list.

The minister has spent much of this year talking about a \$103 million federal adjustment within overall growth funding. Members opposite have parroted this misinformation to hide the real cuts to hospital and health service budgets imposed by this LNP government. More staff cuts and service

closures are expected in my electorate and across the state. I would like to table my calculations of the details of the underspend by the HHSs, ranging from \$22.2 million in the Metro North to \$0.72 million in Cape York. The total underspend across the HHSs is nearly \$159 million.

Tabled paper: Document titled '2012-13 HHS Underspend' [3900].

While not spending all the allocated funds to meet outstanding patient demand for treatment is of concern, the move to make boards responsible for capital works has much more significant and long-term implications. Traditionally, the Infrastructure and Planning Division of Queensland Health has had system-wide responsibility for capital works. Expenditure on capital works for hospitals has been one of the most significant outlays in state budgets over the past decade.


Devolution of service planning to HHS boards now appears to include capital works. The implications are that HHSs may no longer be able to rely on the government for future funding of new capital projects. Their alternative is to borrow in the private capital markets. This is the model that the conservative UK government has imposed on the National Health Service. Some local health authorities have been under pressure to fund an operating surplus through efficiencies and service growth to repay these loans and have had to be bailed out by the government.

Public-private partnerships that involve private financing are not new. However, delegating borrowing authority to a local health board carries significant risks. The opposition needs to question the government as to whether this move to private financing of future hospitals by HHSs is a component of its privatisation strategy. Areas likely to require major hospital expansions in the next 20 to 30 years, mainly because of growth, are the Ipswich, Caboolture and Coomera-Helensvale areas. This stealthy Americanisation of both health financing and our hospital and health service delivery system is the real agenda of the Newman government's Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland. The minister has to come clean on the scale of privatisation of our public hospitals and their clinical support service.

There is real pain in the forced underspend of hospital expenditure—pain, suffering and grief for Queensland families. In fact, I have recently been in contact with Ms Stacey Jaundrell, a patient of the PA Hospital. Ms Jaundrell was initially diagnosed with a rare cancer of the appendix during a caesarean section in early July. A subsequent biopsy identified two types of tumours and a partial bowel removal and internal chemotherapy was urgently recommended. Stacey was referred to a succession of specialists at the PA Hospital and told she would require a gastroscopy, colonoscopy and CT scan before a laparoscopy to determine what surgery was required. She was told that this would take some time because of—and I quote from a letter from her treating specialist—'our horrendous waiting list'.

I would like to point out that Metro South underspent its 2012-13 budget by \$20 million. Stacey urgently requires surgery for bowel cancer and quite possibly a peritonectomy and internal chemotherapy for the rarer peritoneal disease. Neither of these surgeries can occur until the required diagnostic procedures are completed. Stacey has been anxiously waiting for eight weeks for these procedures to be done. She was actually in the operating theatre for these procedures in early October when they were cancelled 'due to unforeseen circumstances'. Her sequence of diagnostic procedures are now scheduled for the second week of November. What is particularly concerning is that there is only a very small window for a peritonectomy at the PA before Christmas. Stacey is 31 years old—a mother of five children, the youngest child being three months of age. I have also been contacted by another young mother of four who is also waiting for the same specialist cancer surgery at the PA Hospital. Stacey has sought help from a specialist in New South Wales but has been told that there are 40 other patients waiting for similar surgery.

I ask all members: how can we make public hospitals declare a profit when these young mothers and their families are anxiously waiting for life-saving surgery? Stacey was told when first referred to a consulting specialist that she could have the procedures done within two days if she had private health insurance. It will be at least four months before the PA Hospital meets its obligation to Stacey. I just hope that she and other patients with life-threatening conditions can survive to get the surgery that they so desperately need and also that they are able to look after their children and see their children grow up. That is what we want to see. I ask the minister to personally have a look at these cases, please, because it is all right talking about amending health legislation but we need to look after people personally as well, particularly these young mothers.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.56 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. This bill continues the hard work the Newman government has been committed to since day one and seeks to amend six acts relating to the Health portfolio. This bill

facilitates the introduction of a state-wide voluntary food business rating scheme, giving power to local councils to establish a scheme that fulfils the needs of individual communities. Schemes such as these are especially valuable to communities like the Gold Coast, where tourists who lack local knowledge have the potential under such a scheme to receive valuable information on the standards of a local business.

We thankfully have comparatively low levels of maternal deaths in Australia and Queensland. However, the ability for the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council to gather data regarding the deaths that we do have is difficult, as noted in its 2011 report. The changes outlined in this bill will ensure quality data and allow for review and improvements in maternal health care. The death of an expectant mother is one of the most tragic losses of life—two or more lives lost at once and the hopes and expectations of the family and the mother herself dashed all at once. If these improvements to data collection aid maternal health care that would save just one family from the heartbreak surrounding maternal death, it will be well worth it.

The changes to the way the members of the QIMR Council may be appointed and maintain their appointment go to improve on the flexibility of the current arrangements. Government should not be hamstrung by inefficiency when the most important outcome is to ensure the most appropriate and skilled people are serving and able to serve. The QIMR has contributed enormously to our knowledge of diseases through its research conducted since its establishment in 1945. Its continued research is of significant value. We are also making additional changes to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act to allow for the QIMR Council to enter into agreements and arrangements with other bodies without the onerous requirement for all such agreements to be approved by the chief executive of the department of health.

Providing for the most effective system in order to encourage organ donation is key to achieving our health objectives. This is a difficult area of policy. There are of course significant emotional considerations to take into account and government should not make the loss of life of a loved one any more difficult than it is already to those who find themselves in that position. However, this must be carefully weighed in light of the need for accessibility to healthy organs for those who do require transplants. The power of veto in regard to organ transplant rests in the hands of the next of kin. This bill introduces amendments to revise the definition of 'senior available next of kin' and makes clarifications around consent. Regardless of the need for more donor organs, the power over a person's body, even in death, should rest with their views held when living and their families.


I will, however, take this moment to encourage all Queenslanders who have not yet done so to register their wishes on the organ donation register. Some of us feel passionately about donating our organs should the circumstances of our death allow for such a donation. Others take a contrary position. Regardless, the registration, which only takes a few minutes of your time, can not only potentially help someone in desperate need but also give an element of certainty to your family of your wishes should the unfortunate event occur.

With regard to organ donation, when I was a practising nurse I worked in a renal intensive care unit for about 12 months. It was very sad watching patients having to undergo peritoneal dialysis for months and months at a time while they were waiting for a transplant. I do remember a particular kidney, and I know that sounds a bit odd. There was a patient called June who I looked after who had two kidneys rejected. For the benefit of the House, when people have a kidney transplant they often do not remove the diseased kidneys; they leave them in place and they put the new kidneys in the pelvic area. The important thing about a donor kidney is that it must be transplanted within 24 to 48 hours of removal from the donor. As I said, it is transplanted into the pelvic area and the renal blood vessels are then anastomosed, or joined together, to the iliac blood vessels. The donor ureter is then transplanted into the bladder.

Of course, the biggest problem with transplants is rejection. You can have acute rejection, which does not take very long to occur, or you can have more long-term tubular necrosis, or an infection, later. As honourable members may well know, all transplanted patients have to have immunosuppressant drugs. When kidneys, for instance, are rejected, they can sometimes be about 10 times the initial size when they were transplanted. I well remember going on a tour with new postgraduate nurses and we went into the morgue. As honourable members would know, they have different specimens there. There was a kidney which was about this big. It was the largest kidney I had ever seen. Then I saw the name and I could not help myself. I said, 'I actually know that kidney. I was there when the kidney was transplanted in theatre.' It was pretty dramatic for new nurses to see what can actually happen with a rejected kidney. It is a story that I have often told to new nurses as well.

In addition, this bill allows for prescribed tissue banks to lawfully recover reasonable costs incurred regarding donation of organ and tissue from other jurisdictions, and enables non-coronial post mortems to be conducted at a facility other than the hospital at which a person died. This bill also seeks to enable the transfer of land from the department of health to hospital and health services, furthering the decentralisation surrounding our hospitals. The decentralisation strategy is working. Since the establishment of hospital and health boards mid last year, hospital emergency waiting times have decreased, and the average length of stay in hospital for patients has dropped by 11 per cent. We have a wonderful new hospital on the Gold Coast, which I believe the minister will be officially opening tomorrow. The staff there have already settled in very well. The pet name for the new university hospital given by the staff is actually 'Battlestar Galactica'. It is about 1.3 kilometres to travel from one end of the hospital to the other end and CTC units have their response rates down to about six minutes. The minister can imagine how fast they are running to get to cardiac arrests and different codes.

The Newman government continues to improve the way our health services operate in Queensland and the figures continue to tell the story. This bill introduces additional common-sense initiatives that will further strengthen our health sector. I commend the minister for bringing this bill to the House.

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (10.03 pm): I rise today as a member of the Health and Community Services Committee to speak to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 and also our report No. 33. As we have heard tonight, the bill is an omnibus bill which proposes amendments to the following Health portfolio acts: the Food Act 2006, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1945 and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979. I will go through a couple of the changes to those particular acts, the first one being the Food Act.

