



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Hansard Home Page: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/hansard>
 Email: hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au
 Phone (07) 3553 6344 Fax (07) 3553 6369

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 15 July 2015

Subject	Page
PETITIONS	1317
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	1317
Budget	1317
Gallipoli Symphony; Budget, The Arts	1318
North Queensland Airfares.....	1318
Budget, Jobs	1319
Budget, Health Services	1319
Budget, Small Business.....	1320
Budget, QMI Solutions.....	1320
Budget, Jobs and Training	1321
Budget, Domestic and Family Violence.....	1321
Budget, Disability Services	1322
Budget, Drought Assistance	1323
Budget, Police and Fire Resources.....	1323
Budget, Marine Infrastructure	1324
Budget, Great Barrier Reef	1324
Budget, Building and Construction Industry.....	1325
MOTION	1325
Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	1325
NOTICE OF MOTION	1326
Ipswich Police Communications Centre.....	1326
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	1326
Budget	1326
Budget	1326
Budget	1327
Budget	1328

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 15 July 2015

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services	1328
Division: Question put—That leave be granted to move a motion without notice.	1329
Resolved in the negative.	1329
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	1329
Budget, Public Service Entitlements	1329
Budget, Public Service Entitlements	1330
Jobs.....	1331
Budget, Public Service Entitlements	1332
Budget.....	1333
Budget, Public Service Entitlements	1333
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 14 July 2015, from Mr Jim Murphy, Under Treasurer, to all TMR staff regarding the 2015-16 budget and Public Service long service leave obligations and suspension of annual employer contributions to the defined benefit scheme.	1333
Budget.....	1334
Budget, Great Results Guarantee.....	1335
Budget, Jobs and Investment.....	1336
Budget, Road Toll.....	1336
Budget, Regional Hospitals	1337
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services	1338
Education.....	1338
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from Queensland Budget 2015-16: Budget Measures—Budget Papers No. 4, page 12.	1339
Gas Prices.....	1339
Division: Question put—That leave be granted to move a motion without notice.	1340
Resolved in the negative.	1341
PRIVILEGE.....	1341
Alleged Contempt of Parliament by a Member	1341
ELECTORAL (REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL	1342
Introduction	1342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015.	1342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.	1342
First Reading	1345
Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.....	1345
Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date	1345
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.....	1345
Further Answer to Question; Budget, Public Service Entitlements	1345
WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1346
Message from Governor	1346
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 15 July 2015, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.	1346
Introduction	1346
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.....	1346
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.	1346
First Reading	1348
Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee.....	1349
PUBLIC HEALTH (CHILDCARE VACCINATION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1349
Introduction	1349
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.	1349
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.	1349
First Reading	1350
Referral to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee.....	1350
GUIDE, HEARING AND ASSISTANCE DOGS AMENDMENT BILL	1351
Introduction	1351
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015.....	1351
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.	1351
First Reading	1352
Referral to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.....	1352
STATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ORGANISATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1352
Introduction	1352
<i>Tabled paper:</i> State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.	1352
<i>Tabled paper:</i> State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes.	1352
First Reading	1354
Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order	1354

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 15 July 2015

MOTION	1363
Ipswich Police Communications Centre	1363
Speaker's Ruling, Amendment Out of Order	1364
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.	1369
Resolved in the negative.	1369
STATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ORGANISATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1369
Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order	1369
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.	1371
Resolved in the affirmative.....	1371
QUEENSLAND TRAINING ASSETS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY REPEAL BILL	1371
Second Reading	1371
Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.	1399
Resolved in the affirmative.....	1399
Consideration in Detail	1400
Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.	1400
Third Reading	1400
Long Title	1400
ADJOURNMENT	1400
Suicide Prevention	1400
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Discussion paper, Queensland Mental Health Commission, dated June 2015, titled 'Suicide Prevention in Queensland: Continuing the Conversation'.....	1400
CAN Awards; Queensland Music Festival	1401
Maleny, Indoor Aquatic Centre; Palmwoods, High School	1401
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 25 June 2015, from Alison Donaldson, Chair, Hinterland High School Steering Committee, to the Minister for Education, Hon. Kate Jones, regarding a proposal for Sunshine Coast Hinterland High School.....	1402
Forest Lakes Lions Club	1402
HMAS Toowoomba; Cockle, Mr R	1403
O'Leary, Mr K	1403
Medicinal Cannabis	1404
O'Leary, Mr K	1404
Torres Strait, Climate Change	1405
Whiskey's Watch	1405
ATTENDANCE	1406

WEDNESDAY, 15 JULY 2015



The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

Maleny State School, Transfer of Land

Mr Powell, from 1,273 petitioners, requesting the House to prioritise the transfer of land at Maleny State School either as freehold or as trust of lease from the State to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council for an indoor aquatic centre [\[782\]](#).

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

Urangan, Elizabeth Street, Upgrade

Mr Sorensen, from 35 petitioners, requesting the House to oversee that urgent road works are conducted to make Elizabeth Street, Urangan safe for traffic [\[783\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.02 pm): Yesterday my government handed down its first budget. It is a budget for health, education, infrastructure and jobs for today and tomorrow; in other words, a true Labor government has delivered for all of Queensland a measured budget, a fair budget and a responsible budget. Importantly, it is a budget that delivers on my government's primary election commitment that our revenue-earning public Queensland assets will remain in public hands. I thank the Treasurer, the Under Treasurer and Treasury officials for their hard work in delivering my government's first state budget. What they have delivered through this hard work is a budget that restores the front-line services which were so near-sightedly axed by the former LNP government and which strengthens our economic position. It is a budget with an eye firmly and resolutely on the future.

Our government's first budget contains record health funding of \$14.2 billion which will deliver 400 more nurses, historic new nurse-to-patient ratios and places for 4,000 new nurse graduates. It delivers record education funding of \$12.4 billion, including almost \$250 million for 875 additional teachers. It delivers a \$10.1 billion infrastructure program, including a \$500 million statewide schools and hospitals fund. Education, health and building infrastructure are core to good Labor budgets, and in that regard we have delivered. These are the sorts of local hospital and school refurbishments that will help support local jobs in local regional communities. Additionally the budget contains \$200 million for Building Our Regions, \$100 million over five years for the Great Barrier Reef and \$34.5 million to rescue TAFE.