The bill proposes to amend the Food Act 2006 by stopping the introduction of a state-wide voluntary food business rating scheme by amending legislation. The department consulted with the Food Business Rating Scheme Working Group regarding these amendments to this scheme. I note also that that working group consists of representatives from the Local Government Association of Queensland, the south-east council of mayors as well as seven local government areas including Townsville City Council in my electorate.

We also heard from the minister tonight that the bill proposes to amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to provide for the transfer of land and buildings between the department of health and hospital and health services—the HHS. This will ensure that hospital and health boards are able to assume responsibility for the land and buildings under their control. It goes well with our devolution of responsibility down to the levels where it can be put to best effect to support the local regional populations that those HHSs support. The amendment also enable the transfer of approximately \$5 billion in land and buildings from the department to the HHSs by way of a transfer notice—again cutting down the regulation—made by the minister and published in the *Government Gazette*. It is expected that most of those transfers will be completed in the next year. As I said, this amendment supports our government's intention to decentralise decision making and improve the autonomy and delivery of healthcare services.


The third portion of this bill establishes the Maternal Deaths Statistics Collection. I welcome and also note the minister's response to our report's second recommendation that the minister outlined in his speech tonight. The bill proposes to amend the Public Health Act 2005 to establish the Maternal Deaths Statistics Collection, increase the awareness of the incidence and causes of maternal death, monitor and analyse maternity outcomes and also research obstetric care. The available research indicates that up to half of our maternal deaths may be preventable. This is the most significant initiative of the amendment as it will help us to monitor and take preventive action against maternal mortality rates.

The bill introduces a requirement that a report be made to the chief executive by the health practitioner who has had primary responsibility for the care of a pregnant woman and is aware that the woman has died up to one year after the end of that pregnancy. This includes death from accidental or incidental causes. The information collected through the Maternal Deaths Statistics Collection will be managed by the department of health and will be analysed and reported on by the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council. I also note the relevant sections of the act that talk about the confidentiality of that information and the need to handle it with care.

The bill also amends the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act. Largely this is to fix up two minor operational issues to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the QIMR. Basically, it will enable the membership of the council of the QIMR to be staggered and to allow the council to enter into agreements without a requirement to obtain approval from the DG of Queensland Health. Again, I also note for the members of this chamber that the QIMR is one of the largest and most successful medical research institutes in the country. Its research focuses on three key areas of cancer, infectious diseases, and mental health and complex disorders.

Lastly, we heard the previous member, the honourable member for Mudgeeraba, talk about—and she has had more experience in this area—the Transplantation and Anatomy Act. The bill proposes to amend the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to modernise the definition of ‘senior available next of kin’ in recognition of today’s modern family structures such as stepsiblings and the like. We have heard already tonight that research shows that about 80 per cent of Australians are willing to become organ donors and 78 per cent to become tissue donors. However, a person’s family is always asked to confirm the person’s wishes to become a donor and, in that case, fewer than 60 per cent of families give consent for the organ or tissue donation. The point here, given that I have not actually dealt with the operation of the Transplantation and Anatomy Act, is that I myself am a donor. The important thing here is to encourage people to make sure that, first of all, they register as donors and they adjust it on their e-health records but they must also let their family know of their intentions. It is very important that if you are planning to become a donor—and I would encourage you all to do so—you do let your family know and discuss it with them obviously before the time of crisis arises.

In summary, I just want to first of all thank again our secretariat, which as usual was very efficient in this process. I would also like to mention the four submissions that we received from the AMAQ, Transplant Australia, Queensland Centre for Mothers and Babies and also from the Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research. I thank the minister for introducing this bill and I also thank his departmental staff for the very informative briefing that they provided to our committee, and I support the passage of this bill.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (10.10 pm): This bill was considered by the Health and Community Services Committee, of which I was a member, and it has been discussed. I have not heard from our chair, the member for Kallangur, but I am sure that he will say something with regard to the bill. The bill was supported by the committee, and I support that recommendation.

The minister here tonight has made an interesting series of statements, beginning with the issue of maternal deaths and the statistical collection of those deaths. It is an admirable process, but it is not new. We have always done it, but it was done in a different way. We have always collected those detailed statistics, as we should, because it is a pretty important part of the running of a hospital which may or may not have an obstetric component. Patients may well succumb, and they may be mothers with children. Traditionally, maternal deaths are one of the greatest tragedies that can occur in hospitals and, as was said by the member for Mudgeeraba and a variety of other people, certainly to families. Of course every maternal and neonatal death is a loss to society, and what you have to realise is that it is the taxpayers of the future. But beyond that there is a lifetime of concern for the medical professionals, nursing staff and ancillary staff who are involved. Generally when these things happen there are quite a large number of people involved. In the smaller hospitals you might find everyone is involved; in a larger hospital you might find that upwards of 50 people or more will be involved directly, and they will all have a view as to what may or may not have happened and what should have happened and what could be the outcome thereof. So in fact, to examine these things in a very detailed way is entirely appropriate.

It is also appropriate to examine the statistics, but you cannot statistically analyse the data because you are dealing with a series of one-offs. That is not to say that you cannot break that data down in such a way that you can make any sense of it, but it is very difficult to do. Strangely enough, when you are actually dealing with these situations a lot of things happen that in fact are not actually recalled by the individuals concerned because everything seems to happen so quickly and you need collateral information to explain what may well have happened. I will not go into details because sometimes they are quite gory. But having said that, it is always a tragedy. It is never very good. There was an assumption made that there are always tragically foetal deaths involved, but that does not always happen. In most cases, sadly enough, it does; but sometimes it does not. It is a uniquely difficult problem when the mother does succumb, but fortunately you might well have a baby that does survive. It would be interesting to know how they collect their data, and I would be very interested to see the outcomes. It is a very rare problem.

Unfortunately, in Australia perinatal mortality amongst Aboriginals remains unacceptably high. It also remains unacceptably high amongst people who have major issues with regard to drugs, alcoholism and a variety of fringe type problems that we cannot seem to get on top of. It does not mean to say that we are not trying. I think in every community these things are occurring at a rate that to everyone else seems very slow, but for those people who are involved and who have tried everything it does not always give them the results they would like. It is very difficult in Australia because you have such a widely distributed group of people. You can see those people antenatally with a view as to how you might manage them, but when things do happen it is an evolving story. It is one that unfortunately besets us in a modern world, and we have not always got the answers. But it is interesting to see that it has come in with regard to this bill tonight, and I will be very interested to see what the outcomes are.

The other changes to the bill are the issues in relation to the Food Act 2006 which seem fairly straightforward. It confirms the state-wide voluntary food business rating scheme. Basically it conforms to the national template.

The most significant change is that involving the health and hospital boards, with the transfer of land and assets effectively from Queensland Health centrally to regional boards. This effectively does complete the transition from a centralised, single-point operation to a series of regional operations. The wider issue of the boards does engender a little bit of further discussion. I have heard some of the points that have been made tonight. I certainly was one of those who were in favour of the boards coming in, as we all were. I thought that the original boards of years ago were actually very effective. I know they are often derided as being everything from National Party plots to people's playthings. By and large, I actually do not believe that. I think there were some problems, but certainly they were not uniform and it would be nice to say that they will not occur again.

Strangely enough, the key driver of the change of the boards is not necessarily the board membership itself; it is probably the capacity of the board to respond to the staff of the hospital in such a way that it reflects the community attitudes. In some ways the board needs to represent itself as the custodian of patient interests, and maybe the CEO or the medical superintendent is in fact the custodian of the standards of the hospital, and the staff, to some extent, and the various heads of the department represent a combination of the two things. It does appear that when the health boards stray from that task—and I am not saying they are at the moment, but I am watching pretty closely—that they tend to defer the interests of the public and have more of a sectional belief that they need to either endorse the view entirely of the CEO or the hospital superintendent, be that as it may—but generally in the Queensland model they are CEOs.

We tend to see a diminution of the capacity of the patients to actually get service delivery, quality of care and also an acquittal of the process. What does that mean? It means that you tend to leave problems behind and you accelerate things that are relatively easy. From a board's perspective this is probably an easy way forward, because in fact you tend to be looking at widgets and people as numbers; but in fact people are not numbers. We count them numerically, but every person is important and you judge the quality of your system by your ability to carry everybody forward with you. It is interesting that you actually have a bill which is talking about health boards and some of these issues about land and things like that, and then you are talking about maternal deaths statistics. With maternal deaths you are looking at ones and twos and you are looking at the importance of one person, and that is the critical issue that boards have got to see themselves in. They have got to be interested in those ones and twos. Everyone can look after the easy stuff, but it is the hard things on which you are judged.

In terms of the health boards, this bill will see the completion of a series of transitions whereby these boards will have assets they have to manage and so on. But if everyone just assumes that they will automatically solve all of our problems and they are always going to work, they are in dreamland. It is not going to happen. I do not care what members have been told: it is not going to happen because (1) it has not happened like that before and (2) if there is a problem with regard to direction, either from above to the hospital administrator or if the hospital administrator gives the board incorrect direction or basically misinforms or selectively informs them, then you are going to get the worst outcomes.

Earlier tonight I indicated that on the Gold Coast this has already started to happen. I am not saying that it is not happening anywhere else—I do not want to go into any details—but it is actually happening on the Gold Coast.

Mr Trout: It is working good in Cairns.

Dr DOUGLAS: Well, it has happened in Cairns in the past.

Mr Trout: No, it is working good in Cairns.

Dr DOUGLAS: It has happened in Cairns in the past. It has led previously in other times—I have worked in the system on and off for a very long time, and I can tell you that if you—

Mr Trout: There are no waiting lists in Cairns.

Dr DOUGLAS: Waiting lists are just one part of the system; it is not everything. If you want to have boards that basically work for the great body politic and actually deliver good outcomes and clinical excellence, those boards have to entirely focus themselves on the needs of all of the people. That is where the focus has to be. And if they do not do that, they will never do anything other than what we have already had. So we will have replaced an existing system, for which many people have worked over the years and which certainly had its problems, but not for the whole idea that magically the new system will make a huge difference. You can forget it; it does not work like that.

The boards themselves have to function in such a way that they deliver a tangible benefit for those patients of whom they are effectively, in some ways, the guardians. If they do not do that they will never deliver anything. They have to start doing it from the word go. As I have detailed, the big problem is when they are selectively informed or misinformed. The presumption is that this will not occur, but in fact—


Mr Trout: Alex, Cairns is working so well.

Dr DOUGLAS: If people assume things and not know them or do not discuss those details with people who would know, all you will get is average results, and you will have problems and you will leave patients behind.

As I have said, we treat every maternal death as a very significant problem—and we should, because it is really important. But do you know what? Every other illness has to be treated in the same way. We have had major problems historically in Queensland. For those who may not know, we shut one of the paediatric cardiac units. It was transferred to Melbourne after an extensive period of investigation. People here probably are not aware of what happened, but decisions were made that probably, in retrospect, were wrong. The whole unit was transferred. People made a lot of assumptions and they all sat there and said, 'There's nothing going wrong. We think everything is great.' Well, if you do not measure it and you are not looking at it correctly, you can get it wrong. Then suddenly you find that there are major problems.

I am not saying that there are major problems, but you do need to measure these things. There has been, I think, an unhealthy zest for thinking 'everything is okay because we have a brand-new system and it somewhat replicates the things we had in the past'. There were problems with the boards in the past and we did not always confront them. We probably should have, and not often enough did we. I have worked in a variety of hospitals throughout Queensland. I can say that they all had their own individual flavours and were influenced in many ways. They all had small problems. There was not one set of problems that was in some ways common to all of them. There was some commonality of issues between them.

When we moved to a centralised system I think it was probably the worst of all evils, but it did not necessarily mean that it was all wrong. As we roll out this new strategy we must recognise that there are problems and there will be problems. We should seek to have a system of clinical excellence. We are spending a lot of money—\$13 billion or something. It is over a quarter of the Health budget and there are huge capital grants coming from the Commonwealth. Under the new Commonwealth guidelines a lot of measures will be applied regarding clinical excellence. They will not necessarily be measures that are mentioned here tonight. Members have been going on about waiting lists and things like that. They will be only one part of it. It will be about outcomes—what actually happens to patients. Small things like maternal statistics are a good guide as to what is going on.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (10.25 pm): The Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 is an omnibus bill. It amends various acts including the Health Legislation Amendment Act 2011, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1945 and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979. It also makes some minor amendments to the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013.

There has been significant consultation undertaken with key stakeholders in relation to this bill, in particular in relation to the Public Health Act amendments in relation to maternal death statistics. Consultation was undertaken with the Australian College of Midwives, the Australian College of Rural

and Remote Medicine, the AMA, the Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies, the Private Hospitals Association of Queensland, the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. They were supportive of the amendments. Whilst the AMA supported the amendments, as the minister mentioned, it was concerned that the World Health Organisation definition of 'maternal death' had not been adopted. The minister dealt with that issue in his remarks about the bill earlier this evening.


I want to speak about one issue in particular in relation to the bill—that is, the amendments to the Public Health Act to establish the Maternal Death Statistics Collection to increase awareness of maternal death, to analyse obstetric patterns and outcomes to facilitate research and to help plan obstetric health services and strategies to prevent or minimise mortality.

The Minister for Health is well aware of the great leaps forward being taken in maternal care in my electorate of Beaudesert. It is an example of a rural community in which maternal services have suffered significantly in the last decade or so but are now being restored to the level they were previously, around 2000, 2001 or 2002. The decline in maternal services in rural Queensland, not just in Beaudesert but also in other parts of the state, in the view of many rural health practitioners, has led to an increased risk to mothers and babies and to expectant mothers living in rural areas. The lack of access to maternity services has led to an increase in roadside births. The removal of those services and the increase in roadside births or potential roadside births increases the risk of mortality for mothers.

Whilst the number of maternal deaths in Queensland is very low, we do need to analyse the data. When it comes to rural and regional Queensland and the fact that maternity services were removed over the last decade by the former government—it is a trend that is now being reversed, step by step, starting with Beaudesert—we need to analyse that data to make sure that services are targeted in an appropriate way and so that the information collected can be used to identify deaths related to pregnancy, including where the death is associated with an intervention or an omission, an incorrect treatment or a chain of events dealing with pregnancy or childbirth or immediately following childbirth. Of course, maternal services do not just end when the baby is born. That is why policies such as the Mums and Bubs policy, providing maternal care after birth, are such good policies.

The Maternal Death Statistics Collection will collect data on the death of women up to one year after pregnancy, and this bill will enable further information to also be collected from other health professionals involved in the care of a woman. There are penalties involved where there is a failure to report and the director-general of the health department will have overall responsibility for the collection of that data. It will include details of the deceased woman, place of death, details of her care during pregnancy, type of delivery and labour, any pre-existing medical conditions, any interventions performed, cause of death, whether a post-mortem was conducted and any identified avoidable factors as determined by a state maternal mortality committee.

There are many good aspects to this bill. However, I wanted to focus on that one relating to maternal death statistics to highlight the work that this government is undertaking to restore maternity services to rural Queensland commencing in Beaudesert in 2014. It was a service that was stripped away from the community by neglect and has taken a change in government to a government that cares for rural and regional Queensland to restore it. This is something that we on this side of the chamber should all be immensely proud, because where in the past things have been taken away we are now restoring those services where they are needed and providing services to rural and regional women to keep them safe so that hopefully the statistics collected under this provision in relation to maternal deaths will be minimised and eliminated into the future. I will be supporting the bill.


 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (10.31 pm): This evening I rise in the House to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 which is an omnibus bill to amend six acts. The amendment aimed at stopping the introduction of the state-wide voluntary food business rating scheme is as a result of extensive consultation with the LGAQ and South-East Queensland Council of Mayors and representatives of 11 councils throughout the state. There was particular concern raised by these representatives with regard to the associated costs of any scheme which were likely to be borne by the councils and/or food businesses. While it was acknowledged that the scheme may well have achieved a level of consistency in standards throughout the state, it was thought that this could already be achieved through the application of the national principle endorsed by the implementation subcommittee of the Food Regulation Standing Committee of the Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council. In line with reducing red tape, of course we will support this amendment.

One of the more significant components of the bill is the component that deals with the transfer of assets from the department of health to the hospital and health boards. The 17 hospital and health services are governed through a hospital and health board that is driving the government's intent to decentralise decision making and improve the autonomy of HHSs so they can individually adapt to the needs of the communities in which they serve. Each of the HHSs are focused upon delivering health services focused on patients and people; providing Queenslanders with value in health services; investing, innovating and planning for the future; and empowering the community and our health workforce. Since the launch of the Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland in February 2013, we have witnessed many structural and cultural improvements within our health system. We are unashamedly proud of the effect that the HHS boards have had on the centralised bureaucracy which has resulted in a 43 per cent reduction of the corporate structure, with the savings redirected out to the regions in service delivery improvements. This amendment will provide the HHS boards with increased autonomy that will see them build upon those improvements to deliver additional services to their regions. It is not unrealistic to expect that these changes will see localised service improvements such as a likely reduction in elective surgery waiting lists.

Another key component of this omnibus bill is the introduction of the Maternal Death Statistics Collection which will increase community awareness of the rate of maternal deaths and will allow greater analysis of obstetric patterns that will ultimately lead to new and innovative strategies to combat maternal morbidity. The reporting obligations now extend to one year of the end of pregnancy and will include deaths from all accidental and incidental causes. While the number of maternal deaths in Queensland is low, averaging between 16 and 25 deaths per annum, this does not detract from the fact that there are likely benefits that extend across public health from the introduction of a more systemic maternal death monitoring program. The data collected will be primarily used by the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council and will ensure that the information provided for inclusion in the triennial report on maternal mortality in Australia is both relevant and of high quality.