This budget reinstates the concessions that were so cruelly ripped away by the Abbott government, with \$347 million for Queensland pensioner and Seniors Card holder concessions. It delivers \$31.3 million to tackle domestic violence, which is one of the most important issues that Queensland faces today. Critically, our first budget builds for Queensland's future; specifically, the jobs that will shape Queensland's future. The budget reconfirms our election commitment to re-establish Skilling Queenslanders for Work with a \$240 million allocation, and of course it delivers our government's \$180 million Advance Queensland initiative which creates the critical jobs and industries of today and of the future which I talked about in some detail yesterday.

This is a budget that helps repair the hurt and the damage of the past three years, when the former LNP government was more intent on axing front-line services and jobs than it was focused on building a sustainable future for Queensland. This is a budget that makes Queenslanders, jobs and our state's future priorities. It is a budget that reflects the core Labor values of compassion, decency and the right to dignity in work. It is a budget that I am proud of, delivered by a government I am proud of.

Gallipoli Symphony; Budget, The Arts

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.05 pm): I was pleased to announce this week that Queensland will host the Australian premier of the Gallipoli Symphony in November. This is another coup for the Queensland Performing Arts Centre as it celebrates its 30th year. The Gallipoli Symphony has been 10 years in the making. Every year since 2006 Australian, New Zealand and Turkish composers have presented a movement of the symphony at Gallipoli to mark Anzac commemorations. On 24 November this year the Queensland Symphony Orchestra will play these individual movements as a complete symphony for the first time in Australia. This is a wonderful opportunity for Queenslanders and a sign of the high regard in which our arts community is held.

This is why I am also proud to announce the boosted arts funding in this week's budget as part of my commitment to ensuring that Queensland is once again a leader in the arts. \$173 million over the next four years will be invested in the future of arts, working towards restoring funding stripped by the LNP government and protecting the heritage value of our cultural institutions. This funding includes \$28 million for essential upgrades to Brisbane's Cultural Precinct in the wake of its heritage listing. The Cultural Precinct supports significant tourism and economic returns for the state. It attracted 4.7 million visitors in 2013-14. It is vital that we maintain this beating heart of our arts scene.

I am also happy to report that \$5.1 million over the next four years will go to an exciting new program: the Queensland Arts Showcase. This will have three separate funding streams to ensure that funds are available to develop new talent as well as attract big names to events across the state.

The budget also includes \$1.7 million for QAGOMA to support exhibitions during GOMA'S 10th anniversary celebrations. Since opening, QAGOMA's top 10 exhibitions have contributed more than \$100 million to Queensland's economy and over 6.4 million people have visited the gallery. The budget also provides \$11.2 million over the next four years to safeguard programs which were slated to end in 2014-15. We will provide additional support for the small to medium sector by continuing the Backing Indigenous Arts initiative and the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy. I might add that I am looking forward to attending the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair later this month. This event is funded to go from strength to strength. I am pleased to report that Queensland now has a government that recognises the importance of an accessible, dynamic and vibrant arts sector to our economy and to Queenslanders' lives.

North Queensland Airfares

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (2.08 pm): I am pleased to confirm that the Palaszczuk government's budget has delivered on our commitment to reinstate cheaper flights for Far North Queensland residents, with the 2015-16 state budget committing \$5.6 million in funding to deliver a new look local fare scheme. I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of the member for Cook and all that he has done over the past few years to make this an issue for Labor and Far North Queensland.

The allocation of funding for a 12-month trial honours Labor's election promise to make air travel more affordable for residents in Far North Queensland. Under the scheme, locals from communities with no access to alternative airfare subsidies will be able to access cheaper airfares for flights within Cape York and the Torres Strait. The subsidy will have a significant impact on the cost of living for families who live in some of the most remote parts of Queensland. In fact, some places in Queensland are closer to PNG than they are to Brisbane.

The cheapest return airfare once the subsidy is applied will be \$198 per ticket plus booking fee. The capped minimum will help safeguard the sustainability of the subsidy while ensuring fares are affordable. I can also advise the House that the new-look local fare scheme will be easy to administer and understand for local residents. The subsidy applies to most fare types, allowing people who live outside remote communities to still access competitive entry-level airfares.

Our approach stands in stark contrast to that of the LNP government, which axed the scheme in 2012 without any warning or consultation with local residents. When I visited Far North Queensland in April, locals told me that air travel to and from remote communities is far too expensive, disconnecting families and isolating local towns. Discounted flights will need to be booked in person through the local ticketing agents, and there are eligibility requirements to ensure this assistance is getting to the people who need it the most. The local fare scheme will begin rolling out on 20 July 2015. I can confirm for the House that under the Palaszczuk Labor government this important social justice scheme will be here to stay.

Budget, Jobs

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.10 pm): Yesterday's budget is a jobs now and jobs for the future budget, delivering a suite of employment policies under our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland plan. It is also a budget that delivers over \$10 billion in capital investment, supporting 27½ thousand direct jobs.

Our Working Queensland jobs plan will focus on skills, training and innovative industries to promote jobs growth and investment. It has five key priorities: skills and training; enhancing business productivity; boosting government services; fostering emerging and innovative industries; and, of course, growing our regions. In addition to the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, which was axed under the former government, the budget also delivers an extra \$34.5 million to restore TAFE as our pre-eminent vocational education and training provider.

I am proud to be a Treasurer from regional Queensland. During the election we promised that the Building Our Regions fund would commence from 2016-17. However, in light of the need for jobs-generating infrastructure projects to help economic uplift in Queensland sooner, the budget outlines that this has been brought forward by a full year, to commence in 2015-16. Over the next two years, local councils and local projects in rural and regional Queensland will share in an additional \$200 million in infrastructure brought forward through the Building Our Regions fund.

From our regional centres to the outback, the budget recognises that some parts of Queensland are doing it particularly tough. That is why we are providing \$52 million of drought relief in this budget, including emergency rebates and freight subsidies. In the north-west and south-west of our state we will be delivering \$40 million for a Western Roads Upgrade Program to improve roads and keep road crews on the job.