The amendment dealing with the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 will ensure that we are able to build upon our already impressive transplant donors and survival rates of recipients. It is an alarming statistic that approximately 80 per cent of individuals consent to organ donation. However, at the critical time, families are either unable to confirm that willingness or refuse to consent and less than 60 per cent of organ or tissue donations actually proceed. The proposed amendments will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of persons tasked with the daily application of this act.

The last amendment relates to the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and will ensure that the QIMR council's fantastic work can continue. I have had the great pleasure of attending a private tour of QIMR under the direction of Professor Frank Gannon. While never professing to have understood the goings-on I witnessed, it was clear that the programs concentrating on mental health and complex disorders, cancer and infectious diseases will continue to develop and provide outstanding benefits to both research and medical developments for many years to come. In closing, I thank the minister and his department for the preparation of the bill and our committee for the review of this bill and the secretariat for its outstanding support and effort. I wholeheartedly support the passage of this bill.

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (10.36 pm): Today I rise to contribute to the debate in favour of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. Despite the perilous condition Queensland Health was left in by the former Labor government, our government has turned around the delivery of health services in this state. With the tabling of the report into the Health payroll bungle highlighting the former government's actions that directly affected 80,000 Queenslanders and cost taxpayers \$1.2 billion, the task of rebuilding our health sector has been a momentous one. To turn this ship around takes great resolve and the foresight to a long-term commitment. In the 2013 state budget we saw the largest increase in Health spending in our state's history. Perfecting our health sector requires continuous improvement and, with legislation like this bill we debate today, we will see the strength of our health system within Queensland grow firmly into the future. This amendment bill will see greater promotion and protection of public health, most notably through amendments of the Public Health Act 2005. By collecting and managing information, the establishment of mechanisms for health information can be assessed for appropriate research by relevant faculties.

The loss of a mother during or after pregnancy is a terrible thought—one I cannot begin to imagine. A 2011 Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council report recommended that the Public Health Act be amended to require that any death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year of the end of a pregnancy be reported. The monitoring and review of maternal mortality are critical to the provisions of evidence based services capable of supporting women during and


following pregnancy. Traditionally, maternal mortality rates have been used as a marker of the quality of maternal care, being one of the oldest recorded forms of healthcare quality assurance activities. As noted by the Minister for Health, the number of maternal deaths in Queensland is low by international standards, historically numbering between 16 and 25 deaths per year on average. However, this does not distract from the fact that there are a number of significant public health benefits to be gained through the introduction of a more systemic approach to the monitoring and review of maternal deaths. The establishment of the Maternal Death Statistics Collection will improve the completeness and reliability of the information that is available about the causes of maternal death in Queensland. The information collected through this register will be analysed to identify deaths directly related to a woman's pregnancy, including deaths associated with interventions or omissions, incorrect treatment or a chain of events associated with pregnancy or childbirth or the period immediately following childbirth.

Deaths that result from haemorrhaging or a rupture of the uterus are examples of direct deaths. The data collected will also be used to analyse information about deaths results from pre-existing conditions. These indirect deaths also include conditions that develop during pregnancy or that are aggravated by the physiological effects of pregnancy. For example, a death associated with heart disease or diabetes that was aggravated by the pregnancy is an indirect death.

Information regarding incidental or accidental deaths will also be analysed. These deaths may indicate a link to pregnancy, although the link may sometimes be considered a distant association. Car accidents, suicides, drug overdoses and some forms of cancer are examples of accidental or incidental deaths that may have been contributed to by the pregnancy or the post-pregnancy care of the woman. For example, the death of a woman that is the result of a drug overdose might not necessarily appear to be linked to the woman's pregnancy.

This amendment bill will also add significantly to the effective operations of the hospital and health services. The establishment of the hospital and health services supports the government's intention to decentralise decision making and improve the autonomy and delivery of healthcare services. Since the hospital and health services were established by the LNP government, hospital emergency department wait times have decreased, with a 12 per cent improvement in the number of emergency department patients waiting fewer than four hours and the average length of stay for patients in hospital has dropped by 11 per cent. In this regard, Logan Hospital has seen great results. In the future, it is expected that improved local control will also see additional reductions in elective surgery waiting times.

The amendments will enable approximately \$5 billion in land and buildings to be transferred between the department of health to hospital and health services and between services by way of transfer notice made by the minister and published in the *Government Gazette*. I commend the efforts of the honourable Minister for Health in tackling the tough decisions that are required to be made to get our health sector back on track. I commend the ministerial and departmental staff for their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of health services in our great state. I also commend the efforts of the Health and Community Services Committee and their parliamentary support staff for their diligent review of yet another vital piece of legislation that will ensure that Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity. I support the passing of this bill.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (10.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 and the constructive changes that this bill proposes in accordance with the Newman government's policy objectives. This bill takes a common-sense approach to a number of pieces of legislation, enhancing operational effectiveness and reducing the regulatory burden in line with the government's legislative priorities.

Anyone involved with the provision of health services on the Gold Coast or residents who have visited a Gold Coast hospital during the past 12 months would have noticed the vast improvements since decision-making power was returned to local health boards in June last year. The Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board, ably led by chairman Ian Langdon, has consistently delivered improved services and managed the successful move from the Gold Coast Hospital to the new Gold Coast University Hospital at Parklands. Tomorrow morning I will welcome the Premier and the Minister for Health, along with some of my parliamentary colleagues, to my electorate for the official opening of the new hospital, which has been operating now for just over four weeks. Mr Langdon and chief executive Ron Calvert have led a seamless transition into the hospital, continuing to provide first-class health services for the constituents of my electorate and all the other electorates across the city.

After the formalities at the new hospital tomorrow morning the Premier will then turn the sod for the new Allamanda Private Hospital next door, which will be part of the growing health and knowledge precinct in Southport. Just across the road at Griffith University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian O'Connor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Allan Cripps have just opened their \$150 million health centre, which is the largest investment in a single building in Griffith University's 40-year history.

There has never been a better time to be involved in the provision of health services on the Gold Coast and in Southport. The changes introduced by the minister and carried out by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service have been instrumental in ensuring that Gold Coasters can access the best possible health care and health professionals. Last month, Mr Langdon wrote to me with the results of the 2013 in-patient satisfaction survey conducted across both the Gold Coast Hospital and the Robina Hospital. Ninety-two per cent of respondents reported that their care at the Gold Coast Hospital was good to excellent, with the same number stating that they would recommend the Gold Coast Hospital to others. These are fantastic results and are a credit to the dedicated staff at these two hospitals.


This bill will hand over even more control to the local health boards by ensuring that they are able to assume responsibility for the land and buildings under their control. This is consistent with the Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland, which proposed that local communities should be allowed to tailor the service delivery of any current and future infrastructure development assets and capital works projects.

I am strongly supportive of the minister's statement in his explanatory speech that—

These amendments are consistent with the government's intention that the decentralisation of health care will be strengthened by giving hospital and health boards greater control over key aspects of decision making.

We are committed to taking the bureaucracy out of health services and making sure that local communities have control over the decisions that are made about health services in their area.

I would also like to highlight the bill's proposed amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to free the implementation of this important legislation from red tape. Three hundred and forty thousand Queenslanders are listed on the organ donor register, part of six million people nationwide. Although that may seem a large number, the reality is that, although 80 per cent of Australians indicate that they are willing to become organ donors, less than 60 per cent of families give consent for an organ or tissue donation to proceed. The organ donation debate was thrown back into the spotlight today when it was revealed that the family of six-year-old Mia Quinnell, who was tragically killed in a freak accident on the weekend west of Toowoomba, made the unthinkable brave decision to donate her organs. Decisions such as that, although heartbreaking, mean that countless other lives are saved and more families are spared the harrowing task of burying their loved ones. This process should operate as effectively and as efficiently as possible to save unnecessary drama and stress at such a delicate time. The amendments proposed in this bill will modify the definition of 'senior available next of kin' and clarify requirements about a person's view of an organ donation. These are important and sensible changes. I stand in the House tonight to speak in favour of this bill. I am very supportive of this amendment bill as proposed by the minister.


 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (10.46 pm): I rise to speak to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 in two particular areas. I refer to the health and hospital board amendment that will provide for the transfer of ownership of the department of health assets to the boards. I seek clarification from the minister. The explanatory notes talk about improving the management of infrastructure and assets across the Health portfolio. I understand the giving of the assets to those boards that are administering services out of those assets. Will the minister confirm that the government will continue to fund capital works and that this transfer will not be a way of also transferring the obligation for the construction of new assets? Although I understand that the minister has given the boards the ability to borrow, in some instances that obligation will be beyond the ability of boards. I would like that clarification.

The member for Bundamba talked about excess funds with these boards. There were some excess funds, if you like, in my area. I commend the board in my area. It is under the chairmanship of Charles Ware. The Gladstone representative on the board is Kurt Heidecker. I think the board is now operating well in terms of endeavouring to provide services to the broader community that lives in Central Queensland. I do not believe that these boards would have the ability to fund the necessary infrastructure, particularly the capital works that would be necessary in these board areas to cover improved services, particularly in high-growth areas such as Gladstone where there are huge influxes of population. Despite the best efforts of the board and some assistance from the minister, the health

services for the Gladstone area still do not equate to either the population growth or the risk profile. However, I commend the minister for his visits to the electorate and his discussion in relation to his vision for improved services and that, under his stewardship, some of the criteria for restricting growth that were used by senior members of the health department under the previous government would not be acceptable. I thank the minister for that.

There is an issue that I intend to raise with the minister this week in relation to the employment of a surgeon, but this is not the time to have that discussion. I look forward to the minister's response on that matter to ensure that this is not a way of government cutting out its responsibility to fund particularly those capital works in many board areas. The need is greater than the ability of the local area to raise that much needed capital.


I want to touch on the issue of post-mortem examinations. With the Deputy Speaker's indulgence, I want to place on the record the appreciation of both my office and families in my electorate in relation to a post-mortem that was carried out very promptly as a result of a culturally sensitive circumstance. I apologise if it may be a stretch in relation to this bill, but I did want to place on the record the appreciation of this particular family and also my office in ensuring that the post-mortem could be done expeditiously in order for that culturally sensitive matter to be dealt with. I thank the minister and his staff for their work at that time. It was greatly appreciated at a time of great sadness. I look forward to the minister's response.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (10.50 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I commend the Minister for Health on the great work he has been doing over the last 18 months. His predecessors from the Labor government did a terrible job. The Minister for Health has done a fantastic job in illustrating what a health minister needs to do to deliver quality health care for Queenslanders. I commend him on the great work that he has done.

This amendment bill will amend a variety of acts that will improve their operation. Ultimately the outcome of this bill is that it confirms and supports our government's commitment to decentralising decision making and also confirms our support for the increase of local autonomy. There were two things that I did want to touch on if I could. I wanted to touch on the changes to the Public Health Act which will allow for the collection and the management of particular data for research, particularly into pregnancy and post pregnancy deaths. Our pregnancy mortality rates are very low in comparison to international numbers, but as many of my colleagues have already said, any death is tragic. A death during pregnancy or immediately after birth is particularly tragic. I am very lucky that none of my friends or family have been touched by such tragedy. I hope that with the information that we collect we can look out for the signs and factors and avoid them so that families in the future do not have to go through the tragic circumstances that unfortunately many do every single year.

The other issue that I wanted to quickly touch on is the changes to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act which clarify provisions to ensure that there is absolute certainty with regard to a deceased's wishes and to make sure that they are honoured. I am a big believer in organ donation. I think that it is a great thing when someone makes a decision to donate their organs and when someone's family supports that decision. It means that someone else is able to lead a full life and is able to continue with their family. It means that good comes out of tragedy. I think that where we have been able to clarify who next of kin is and what consent is is a good thing.

The other thing that I wanted to say touches on comments that the member for Southport made when he was talking about the Gold Coast Hospital and the new Gold Coast University Hospital. Earlier this year my grandfather unfortunately fell ill and he had to spend some time at the Gold Coast Hospital in Southport. My family and I were touched by the very caring nature with which he was treated and the incredibly high quality of care that he received. I have no doubt that it has made an impact on his life to this day. I have heard from constituents who have taken advantage of the new Gold Coast University Hospital that they too are receiving quality care and are finding it an amazing hospital to visit. The new services that there will be over the coming months are fantastic for the Gold Coast community. No doubt tomorrow's ceremony and festivities will contribute towards the future of the Gold Coast University Hospital. I look forward to seeing this bill pass the House. Thank you.

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (10.54 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions tonight and in particular the members of the government for their warm support and acknowledgement of the great work which has been done by this can-do government in rebuilding the health system in Queensland. I want to touch on a couple of issues raised by those members opposite and the honourable member for Gladstone. If I can start

with the honourable member for Gladstone, the honourable member asked a couple of questions in relation to capital works in particular. We are facilitating a seamless process to enable the transfer of assets to hospital and health services. It was something that was laid down in a head of power when we passed through this parliament last year the Hospital and Health Boards Act. We felt that it was important to enable our hospital and health services to own those assets and have some degree of control over the management of those assets. The assurance that I would give to the honourable member, and it also ties in with a question raised by the honourable member for Bundamba, is that any substantive trade in assets—that is, a sale in assets, a lease or a loan—has to have the consent of the Health minister and the Treasurer. We are the final arbiters. This is not designed to shift off our books our obligation to fund major capital works. There are significant assets which are in the overall remit and ownership of Queensland Health. We believe in allowing the hospital and health services the flexibility to trade in some of those assets. If they have a block of land or a small disused building we believe they should be able to sell that in order to put something else down. We are not talking about great big hospitals. There is a lot of land and small assets that, if traded in the right way, can allow for other priorities, which might be in the area of community health or dental. It does not mean that we will be turning around and selling hospitals. That is not what it is about at all. I said that last year. I reinforce that. It is beyond the capacity of a board to invest in hospitals that are worth millions and millions of dollars. We would have to discuss that and look at how we contribute to that as central government.

I have mentioned previously that we are looking at how we can leverage external capital to help us invest in new infrastructure in Queensland, the same as the previous government did with the Sunshine Coast University Hospital with the public-private partnership which we are now looking at building on. We are one of the major proponents. After getting start-up capital from the state they then borrowed and were able to utilise that to construct the hospital. We are not looking at shifting principal responsibility, but we do believe that the ability to look at and better utilise assets is something that our hospital and health services should be doing.

I acknowledge the member for Gladstone's concern and advocacy over many years in the area of enhanced services for the people of the Gladstone health area. I think that that is bearing some particular fruit in recent times, certainly in relation to the overall service mapping in that community which she has been a major advocate of and also the opportunity to be able to partner in particular with Mater Health Services in town, which is basically linked to our hospital, with regard to joint appointments for specialists in Gladstone. We see that as very important to enhance their opportunities for retention in the Gladstone community.

The member for Gaven raised a number of issues. I might just touch on them. I am one who actually believes if there is an issue we should get the evidence and act upon it and take whatever steps we need to. Last year when issues were raised with me around the proficiency of the Queensland Board of the Medical Board of Australia and their conduct I instructed an investigation into that. That investigation found that there were significant failings in the medical board which led to its dismissal and the establishment of a new system in Queensland to deal with health complaints. I say to the honourable member for Gaven that if there is evidence of anything then the honourable member should bring that evidence forward and it will be properly investigated.

Dr Douglas: I tabled it. Read it. I tabled it a week ago.

Mr SPRINGBORG: He came to estimates last year, on about 28 June I think it was, and raised some issues—

Dr Douglas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order, member for Gaven!

Mr SPRINGBORG: He raised some issues. I said, 'Bring forward the evidence'. At that stage no-one had brought forward any evidence. One or two days later, some information came forward. The hospital board came to the department of health and asked the director-general to put in an external reviewer, which was done subsequently. I understand that that report has just about concluded and is being made available to the department. On at least one occasion we made contact with the honourable member through the police officer who is associated with the department of health, asking the honourable member to bring forward any evidence. On the last occasion, he said he had nothing further to offer. I am sure many people in Gaven would share that particular view.

Dr Douglas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Gaven, you have had your chance.

Mr SPRINGBORG: It is not unusual for agencies as large as mine to have people from the QPS embedded in them.

Dr DOUGLAS: I rise to a point of order. I take offence at those comments and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I did not hear the matters to which you refer. I ask the Minister for Health to continue.

Mr SPRINGBORG: As I have proven in the case of the medical board and its conduct in the health complaints system, if there is evidence we will not only take action but also significantly reform them. When it comes to issues, recently we have heard a lot of stuff from the honourable member for Gaven as he sought to misrepresent the PRIME report into the Gold Coast Hospital, where reports are brought forward by clinicians with regards to particular incidents in hospitals in a range of categories.

Dr Douglas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member for Gaven will cease interjecting.

Mr SPRINGBORG: When he has finished his witch hunt against the CE, demanding that the board chair sack that CE and while he is talking about interference, maybe he should look at himself and his own conduct. The honourable member was informed that there has been no remarkable increase in the reported incidents across a range of categories. In relation to standardised hospital mortality, for a hospital the size of the Gold Coast University Hospital the figure is remarkably below the number of incidents that would be expected with regards to standardised hospital mortality. It is actually performing exceptionally well.

Dr Douglas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gaven will cease interjecting. I warn the member under standing order 253A.

Mr SPRINGBORG: The honourable member fundamentally misunderstands the issue. The PRIME report related to reported incidents across a range of categories from unremarkable incidents up to alleged mortality in the hospital. There has been an eight per cent increase at the same time as there has been an eight per cent increase in the overall patient cohort seen in the hospital. There has not been any trend over a 12-month period other than that it has followed the growth in patient numbers. When it comes to standardised hospital mortality, with 100 being the benchmark, the Gold Coast Hospital is below that and for at least two quarters was down around 70. That is where the real indicators are. I agree with the honourable member that we should have measures and we should have good data. We should measure them and we should be able to report against them. That is what fundamentally drives us when it comes to knowing what is going on. I have indicated clearly that we will always take action on evidence that comes forward. That does not always mean that the proposition is verifiable at the end of the day.