Businesses need certainty regarding a pipeline of future projects. That is exactly what we are delivering on a number of fronts. We recognise that there are times when economic uplift is required in order to deliver jobs. In a decentralised state like Queensland, government building projects do help to deliver employment when and where it is most needed. That is why the budget includes a \$500 million injection in Queensland's local schools and hospitals—to enable the delivery of important refurbishment and maintenance projects. The new Statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund will provide an economic uplift to local communities with a focus on health refurbishment and education capital and maintenance projects. By giving Queenslanders access to well-maintained and modern facilities we can ensure our state continues to grow and prosper. More importantly, the Statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund will deliver new health and education projects and generate local jobs and new investment in our economy. This is a sound investment in our kids and in our future.

This is a budget about both building infrastructure and catalysing infrastructure. We are introducing a streamlined assessment process to encourage infrastructure investment and development. The Palaszczuk government is focused on infrastructure delivery, which is why we want to harness the knowledge and expertise of the private sector as best we can. We are making it easier for the private sector to submit proposals which can capture economic uplift and job opportunities. We want Queensland to lead the nation in working with the private sector to implement innovative financial arrangements which can deliver infrastructure, new projects and ultimately more jobs.

Budget, Health Services

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.14 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring Queenslanders have access to the best possible health care in the public system. This is why our government's first budget has sought to restore balance to the health system, with significant investments in front-line services, preventative health and patient safety. In 2015-16 the Palaszczuk Labor government will invest a record \$14.2 billion in Health. This is good news for people all over Queensland who rely on the health system. The government is providing an additional \$2.3 billion over four years to ensure health and ambulance services keep pace with the ongoing growth in demand for services.

We are tackling critical areas like the waiting list for the waiting list, an area ignored by the previous government and brushed aside by the Leader of the Opposition when he was the minister for health. We are investing \$361.2 million over four years to improve access for Queenslanders to specialist outpatient appointments. We are investing record amounts to rebuild and expand our nursing and midwifery workforce across the state to deliver real results in the quality and safety of care. As part of these commitments, over the next four years we will employ an additional 400 experienced nurses

to help patients navigate the health system. We will offer up to 4,000 additional places to new Queensland nurse and midwifery graduates. We will legislate, for the first time in our state's history, mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios in acute wards.

But there is more to the Health portfolio than just hospitals. That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government will invest in preventative health programs that keep Queenslanders healthy and out of hospitals. In Diabetes Week I am proud to be the minister responsible for the Health for Life! program, which will invest \$27.2 million over four years to make it easier for people to identify and take action on the risk factors for diabetes and chronic disease. We will reopen the Biala sexual health clinic in Roma Street and develop a statewide sexual health strategy, with an \$18.5 million investment over four years.

The Australian Labor Party has a proud tradition of supporting the public health system, and I am proud to be a member of a government which is continuing that tradition.

Budget, Small Business

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.16 pm): The Palaszczuk government is dedicated to supporting small businesses in Queensland. We know that they are vital to our economy and delivering jobs now and into the future. I know that small businesses are innovative and are always looking for new business opportunities, and this budget commits more than \$186 million to help them to do just this. At the core of our economic agenda is the \$180 million Advance Queensland initiative. This initiative will strengthen not only our research talent base but also our business sector, too, by stimulating a thriving start-up culture and a vibrant venture capital sector. Advance Queensland gives our emerging innovative small businesses the start-up they need to get on track to success quickly.

The Knowledge Transfer Partnerships Program will enable small to medium business to employ postgraduate students to assist in developing their products and services. This gives small business an injection of new ideas and talent and access to the latest research in their industry.

The \$40 million Business Development Fund will provide funding to kick-start innovative businesses and help their ideas become a commercial reality. Through the fund, small businesses can access the start-up capital they need to create new opportunities and productive capability. The \$24 million Startup Queensland program will encourage a new wave of Queensland businesses. This is in addition to the \$2 million Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow initiative and the \$1 million allocated towards entrepreneurial and business development education and learning programs in our Queensland schools.

Of course, there is also \$1 million for the Home Based Business Grants Program, providing up to \$5,000 to assist stay-at-home parents develop and grow home based businesses. This is the only one of its type in Australia and will help small businesses grow while keeping a healthy balance between home life and working life. Applications for this funding, I am pleased to advise the House, will open on Monday, 24 August 2015.

Today the government is ensuring Queensland's small businesses are supported and strengthened to create jobs today and into the future.

Budget, QMI Solutions

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.18 pm): I am pleased to announce that the Palaszczuk government's first budget will renew a program which has helped Queensland businesses win millions of dollars in contracts. The 2015-16 budget will provide \$900,000 to QMI Solutions to assist local suppliers gain the opportunity to tender for work in major projects across this state. Established in 1993, QMI Solutions is a Queensland based organisation dedicated to improving the competitiveness of small to medium enterprises Australia-wide. This government has been proudly partnering with QMI Solutions since 2008 to deliver services under the trading name of Industry Capability Network Queensland to support the state's local industry policy and assist industry to access new business opportunities. Through its skilled team of procurement specialists, it assists local suppliers to identify emerging opportunities arising from major projects and procurements. It also assists project proponents and prime contractors to provide suppliers with full, fair and reasonable opportunity to tender. QMI recently opened its new office in the electorate of Springwood much to the delight of the member for Springwood, who is a passionate advocate for QMI.

The government's partnership with QMI Solutions has generated work for Queensland firms on projects such as the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the New Generation Rollingstock project at Ipswich, the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital and the Moreton Bay Rail Link. QMI has been making a real difference for businesses in our state and that means jobs. I recall in my previous life that QMI assisted a proud Queensland company to produce the first 3D printed anatomical facial skeletal models that allowed us to perform precise reconstructive surgery in our hospitals in Queensland. For the 2014-15 financial year, QMI helped businesses in Queensland win approximately \$330 million in contracts. For example, QMI assistance in the ongoing Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games construction program has resulted in Queensland based companies winning \$23 million in contracts to date. The \$180 million rail maintenance facility which is part of the New Generation Rollingstock project at Ipswich has resulted in \$34 million of work going to Queensland firms and the Moreton Bay Rail Link project has seen local firms win \$50 million worth of contracts. QMI has also helped engineering firm Holmwood Highgate win \$65 million worth of work with Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles to supply the Australian Army with more than 2,500 medium and heavy military logistical trucks from late 2016 to 2020. QMI has also supported Queensland companies access opportunities on the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital development, resulting in Queensland suppliers winning in excess of \$230 million in contracts over the life of the project. The budget allocation for QMI is targeted and is responsible investment that is delivering tangible results in contracts and jobs for Queenslanders.