With regard to the hospital boards, there is no doubt that they are bringing a tangible benefit. Instead of pulling down the hospital board and the remarkable achievements of the staff on the Gold Coast, I encourage the honourable member for Gaven to be prepared to give them some praise for what they are doing. In recent times they have had some remarkable turnarounds on the Gold Coast. The endoscopy waiting list has reduced from two years to six months for long-waits. That is an extraordinary performance. Now they are working through the long-wait surgical lists and will have them under control as well. They have done some quite extraordinary work in that particular area.

With regards to the reporting of maternal deaths in Queensland, no-one is walking away from the fact that there has been an informal collection of that information over a period. This bill puts in place a formal process with a statutory basis for the obligatory collection of statistics in relation to maternal deaths. The honourable member indicated that with such small numbers it is often very difficult to get some sort of tangible understanding of what is going on. Certainly we understand that the numbers are small—between 16 and 25—but there is no doubt that this has been driven by a reasonable expectation amongst clinicians that we can properly map what is happening with regards to maternal deaths and what is avoidable. There is a whole range of issues with regards to potential health impacts for women, right through their pregnancy and also post-pregnancy up to a year after birth. If we can do things to assist in ensuring greater outcomes for mothers during their pregnancy and post-birth, we will do that. This bill will do that in a formal way.

The member for Bundamba raised issues of asset transfers. I think I covered that in relation to my answer to the honourable member for Gladstone. She also talked about the issue of outsourcing. Outsourcing is unremarkable. The previous government outsourced around about \$1 billion in the last year of its government. We have done a similar amount. I think we might have been slightly down in our first full year, but I assure the House that will not be happening for too much longer. We believe in outsourcing if there is a contestable benefit to it. The state has an obligation to ensure that we get the best free public health services for the people of Queensland.

The honourable member for Bundamba fretted over the issue of surpluses. I suppose she would fret over that, because it is a completely alien concept for the Labor Party. In the last full year of its government, there was a \$302 million deficit. Every single hospital and health service had to be topped up. Notwithstanding that, we had elective surgery blowouts, we had a lengthening in outpatient waiting lists and they did not have a strategy to deal with our national elective surgery access target agreement. Notwithstanding the fact that they had budget blowouts and an escalation of 10 or 11 per cent each year with regards to the increase in health funding, they were not able to do the things that are fundamentally important.

We make no excuses for the fact that we expect our hospital boards to come in on budget. That is what we expect. The difference is that we are saying to them, 'If you meet your contracted activity, that is, the activity that we contract and expect you to do, and you put in place innovative processes and programs and are able to identify savings through liberating latent capacity and innovation and those sorts of things, you get to keep the savings in a spirit of entrepreneurship in order to reinvest'. Why would they not do that? Cairns will now be attacking 600 long-wait surgical cases. We are seeing a similar thing on the Gold Coast. The Darling Downs District Hospital and Health Board is looking at investing in the emergency department upgrade at Kingaroy Hospital, new maternity facilities in Stanthorpe and palliative care in Goondiwindi. They would not have been able to do those things if they had not liberated that latent capacity along the way.

Mrs Frecklington: It is common sense.

Mr SPRINGBORG: It is common sense for them to do that. Until a few months ago under the previous government, the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service had four-year-long waits for endoscopy. By December, it will be down to four weeks. That is what is happening.

Let us look at what has happened with the dental wait lists in Queensland with the injection of additional money from the Commonwealth that has been more than matched by the state government. Over the last little while we have put in \$56-odd million or almost \$60 million and, at the same time, the Commonwealth has put in around about \$10 million, which will escalate over a period as ours will escalate. What we have done that is different is that we have outsourced it. We have outsourced an enormous amount of activity to address those dental long-waits.

The previous government spent about \$1 million in a year. We are doing those sorts of things in a matter of a couple of weeks. We have cut the long-waits from 63,000 to 13,000 by doing things differently. It is not only about having targets but being prepared to be innovative along the way.

I note the issues that the honourable members raised with regard to a patient. I understand that that is an extremely complicated procedure that takes certain expertise. If that information is provided to us we are certainly happy to look at it and see what can be done. I have indicated that our hospital and health services are absolutely smashing the list with regard to standard endoscopy because of the work that they are doing and the way they are reinventing, reinvigorating and innovating.

The other thing we have to consider is the National Health Reform Agreement. Maybe the honourable member for Bundamba should have been paying attention when the National Health Reform Agreement was drawn up by the previous governments. I actually agree with the National Health Reform Agreement because it actually says who should be responsible for what. Primary and preventative health care is a Commonwealth responsibility. Acute health care and some of the specialist areas are our responsibility.

It also set national emergency access targets. No other Australian state or territory that signed up to this agreement is actually making the leaps and bounds that Queensland is in terms of some of the elective surgery targets. In terms of outpatients, it is the first year in seven years that we have fewer people on the outpatients waiting list than the previous year—some 16,000 of them.

There is an inherent disincentive for states that are efficient to do more work because this financial year is going to be used as the measure to set the benchmark for the new and efficient growth funding. The Commonwealth will provide 45 per cent funding next year and that will ramp up to 50 per cent.

The more our hospital and health services invest in addressing the historical and appalling long-waits left over by our predecessor the higher the benchmark will be set. As a result the Commonwealth government will not provide the same amount of trajectory funding under the new efficient growth arrangements. It is a disincentive and a problem that we are dealing with at the moment. The more we actually invest the more efficient we become and the more it disadvantages us. Therefore there is less of an obligation on the Commonwealth to actually provide a greater proportion of new efficient growth funding over a period of time.

I thank honourable members for their contribution. This will make an enormous difference to a whole range of healthcare issues in Queensland. Honourable members have ably spoken about this bill tonight. 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 31, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (11.13 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. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (11.13 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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


Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.14 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Castan, Mr C

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (11.14 pm): Last Tuesday I had the honour of attending the launch of the posthumously published book of Constantine (Con) Castan—*The Greeks of Brisbane: migration, arrival, home*. It is an incredibly well researched and wonderfully written tribute to the Greek diaspora who have made Brisbane their home since the mid-19th century. I am acutely aware of the influence that Greek migrants have had and continue to have in my community of West End and South Brisbane. Because of this influence and contribution West End and Brisbane is a more enriched community. The Greek diaspora held onto their culture and traditions and wove them into their new lives in a new land and shared them with their new community.

Con Castan was very much a part of the Greek community of Brisbane. In fact, he was a well-respected giant of Greek culture and literature and made an incredible contribution throughout his life. As close friend and colleague University of Queensland Emeritus Professor Bob Milns states in his forward to Con's book—

Con's devoted and tireless efforts to promote and propagate Greek culture in the city of Brisbane cannot be overstated. He was one of the main proponents of the founding of the ethnic radio station, 4EB, and, together with George Pippos, he can be rightly regarded as the founder of the ... Solomos Society, the Greek cultural organisation that has now been in existence for over thirty years ...

For his significant contribution to the Greek community he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia.

The Greeks of Brisbane is not only a celebration of the achievements and successes of each wave of Greek migration to Brisbane, but it is also a truthful account of the dangers and hardships they met along their way to creating a new life in an old land. Underpinning this excellent account of Greek diaspora in Brisbane is a poignant and graceful narrative of Con's personal history. A West End boy by birth and upbringing, Con was well published and widely sought after for his knowledge and expertise in both English and Greek literature. In short, Con is a migrant success story.

Credit must also be paid to Con's wife, Voula Castan—a wonderfully proud Greek-Australian woman who commands respect and affection in equal proportions—and his lifelong friend and the book's editor Barbara Garlick. Both Voula and Barbara honoured Con's ambition to complete and publish this book despite the difficulty of his illness followed by the grief of his death.

Con Castan has left much to mark his time in our city, in our country and in our community. I know that many in the Greek community are incredibly proud to call him a much loved son. Thank you Con for this significant tome—your last literary piece. May you rest in peace.

Russo, Ms M



Mr CAVALLUCCI (Brisbane Central—LNP) (11.17 pm): I rise tonight to pay tribute to an outstanding member of the Brisbane Central community who today, 29 October, reaches the enviable milestone and wonderful age of 100 years young. Congratulations to Signora Maria Russo, matriarch of the broader Russo family, mother of the highly regarded businesswoman Sarina Russo, daughters Rosina and Rita and son Joe.

Maria's story is another classic migrant story. Her family's achievements were born in a similar way to the many other hardworking migrants who came to Australia after World War II, ultimately making invaluable contributions to the modern society and way of life that we all now enjoy in Queensland.