Budget, Jobs and Training

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.22 pm): Today I rise to update the House on one of the many important initiatives as part of this government's commitment to the Working Queensland policy initiative and jobs now, jobs for the future. The budget delivers on this commitment to drive jobs and highlights the need to focus on training and skills—quality training and skills—because to grow our economy, deliver new industries and foster innovation Queensland needs a workforce that is up to the challenge. That is why quality training and skills are so important to future job creation and innovation.

I am proud that yesterday's budget included \$4 million to deliver on our election commitment to establish an independent Training Ombudsman for Queensland. I am also proud to be part of a government that is committed to stakeholder consultation to guide the implementation of this election commitment. On 2 July I hosted a stakeholders round table to discuss the reinstatement of the Queensland Training Ombudsman, inviting participants from right across the sector. Participants included CEOs from the Queensland branches of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, Apprenticeships Queensland and TAFE Queensland. The chief commissioner of ASQA, the executive director of the Office of Fair Trading and a number of other significant industry representatives participated. I want to sincerely thank everyone who attended and participated in the round table. I appreciate everyone taking time out of their busy schedules to help shape the role of the future Training Ombudsman, and their ideas and vision for the sector were welcomed. The diverse insights provided by stakeholders from across the sector will ensure that our new independent Training Ombudsman addresses the needs of the sector.

The former government's interpretation of consultation was to find organisations that supported its strong plan and ignore everyone else—or, as we know in the community and legal sector, actively gag people and organisations from expressing their views at all. The Palaszczuk government is committed to consulting with Queenslanders to ensure we get things right, including the implementation of the independent Training Ombudsman. Information gained from the round table included collaboratively working with other agencies to avoid duplication of roles, and it was a timely reminder of our priority to work with industry and public providers to develop jobs for the future and to ensure we have the skilled workforce our economic growth depends on. We do this because we are delivering on our election commitment to Queenslanders and we do this because that is what Labor governments believe in—providing the opportunity for all Queenslanders to access training and skills to get into the workforce and contribute. We will give Queenslanders the security of knowing that when they enter into training they will get the quality service they deserve and employers will get the skilled workers that they need for their businesses now and into the future.

Budget, Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.25 pm): Members of this House will know that I am passionate about the Palaszczuk government's commitment to reducing the devastating effects of domestic and family violence, which is why I was so pleased that the budget the Treasurer handed

down yesterday includes a significant allocation to begin the government's response to the Domestic and Family Violence Task Force report. I joined the Premier last week to announce a \$31.3 million suite of initiatives including the trial of a specialist domestic and family violence Magistrates Court with a dedicated magistrate to commence in Southport in September; additional funding of \$3 million over four years to establish an independent Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board and expand the domestic and family violence review unit; and \$1.1 million to expand the Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Service to 14 locations through Legal Aid Queensland. This package also includes \$19.9 million over four years to establish and operate crisis shelters in Brisbane and Townsville, providing critical safety and support for women and children escaping domestic and family violence; working with the domestic and family violence sector to develop models for the seamless delivery of domestic and family violence services to improve outcomes for those affected by violence in rural, remote and urban areas; and \$3 million towards a national campaign designed to reduce violence against women and their children, as the Premier committed to at COAG. This has been well received by the sector. In fact, it was described by key stakeholders as 'a watershed moment' and 'something we've waited years for'.

I want to acknowledge for the record that it was a good thing that the Domestic and Family Violence Task Force was established. Quentin Bryce and her team methodically worked through domestic and family violence across Queensland, presenting the new government with a road map for action. The Palaszczuk government is carefully considering each and every one of those recommendations and will respond more fully in the near future. We are committed to looking at this incredibly complex issue in a methodical and comprehensive way. The government has conducted a series of round tables with stakeholders right across the state to inform our full response. We have met with hundreds of participants across the length and breadth of Queensland. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has participated and contributed to the government's comprehensive consideration and development of our response to the task force report and Queensland's draft Domestic and Family Violence Strategy. Queensland will finally have a plan to tackle this issue, having been the only state without one.

Budget, Disability Services

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (2.28 pm): I am pleased to inform the House that the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to prioritise Queenslanders with disability, their carers and the disability sector. In the 2015-16 state budget, \$1.547 billion has been allocated to the Disability Services budget, an increase of \$82 million from the previous financial year. Included in the budget is \$1.9 million to fund the early launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland. This was a key election commitment after Queenslanders missed out on a trial.

This government believes that it is essential that Queenslanders are ready for the transition to the NDIS. The early launch will give us vital information about how we can transition to the full NDIS across the rest of the state from 1 July 2016. The funding of almost \$2 million for the launch means that we can finalise negotiations with the Commonwealth and get the NDIS to a launch site in Queensland this year.

This budget also recognises the importance of suitable accommodation for people with a disability, which the federal coalition budget did not address. The state budget allocates almost \$25 million for a range of initiatives that will provide housing accommodation options for people with a disability across the state. These initiatives include \$9 million to build or upgrade accommodation for people with an intellectual or cognitive disability and severely challenging behaviours; \$6.6 million allocated to continue the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial, which is aimed at assisting elderly parent carers to organise accommodation for an adult son or daughter who has a disability and whom they can no longer care for; \$6 million to build or purchase supported accommodation for people with a disability living in inappropriate settings; and \$3.1 million for supported accommodation in Cairns, Townsville, Wynnum and Banyo. These initiatives are a start to addressing the lack of housing options for people with disability.

Disappointingly, we have heard nothing from the federal government about the approximate \$700 million a year that is available for disability housing options under the NDIS. This government will continue to fight for appropriate housing for people with a disability. This is an issue that will continue to grow as the introduction of the NDIS will increase the demand for affordable and appropriate housing for people with a disability. The Palaszczuk government supports a smooth transition to the NDIS and the right of Queenslanders with a disability to live an ordinary life.

Budget, Drought Assistance

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (2.31 pm): The Palaszczuk government is providing strong support for farmers in drought. Labor's commitment to supporting those in drought is unwavering. When we formed government, I confirmed that Labor would honour its election commitment to maintain existing drought relief arrangements through to 2018 to provide support and stability to affected communities.

With some 80 per cent of Queensland officially drought declared, the Queensland government knows that primary producers are doing it tough. Yesterday, those who listened to the Treasurer on Labor's commitment to our primary producers could not be mistaken about our support for those impacted by drought. The budget drought assistance package includes more than \$52 million of much needed drought relief for primary producers. As part of this government's commitment, our drought assistance measures include our previously announced increase in the cap on the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme from \$30,000 to \$40,000 for producers with a drought management plan entering their third and subsequent years of drought. Our 2015-16 DRAS measures will continue freight subsidies for moving fodder and water during drought and a 50 per cent rebate on the purchase of emergency water infrastructure. As at 30 June 2015, the Queensland government processed more than 5,960 DRAS claims, valued at more than \$28 million. Labor is delivering on its election commitment of \$5 million over three years to control wild dogs and cats.

My other ministerial colleagues are also supportive of those who are impacted by drought. Relief on electricity charges for irrigators administered by Ergon and the Department of Energy and Water Supply is at \$2.5 million and there is \$4.1 million from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines in rent deferrals, waivers and fee rebates to help ease the burden on drought affected leaseholders and water users. Primary mental health, administered by the Department of Health, is supported through the Royal Flying Doctor Service with \$1.5 million. There is also \$4 million in social and community support to assist community wellbeing.

This government, across a number of ministries, is supporting our producers on the ground. It has been said by some that this is a vanilla budget. A vanilla budget for Queenslanders is a good one. It is a budget not of radical flavours but a welcome, wholesome experience. Under Labor, there is certainty for primary producers who are impacted by the drought.

Budget, Police and Fire Resources

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.34 pm): Our Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering new and improved police and fire facilities right across Queensland. From Gordonvale in the far north to Burleigh in the south and out west to Cunnamulla, we are ensuring that no matter where you live in this state—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana and member for Chatsworth, your interjections are not necessary. I warn you under standing order 253A. I urge you to stop disrupting the business of the House.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are ensuring that, no matter where you live in this state, police and fire officers are working out of properly equipped stations with access to the best facilities. We are investing around \$14.6 million on new and upgraded fire stations, including \$4 million for new stations in Bundaberg and Petrie; \$600,000 for a new station at Dayboro; and \$250,000 for a new station in Gordonvale. As part of that package, more than \$1.8 million will be spent towards upgrades of the Bundamba station, \$1.6 million for the Burleigh station and \$600,000 for an upgrade to the Roma station.

We are also planning for the future. We have set aside \$4.3 million to buy land to build urban fire and rescue stations and other rural fire services facilities where and when they will be needed. We are spending \$2 million to complete the fit-out of the QFES facility at Kunda Park, the SES equipment storage facility at Morningside and on improvements to the State Disaster Coordination Centre.

In this budget, we have committed \$23 million towards improving and replacing police buildings across Queensland. We have set aside \$6.9 million to complete the new replacement Kingaroy Police Station and watch house, \$800,000 to finish improvements to the Nanango Police Station and \$800,000 to complete an upgrade of the Thursday Island Police Station and watch house. We are also investing

\$2.4 million in officer and prisoner safety by upgrading CCTV cameras across the state including in the Sandgate, Townsville, Wynnum and Gladstone watch houses. All of these improvements will provide better working conditions for staff, improved safety and a greater police and fire presence across the state.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to ensuring the safety of Queenslanders. Our investment in new and improved police and fire facilities is just one way in which we are delivering on that commitment.

Budget, Marine Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (2.37 pm): The Palaszczuk government is building better boat ramps at waterways from Weipa to the Whitsunday Coast and from Burdekin to Brisbane. Queensland has an abundance of rivers, creeks, inlets and estuaries and boaties, anglers, kayakers and canoeists are set to benefit from the government's commitment to extend the Marine Infrastructure Fund. Labor is committing \$30 million extra over three years, with \$2 million brought forward to this year for a breakwater to shelter the boat ramp at Whisper Bay, Cannonvale, funded from this month.

The government will also honour previously committed boating infrastructure projects, with construction funded through to June 2016. Revamped boat ramps are ready for use now from Karumba to Currumbin. A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of opening the new Winders Park boat ramp at Currumbin Creek on the Gold Coast.

More and more Queenslanders are heading out to enjoy themselves on the water and the launching spots need to be safe and accessible. The Marine Infrastructure Fund has set aside money to upgrade, rebuild or widen boat ramps right across Queensland during this financial year. These include building a new boat ramp and pontoon in Weipa; upgrading a pontoon at Abel Point Marina on the Whitsunday Coast; building a new floating walkway at Saunders Beach, north of Townsville; widening a boat ramp in Cairns; and a new boat ramp at Macleay Island in Moreton Bay.

There are also new projects planned at Gladstone, Daintree, Burdekin and Mission Beach. In Brisbane we will soon see new and upgraded boat ramps at Colmslie, Barungwarra Reserve at Bald Hills and at the Kedron Brook floodway. Two additional boat ramps are being built at the Townsville Recreational Boating Park and on the Sunshine Coast boaties will benefit from a new two-lane boat ramp and floating walkway on the Maroochy River. Better boating infrastructure supports Queensland's tourism industry and that is good news for the state's economy.

Budget, Great Barrier Reef

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (2.39 pm): I rise to update the House on the government's financial investment in protecting the Great Barrier Reef and the 69,000 jobs that rely upon it. The amount of \$100 million over five years has been committed for water quality improvement initiatives. This is new money on top of the already substantial investment the Queensland government makes to activities that deliver outcomes for the reef. The government has also committed an additional \$6 million over four years to expand the Regional Report Cards program to include Cairns and Townsville. One of the first projects to receive funding under the water quality improvement investments is known as eReefs. Before departing for Bonn I was thrilled to announce that the Queensland government will invest an additional \$2 million over the next two years for phase 2 of this cutting-edge project which will deliver real time water quality results for the reef. This brings the government's commitment to \$3 million for phase 2 of this project.