Maria was born of humble beginnings, one of eight children, at the base of the north western slopes of Mount Etna in Sicily. She met and married the love of her life Antonino, who was a grape and hazelnut farmer in Castiglione di Sicilia. Antonino first moved to Australia after experiencing the possibilities of the outside world as a prisoner of war in England. Maria arrived in Brisbane in 1956 with the rest of the family to start their new way of life.

As a hardworking, resilient and strong woman, and like many Italian migrants of the time, she worked at the Golden Circle cannery during the week and at the family vineyard at Wacol on the weekends, all while raising her growing family. A strong willed and opinionated woman, Maria would sometimes be stood down from her job at the cannery, only to reapply for her job at a later time under a different name. Apparently this was also a trick often employed by her daughter Sarina.


Like many other migrant families, Maria's home community was the inner city. In the early years they settled in Spring Hill, in my electorate. Her daughter Sarina remembers and recognises her mother's support and generosity, with her mother providing the loan of \$2,000 to Sarina to implement her original business plans that today have culminated in the successful Sarino Russo group of businesses.

Today Maria will receive her due recognition—certificates and letters of congratulations from Premier Newman, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, Prime Minister Abbott and many other dignitaries. However, I thought I just might be able to top those by recognising her in this House tonight. This recognition will be a real tribute for those who have known her through the years—a special and hardworking lady who came from the farming community of Sicily and now sits in her apartment

overlooking the Story Bridge, no doubt reminiscing of a life to be proud of, a matriarch with 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren and an early pioneer of the great modern society that Queensland has become thanks to people just like her.

Today, on her 100th birthday, I commend Signora Maria Russo for her contribution and achievements, and I congratulate her on this special occasion on behalf of her fellow constituents of Brisbane Central. Buon compleanno e tanti auguri!

Drought


 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (11.20 pm): Generally I like to speak about positive things, but tonight I have to speak on a sad note about something that does not have a lot of positivity to it. I want to bring to the attention of the House the deplorable situation that is confronting Western and North-West Queensland, and almost the whole of Queensland for that matter—some 70 per cent of this state—that is drought stricken. It takes me back to my memories of being a young man facing the horrific drought of 1965 and I think of the plight of the people of that era. We are facing the same front now. I appeal to my colleagues in this state House to recognise the dire situation of the people of North Queensland, North-West Queensland and Western Queensland. I appeal to the Prime Minister and the federal Treasurer to take stock of that situation. In the words of that great American leader Abraham Lincoln, when the streets of the cities are covered in grass it will only be removed if we have a successful agricultural industry. I have to say that that is exactly the situation here in Queensland.

We have somewhat of a downturn in the mining industry at the moment. Everybody thinks that the mining industry is the be-all and end-all, but I have to say that out there at the moment there are many hundreds of young families wondering what their future holds. I plea tonight to the banks and to the financial institutions of this country to show some leniency and some understanding to these people who are facing a dire situation as we move into the spring of 2013. We pray to the Lord that there will be abundant rain soon. But their plight is desperate. Many of them cannot pay their bills. They do not know which way to turn next. I am fearful for the future of some of these people in question. It saddens me to see this happen. I have experienced it myself and I know full well what these people are going through.

A few months ago in May I was in Richmond with the Hon. John McVeigh, the state Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and we witnessed firsthand the stress on the faces of those northern cattle producers as a result of the export ban on live cattle from their part of Queensland. There is a dire situation out there in Western and North-West Queensland and right across most of the other parts of this state. I say here tonight: do not let anybody in this country think for one half of one minute that we can treat these people with contempt because we cannot. They are the young people who are out there forging a future for our agricultural industries. They are the ones who need some long-term comfort from banks and financial institutions to get them out of this mire. Please God, let us see rain soon and let us see governments both here in Queensland and in Canberra look after those people and address their needs.

(Time expired)

Western Australia, AAA Credit Rating

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (11.23 pm): In an earlier debate this evening I think Minister Cripps said, 'It's the economy, stupid.' If I am misquoting him, I apologise. But I thought to myself: you bet it is! What incredible news we have seen in recent times coming from Western Australia. The Western Australia tory wunderkinder have guided the state to the point of losing their AAA credit rating! Will wonders never cease? But, as the media has reported, it has just been a sad joke to listen to Premier Colin Barnett offering the forlorn hope of all defences. These are the some of the comments that this economic failure is offering.


He has said, 'Debt is high and is rising. Why? Because the state is growing.' Here is another classic: 'We are investing in hospitals, in schools, in improving our capital city, road projects, regional development and the like, and I don't apologise for that.' It sounds positively socialist, doesn't it? Comrade Colin! Imagine a government actually investing their own money in the future via hospitals, schools, road projects et cetera. At least there is better economic sense in Western Australia, where there was no idiot immediately talking about austerity programs—at least not straight away, because nothing would surprise me about conservative economics.

Here is a bit more from the Western Australian Premier: 'This is a transformational decade for Western Australia.' What is he talking about? What gobbledegook. Transforming to what I would ask. The Tories over there are not dealing with the global financial crisis or dealing with collapsing economic circumstances at any level approaching the degree that Labor governments had to address in the recent past. And even in this most benign of economic threat environments, these right wing economic buffoons cannot manage an economy. Where is the horror, where is the outrage, where is the criticism from their ideological twins in the LNP in Queensland? Nowhere, because they are as clueless as this mob in Western Australia are useless!

Where is the outrage in the mainstream media? Again, that would be nowhere and I think we know why that is. We have seen the LNP's credentials revealed very regularly. My favourite this year was Joe Hockey when he said this classic line back in July before the election: 'The fall in the Australian dollar will have an immediate negative impact on business confidence.' What an economic numpty! Business was screaming for years prior to that to get the Australian dollar down to a level of 75c or 78c. Yet here is the now Treasurer talking about these matters. I think it is about time the debate in this state got on to the subject of economics permanently, and I look forward to that opportunity.

(Time expired)

South-West Brisbane Designated Driver Program


 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (11.26 pm): I do not want to alarm anyone but there are only eight weekends between now and Christmas and it is only a fortnight or so until schoolies celebrations begin. The year is winding down and I am sure many of us are looking forward to getting together with family and friends over the Christmas and New Year break. So now is a good time to think about how to stay safe.

Last week I was delighted to join the South West Brisbane Liquor Industry Action Group to launch the south-west Brisbane designated driver program—and what a fantastic initiative this is. Under this program people who volunteer to be the designated driver for their group of friends receive up to four free soft drinks during their night out. So it is a bit of an incentive and also an acknowledgement of their commitment to get their friends home safely. It is a great local program run as a joint effort by the Metro South Hospital and Health Board and the South West Brisbane Liquor Industry Action Group and sponsored by NRMA Insurance. It not only aims to reduce drink driving itself but also alcohol related street disturbances caused by patrons of licensed venues.

The benefits of having a designated driver are not only a safe trip home but also avoiding the hassle of having to make decisions about transport late at night. And, because people are less likely to loiter around a venue after closing time, there is less likelihood of some people making a nuisance of themselves or vandalising property. So it is a win-win situation and a program that I wholeheartedly endorse. I would like to thank all the licensed venues in my electorate of Mount Ommaney who have signed up to take part, including Hotel Monier and Club Oxley. But, sadly, even with great programs such as this, drink driving remains a problem in our community, and this is something we need to think about heading into the end-of-year celebrations.

The Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety, CARRS-Q, says that alcohol and drug driving is the No. 1 contributing factor in almost a third of fatal crashes in Queensland. Members will be aware of the 'fatal four', but it became the 'fatal five' when 'distraction'—especially in relation to using a mobile phone while driving—was added to the campaign. That is something of a concern. So, while it might be tempting to make a quick call while stuck in traffic or to read a text message you might be expecting, remember that using a mobile phone while driving can increase your risk of a crash fourfold, and wait—just wait—until you get out of your car to make that call. In closing, I would like to again thank the various organisations behind the south-west Brisbane designated driver program and, indeed, wish my colleagues a proactive and safe new year.

Coal Industry


 **Mr YOUNG** (Keppel—LNP) (11.29 pm): Having recently returned from a holiday in Europe and after having countless conversations with fellow holiday-makers from the Northern Hemisphere, one thing that resonates clear from these discussions is that Australia, indeed Queensland, needs to protect its export markets. The coal export market derived predominantly from the Central Queensland region is the economic engine room for the Queensland government. The Bowen Basin

reserves provide the most important source of coal currently exported from Queensland. Other coal deposits, namely Moreton, Surat, Callide, Tarong and the largest coal deposit, the Galilee Basin, will supply the growing demand from China and India for thermal coal used in power generation.