The eReefs project will develop tools akin to those provided by the Bureau of Meteorology for weather. This means that in the future people will be able to see what is happening in relation to Great Barrier Reef water quality on their computer, tablet or phone in real-time. They will be able to see how clear the water is, what the temperature is and the effects of floods, storms and cyclones on the reef. You will be able to zoom in on your local river to see how much sediment, nutrients and pesticides are flowing into the reef. This will be a game-changer for reef managers by allowing us to better understand the changes we need to make on land to improve reef water quality.

This project is a collaboration which brings our funding together with investment from the Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, the Science Industry Endowment Fund, BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance and the Australian government. It is only with tools like eReefs that we can better target our investment and

make a real difference to the health of the reef. This project is also a great example of governments working with the private sector and philanthropic organisations to leverage investment with a single purpose, better understanding the health of the reef so we can all take steps to better protect it. The Great Barrier Reef is a very special place. It deserves to be afforded the highest level of protection and care. These investments by the Queensland government reflect our commitment to delivering this.

Budget, Building and Construction Industry

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.42 pm): A key commitment of this government is to deliver jobs for Queenslanders. We saw this yesterday in the Palaszczuk government's job-creating budget and we will see this through our Advance Queensland plan to deliver jobs for now and jobs for the future. As a government we are also very focused on the jobs created by our building and construction industry. The industry employs around 250,000 Queenslanders and contributes around \$60 billion into the state's economy in 2013-14. A key part of the building industry is the subcontractors. The Palaszczuk government has committed to investigating the security of payments for subcontractors and ensuring that all subbies are paid for the work that they do. This is not just an issue for Queensland. Right around Australia governments are attempting to address this complex issue with varying levels of success. There are many factors involved. The contracts themselves, the financial health or resilience of a company, external market forces and many other variables can affect payment. The issue also involves three different pieces of legislation, as well as other guiding materials. My department is currently reviewing the laws, codes and guidelines related to this issue to determine what measures could be adopted to address these complexities and improve security of payment. The department will also be consulting across government and with key industry stakeholders such as the Subcontractor Alliance, a group I know you, Mr Speaker, have worked closely with.

As members would be aware, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission is supporting the public examination by the independent liquidator into the affairs of Walton Construction. The public hearings are set to commence in August and the department will also consider any recommendations arising from the inquiry. This is an issue that affects many people. I want my department to move ahead with a considered, consultative approach to identify just how deep this issue really runs. Because it is such a complex issue that impacts many livelihoods it is important that we get it right. I look forward to providing the House with further updates as this process continues.

MOTION

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (2.45 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee inquire into and report on whether there is a need to improve the consumer protections and remedies for buyers of new motor vehicles with numerous, severe defects that reoccur despite multiple repair attempts or where defects have caused a new motor vehicle to be out of service for a prolonged period of time—otherwise known as lemons.

That, in undertaking the inquiry, the committee should consider, but not be limited to—

1. The experiences of consumers in Queensland who have purchased lemons, including community expectations of what constitutes a lemon motor vehicle and the impacts, financial and otherwise, on consumers who have purchased lemons;
2. The consumer protections and remedies available under existing legislation, such as those contained in the Australian Consumer Law and state based legislation, including remedies available through Queensland courts and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and their adequacy in assisting consumers who have purchased lemons;
3. How legislative protections and remedies might be improved to better protect Queensland consumers who have purchased lemons, including improving the ability of a consumer to enforce their rights without recourse to courts or tribunals; and
4. Any legislative and other protections in other jurisdictions assisting consumers who have purchased lemons, including the costs and benefits of existing and proposed protections.

That the committee seek public submissions and consult with key stakeholders, including motor vehicle manufacturers and dealers, as well as consumer protection representatives and report to the Legislative Assembly by 30 November 2015.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Ipswich Police Communications Centre

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.47 pm): I give notice that I will move—

That this parliament supports the Ipswich police communications centre located at Yamanto and calls on the Queensland government to retain the Ipswich communications centre at its current location.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Budget

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.48 pm): I think it was very clear in yesterday's budget that this government did not level with the people of Queensland at the ballot box. Virtually everything that it promised as a part of its debt-reduction strategy was washed away and forgotten about when the Treasurer brought down his budget yesterday. With regard to paying down debt, there was no mention anywhere of using the dividends from our electricity GOCs. In actual fact, if one looks at the budget papers, the dividends that they will return, which are already being spent, are going to be far less because the government is going to load them up with even more burdensome debt, as if those opposite did not learn anything from the pre-Somerville era prior to 2004. Also, nowhere was it mentioned to the people of Queensland that this government was planning to dip into the long service leave entitlements of public servants—to effectively raid them—and also to effectively not fund its contingent liability around future superannuation obligations. I could bet my bottom dollar that if the people of Queensland knew that this Palaszczuk government was intending to do that in opposition then we may have had a different result. There was no mention of that as part of a debt-reduction strategy for the people of Queensland.

Indeed, this government went to the ballot box talking about creating jobs. What did yesterday's budget papers reveal? Unemployment is projected to rise in Queensland. The government's budget papers said that employment growth in Queensland was going to weaken. Yesterday's budget also predicted that economic growth in Queensland was going to weaken. This government did not level with the people of Queensland at the last state election. They cannot be trusted because nothing they said coming into the election they took forward yesterday in their first budget. Indeed, if one wants to put the microscope of scrutiny over this government and what it says, it is most instructive to look at what the ratings agencies say, because they are the ones that peel away all of the fluff and the smoke and mirrors. What have Standard & Poor's and Moody's said? They have said that the underlying debt situation in Queensland is going to continue to worsen because there is no debt-reduction strategy from this government. Indeed, manipulating \$6 billion worth of public servants' entitlements in a debt-reduction strategy is only smoke and mirrors. It is a one-off sugar hit that cannot sustain the budget beyond this year and, indeed, as the budget papers themselves said, the debt situation will worsen.

Budget

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.51 pm): Such negativity from those opposite! I would like to provide an update on how the 2015-16 budget was received by those who are actually willing to give it a go and, of course, I am talking about business, industry, non-government organisations, unions and the broader community. The feedback is that the Palaszczuk government's first budget is being well received across many sectors of the community. AMA Queensland Chair, Shaun Rudd, said, '... the 2015-16 Budget delivers for the health system on many fronts' and—

... when it comes to frontline staffing, the health budget is excellent. Employing more nurses, nurse graduates, and paramedics as well as providing millions of dollars for preventative health measures is very welcome.

On the \$180 million Advance Queensland policy, Jemima Dunn from the Australian Industry Group said—

We believe this is going to go a long way, particularly in the long-term, diversifying the economy and building a smart, initiative and knowledge-based economy in Queensland.

The Local Government Association of Queensland stated—

Local Communities have done well out of the Palaszczuk Government's first Budget, with more funding for road projects and a solid commitment to boosting local jobs, training programs and infrastructure programs.

The Property Council said—

Unsolicited proposals have the potential to deliver a very broad range of social and economic benefits to Queensland. This announcement by the QLD Government is a step in the right direction in terms of unlocking private sector investment across the state.

Of the Advance Queensland initiative, the CCIQ said—

The state government has got it right when it facilitates industry, universities and government to work together to take great ideas and turn them into reality, attracting investment and creating jobs.

Of the budget more broadly, the CCIQ said, 'We think that it is a budget that invests in Queensland's economic future'.

Of the budget as a whole, AgForce has said—

This budget comes hot on the heels of the Federal Government's Agricultural White Paper and we believe it shows both levels of government are listening to people in rural Queensland.

The Housing Industry Association welcomed our policy to provide payroll tax rebates to larger employers to engage apprentices and trainees in vocational training. They noted—

Other measures in the Budget like the spending promised on maintenance of Government assets like schools will also benefit tradespeople in the industry.

The list goes on and on. I would ask for an extension of time to go through them. However, I will say that I understand there have been a few reports of many people talking about exactly how this has gone. The Leader of the Opposition is absolutely deceitful in saying that we have in any way departed from our election commitments. We said we would pay down debt without selling assets, without cutting the Public Service and without raising taxes, fees and charges and introducing new ones. As I look across the chamber today, I see a lot of very unhappy people on the other side. However, I see one person who is happy and that is the member for Chatsworth. The member for Chatsworth is even cutting his hair a little shorter these days.

Budget

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.54 pm): Queenslanders can rightly ask why they should trust this Premier when they consider what they were offered to vote on and what has been delivered. Apart from confirming that the Treasurer's pre-election fiscal plan is a complete dud, yesterday's budget also reinforced the strong economic credentials of the LNP. The budget papers show that debt in 2014-15 is now estimated to be \$75.5 billion. Debt now is almost \$10 billion lower than previously predicted by the Bligh/Fraser government in the 2011-12 midyear fiscal and economic review. That is a direct result of the strong and prudent financial management of the previous LNP administration. The LNP was elected with \$13 billion of fiscal deficits locked in. By contrast, we left office forecasting three fiscal surpluses starting in 2015-16. Yesterday's budget reveals those fiscal surpluses have evaporated under Labor. Similarly, the multibillion dollar operating surplus predicted by the LNP in 2015-16 has shrunk to a \$1.2 billion surplus. Over the next three years, operating surpluses will be \$4.2 billion weaker because of this Labor government's financial management. When it comes to jobs—considering that it was all about jobs, jobs, jobs—unemployment is also forecast to stay at over six per cent for the foreseeable future. The LNP was able to carefully manage the budget and reduce Labor's debt, while also investing an extra \$2 billion in health, an extra \$3 billion in education, funding the NDIS and putting 1,100 more police on the beat.

Let us contrast that with the budget delivered yesterday by Labor. The Treasurer promised a budget in the finest Labor traditions and he did not disappoint. He is not delivering one fiscal surplus and, despite his short-sighted cash grab on long service leave and super, in Queensland debt continues to increase over the forward estimates. It heads toward \$80 billion again after the raid on superannuation and long service leave funds. The member for Mulgrave has also gone where no other Treasurer in the history of Queensland has dared to tread. For every single Treasurer in Queensland's history, superannuation and long service leave have been off limits. Not even Andrew Fraser and Anna Bligh, in their darkest days, considered touching something so sacrosanct. However, this Treasurer's ridiculous pre-election fiscal plan had him short of options. Yesterday, the power-merger plan did not rate a mention and it was the same with the debt-reduction trust, which was going to provide \$1.5 billion annually to pay down debt. He has resorted to a shameless cash grab and a debt shuffle. The budget announced yesterday was never part of the plan that the Premier and the Treasurer took to the people of Queensland and it is not going to lead to long-term economic prosperity in Queensland.

Budget

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (2.57 pm): Yesterday, the Palaszczuk Labor government delivered a budget about jobs. Jobs for now and jobs for the future: jobs now, with \$240 million over four years to restore Skilling Queenslanders for Work, supporting 32,000 Queenslanders back into work; jobs now, with payroll taxes for employers who hire apprentices and trainees; jobs now, with our \$18.8 billion QTRIP program supporting almost 15,000 jobs over four years; and jobs now, with our \$40 million Business Development Fund to provide early stage venture capital to emerging and growing Queensland businesses. We are also creating jobs for the future through Advance Queensland, our \$180 million investment in innovation to diversify the Queensland economy and deliver new knowledge based jobs. This will include funding for Startup Queensland, new research scholarships and the expansion of STEM, coding, computer science and robotics in schools. We are unashamed in our commitment to jobs for Queenslanders. Our plan will develop skills, support commercialisation and export, and grow the jobs of tomorrow.

However, yesterday we also saw the LNP release its own jobs plan. You would not know it! It was slipped out by the member for Mansfield very quietly and with not a lot of fanfare. It is a jobs plan that they say will be backed by legislation and it is a jobs plan that looks very different to Labor's. The LNP jobs plan is a plan for more politicians. They want to increase the size of parliament and see more politicians in this place. This shows the LNP's wrong priorities. At a time when Labor is fighting to create jobs and more opportunities for Queenslanders, the LNP is fighting for more jobs for politicians on George Street.

Of course they have got form in this respect as you know, Mr Speaker. At the same time as they were telling Queenslanders that we all had to tighten our belts, that we had to sack public servants, that we had to cut front-line services, what did they try to do? The member for Callide tried to slip in a 42 per cent pay increase for politicians. Of course they have form in this respect. They are only here to look after themselves.

Mr Hart interjected.