In 2012 Australia exported a total of 300 million tonnes of thermal and coking coal, with Japan remaining the main export destination for Queensland coal with exports of 46 million tonnes. China runs second, India third and Korea fourth. The race for coal is now; coal exploration and mining, combined with new technology from countries closer to our traditional trading partners, will prove to be our greatest challenge in years to come. The move to generate power using LNG will also impact on our coal export market. North America now uses 30 per cent less coal in power generation—in the last year alone—creating an oversupply of thermal coal. Coal prices have halved since the heady days of mid-2008, when coal prices for coking coal reached over \$300 a tonne and thermal coal sold for around \$200 a tonne. In 2009 Indonesia, our closest and largest trading partner, produced 245 million tonnes of steaming coal and lies third behind Australia and China in world exports. Kaltim Prima Coal, located in North Kalimantan, has one of the world's largest open-pit mining operations. With low labour rates and large reserves of yet to be developed coal deposits in Sumatra, West Java, Sulawesi and the balance in Kalimantan, the real need now is to boost export markets. The recent memorandum of understanding between the Abbott federal government and the Queensland government will provide the mechanism for faster development approvals, which have dogged mining development for years.

My discussions with my fellow tourists from the Northern Hemisphere left me with this lasting impression: Australia is a long way from anywhere.

Walton Construction


 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (11.32 pm): The vulnerability of Queensland subcontractors has again been identified with hundreds of thousands of dollars remaining owing to them as a result of the Walton Construction company collapse whilst building the Coles shopping centre in Nambour. It appears to me that if Coles management had chosen the more expensive tenderer to build their new shopping centre in Nambour instead of the Walton company we would not now be asking, 'Where has all the money gone that should have been paid to the subcontractors who worked on the Coles site?' I believe we need a new way of managing the payment of money on construction sites of this nature. Clearly, the money has not disappeared into thin air, but it will now cost subcontractors more money to try to trace the money trail to recover whatever funds are available.

It appears that Walton Construction Pty Ltd closed its doors one day and commenced trading as Peloton Builders the next. Profitable Walton projects were transferred two weeks ahead of Walton entering into administration, leaving the rest of the company's contracts for the administrator to deal with. I believe that our government needs to go down a new road to better secure contract money. In cases like this, at the contract stage the money could be paid to a third party who would be responsible for disbursing the money as work is done in accordance with the terms of the relevant contract. The management of contract money by a third party, I believe, will make it significantly harder for illegal and inappropriate transfers of money possible under our current laws. If a business is going bad under the current arrangement, it would be identified at a much earlier stage with fewer people affected.

The collapse of this construction company leaving significant debts to people around Australia reinforces the need for similar laws governing these types of contracts in all states and territories of Australia. Unless this happens, we will simply see shonky and bad construction companies opening businesses in one state and doing work in another for the sole purpose of minimising their risk. I am pleased that, at our meeting with some subcontractor representatives and Minister Mander today, the minister agreed to my request for this matter to be raised at the next ministerial joint meeting with his interstate and federal colleagues with the purpose of trying to bring in similar laws throughout our great nation. I also note the suggestion that Coles and similar large companies need to thoroughly investigate and maintain ongoing monitoring of the capacity of its principal contracting partners to deliver on the terms of the contract they entered into where failure to do so could cause devastating consequences to many small businesses. I hope this case will be raised at the highest level in Coles management and that Coles, as a partner to the principal contract, are able to find in their balance sheet some additional support for the small businesses devastated by this business collapse.

(Time expired)

Baitul Masroor Mosque


 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (11.35 pm): On Wednesday, 23 October, I was honoured to join a few of my parliamentary colleagues, the members for Waterford, Algester and Stretton, for a wonderful evening in welcoming His Holiness Mirza Masroor Khalifatul Masih V to the Baitul Masroor Mosque in the great electorate of Logan. His Holiness was selected on 22 April 2003. Today he frequently tours around the world, visiting countries for the community's Jalsa Salanas, or annual gatherings. His Holiness also regularly leads prayers at the Fazl Mosque in London, England, the current global headquarters for the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. He also leads Friday prayers from the Baitul Futuh Mosque, in Morden, London. Marking the official opening of the Baitul Masroor Mosque situated in Stockleigh, a country rural area in my electorate of Logan, the mosque is home to the Ahmadiyya community and is the only one of its kind in Queensland.

The new mosque is an eminent place of worship for the hundreds of Ahmadiyya Muslims throughout South-East Queensland. Construction commenced in 2012 expanding on the modest structures that have been home to worshipers for over 20 years. The new facilities will serve more than just as a place of worship for the Ahmadiyya community, but also as facilities for the broader community to enjoy and congregate.

The Ahmadiyya community are part of the rich cultural fabric that defines Logan. Their ongoing support of local charities and causes are iconic and reflect the community spirit of the people across Logan. I pay particular tribute to their work in the wake of the devastating Australia Day floods in January of this year. The Ahmadiyya community played an active role in assisting residents who had been inundated by the rising flood waters. Volunteers from this honourable community assisted in the clean-up efforts in Logan, and when their work was done there, they went to Bundaberg to help others in need.

This wonderful community epitomises the spirit of Logan. Their community work extends to include Clean Up Australia Day, and this past year they had the second largest group in Australia participating. They participate in regular blood donations, Red Cross funds collection and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, just to name a few. As Logan continues to expand and our community welcomes new residents, groups like the Ahmadiyya community will continue to play a key role in the development of our broader community. With their motto of 'Love for all, Hatred for None', I look forward to continuing my firm relationship with the Baitul Masroor Mosque and their role within the community. Working together we can achieve unknown possibilities that will last generations. With such firm pillars of the community adding to the cultural fabric of Logan, our community will continue to be the shining jewel in the South-East. Together, we can make it happen.

Chiropractic Safety

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (11.37 pm): There is a very dangerous precedent that has been set in parliament by the release of a confidential AHPRA report regarding the fracture of a child's neck that was reported by a Melbourne paediatrician, Dr Chris Papas. The report is actually a false report. I am actually very thankful that the member for Bundamba tabled this report at the last sitting of parliament. We would not have had this otherwise.

This case involves a four-month-old baby who had their C2, that is the second cervical vertebrae, fractured as a result of a chiropractic manipulation performed in a hospital. It was done without anyone at the hospital actually being told such as the supervising doctor or the staff at the hospital. There were a lot of complications because the child subsequently had to be in a neck brace for seven months and suffered all sorts of problems.


I have gone through this report. In fact, what was originally said in one part of the report—and I thank the member because she showed me a single part of it beforehand. The primary response that I gave to her after I was shown one X-ray result was that it demonstrated no fracture, but the repeat X-ray that was taken that is in the report in a subsequent section shows that the baby's neck was broken.

Subsequently there was an AHPRA investigation, and a confidential document was released to parties still unknown. That report was then released to the Labor member for Bundamba, and she correctly decided that she needed to clarify the record. What this report shows is a healing C-2 fracture. I am tabling the press release that was put out by the CAA, which is the Chiropractic Association of Australia. There are two associations.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents in relation to AHPRA clearing a chiropractor of an alleged neck break [\[3901\]](#).

I had previously made a report which said that I thought AHPRA needed to reinvestigate this case. They had had a lot of difficulty down in Victoria—as you know, there is a hung parliament—and no-one had been able to do anything about it. This AHPRA report states that there is no fracture, but their report actually states that there was a fracture. In the report there is an indication that there was an MRI taken, but there is no copy of that in the CD-ROM. The AHPRA people need to immediately investigate how this confidential release occurred. We need to find out exactly what occurred to this child, and we must never, ever see this happen again.

Gympie Relay for Life

 **Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (11.40 pm): It is a pleasure to rise in this chamber—even though it is late at night—to talk about something that is of importance to my electorate, and that is a magnificent fundraising event that occurred just last weekend: the Gympie Relay for Life. As many in this House would know, one in two Australians is touched by cancer. What we saw in Gympie was nothing short of an amazing outpouring of community spirit as 43 teams gathered at the one-mile oval for 18 hours of the relay. As a result, at the end they raised over \$80,000 for the Cancer Council. That is an amazing achievement, and one of which the Gympie community can be very proud.

There was one team, the Purple Packers, which raised almost one quarter of the total amount. The Purple Packers were the Nestle team, and they raised \$19,223—an amazing effort from a group that no doubt had access to some of Nestle's finest products—caffeine—that we could probably be using at this time of night in the chamber. They did a fantastic job!

I would also like to recognise many of the school groups that were involved in the Relay for Life. My daughter was involved through St Patrick's, but many other Gympie schools were involved. I would particularly like to pay credit to the teachers who gave of their time voluntarily—and I know in the case of St Patrick's it was Mr Newton and Mrs Last—so that the students who wanted to be involved in this amazing experience, the Relay for Life, could do so.

We visited at the beginning, and as is the case with each Relay for Life, the event is started off by the survivors. It was inspiring to watch these people, those who had been touched by cancer in one way or another, commence the whole relay event. We dropped in through the night just to see how our daughter and other members were going, and it was very much a party atmosphere at about 11 o'clock in the evening; however, the next morning it was a very different affair. Eighteen hours later they were weary and sore, but they were soldiering on. They demonstrated what it was to show true commitment to a very worthwhile cause.

I would like to thank everyone who was involved in the Gympie Relay for Life. You showed what our community knows so very strongly: that when we put our mind to something, we can punch well above our weight in raising funds and raising awareness of cancer, and one day we hope to see a cure.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.43 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, 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, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young