Ms TRAD: We on this side of the chamber are fighting for jobs. We are fighting for Queensland and going up against the Abbott government. On that side of the chamber they are rolling over to Abbott, they are fighting for higher wages for politicians and they are fighting for more politicians. There is only one party in this place that understands what it means to deliver jobs for Queenslanders.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Kawana, I say to the member for Burleigh that he has been leading in his interjections. I would urge him to be more careful.

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (3.00 pm): This Labor government is going from crisis to crisis. Now we have a crisis of confidence in the police minister. I have never seen a situation where the Police Service does not support the police minister. The Premier does not support the police minister. The local mayors do not support the police minister. In fact, Paul Pisasale, the mayor of Ipswich, said last week that the Minister for Police is the worst police minister in the country. The Premier came out and said, 'He is just passionate about Ipswich.' There was more than passion in Paul Pisasale when he said that she is the worst police minister in the country. It is the truth. He was absolutely speaking the truth.

In opposition the police minister said that lodgings for mine workers were Nazi concentration camps. When she became a minister she backed home detention for dangerous prisoners which, of course, earned a rebuke from the Premier. She hijacked a school safety event to attack the LNP whilst schoolkids were in the background. She contacted a whistleblower during a police investigation. We are going to debate the Ipswich police communications centre issue later. Staff in her electorate office are being accused of running an anti-Ipswich campaign. Of course, we have the PCCC issues that we have seen in the last 72 hours. How much more will there be?

We know that the minister is not protected by anyone opposite. She is protected by the CFMEU. The only thing that is keeping the police minister in cabinet is the CFMEU. The Premier knows that she cannot get rid of the police minister because she is in the wrong faction. I saw that the *Courier-Mail* was debating whether Mark Ryan, the member for Morayfield, was going to replace Jo-Ann Miller as the police minister. Bring it on! Apparently he is from the same faction.

As the Treasurer interjected yesterday, it is because of all of this—the bungling, the move from crisis to crisis, the incompetence of the police minister, no confidence in the minister from anyone not even the Queensland Police Service or the Ipswich Police Service; Mr Springborg and I were out there this morning—that I feel compelled to seek leave to move that the Acting Chairman of the PCCC be directed to provide to the House any documents that will restore confidence in the police minister.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Premier. I call the member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I said that I feel compelled to seek leave to move that the Acting Chairman of the PCCC be directed to provide the House with any documents that will restore confidence in this police minister.

Mr SPEAKER: With respect, member for Kawana, the first thing you have to do is seek leave to move a motion; not give the motion.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, I did not hear it.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I said 'I feel compelled to seek leave to move'. That is the third time.

Mr SPEAKER: The correct wording should be, 'I seek leave to move a motion without notice.' Your time has expired.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I have taken advice from the Clerk. I am informed that the member for Kawana did seek leave to move a motion without notice. Accordingly, the question is whether leave is granted.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted to move a motion without notice.

AYES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 45:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 1—Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

Resolved in the negative.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time is due to finish at 4.03 pm.

Budget, Public Service Entitlements

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (3.11 pm): My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the following quote from former premier Peter Beattie, who had bipartisan support for this: 'All the earnings from QIC for our liabilities such as superannuation and long service leave will be reinvested to provide a buffer against periods when the markets are not so strong.' I ask: will the Premier say where and when she sought a mandate to raid people's superannuation and long service leave?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I note that the Leader of the Opposition referred to former premier Peter Beattie, who text me this morning and congratulated me on a great Labor budget. So it is great to see that endorsement of continuing on with the Smart State legacy where we are moving towards a smarter state and investing in jobs. My government is unashamedly about jobs. What we have seen today from those opposite is that they are looking at fostering more jobs for themselves in this House by creating more jobs for politicians. On a day after the budget you would expect the Leader of the Opposition to be talking about the budget—but no. The opposition wants to talk about increasing the number of politicians in this House above the 89.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order, Leader of the Opposition?

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question was specifically about the budget and where the Premier had sought a mandate to raid long service leave and superannuation of public servants.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am clearly talking about the difference between this side of the House in relation to the budget and creating jobs and those on the other side of the House who only want to create jobs for themselves. To address the specifics of the Leader of the Opposition's question, this is what I say: there is no way on this earth that my government will axe public servant jobs like the former government did. The mark of the first government, the first act of the Newman government, was to axe 14,000 jobs. Before that election the Premier said public servants had nothing to fear.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not want to hear it because the truth hurts. Before the Newman government was elected they said public servants had nothing to fear and some 14,000 jobs were axed. The Leader of the Opposition was the health minister, and how many jobs were axed in his portfolio? Over 4,500 jobs gone from the health service. What is my government doing? This health minister is restoring front-line jobs. That is what my government said we would do. A Labor government will restore front-line jobs because we value front-line jobs and we value service delivery.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I understand the question was about a mandate in relation to superannuation. Thank you, members. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This government will create jobs for Queenslanders. That is what we were elected to do. We also said that we would not sell our assets. The architect of the assets sales, the member for Clayfield, is sitting over there on the front bench. That is what they went to the election with. This government will not sell our assets and we will—

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I know that the Premier is being quite enthusiastic with her answer but she has not really touched on the question yet. My question was specifically about where the Premier sought a mandate with regard to accessing or raiding public servants' superannuation and long service leave.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me make it very clear: I value public servants in this state. I value the work that they do and under my watch there is no change to their entitlement whatsoever—no change to their entitlement whatsoever. I want Queenslanders to judge me on my record because the opposition's record is horrendous. Their record is reckless and horrendous. Where they destroy we are restoring.

Budget, Public Service Entitlements

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer to former treasurer Andrew Fraser, who acknowledges there had always been bipartisan support not to raid the superannuation scheme, and I quote: 'I will be the first to acknowledge that the provision has been there through generations of strong financial leadership from both sides of politics.' Can the Treasurer say why he did not level with Queenslanders at the ballot box and say he was going to raid their super and long service schemes?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. Well, here we are again. The Leader of the Opposition at one stage in a previous life as opposition leader led the charge about making public servants de-necessary. 'De-necessary' was a new word in the dictionary. We have heard another one. 'Jiggery-pokery' is one of the latest ones he has come up with. He is very clearly trying to lead the charge again after being part of a cabinet, part of a government, which spent the previous three years in office terrorising public servants, putting fear into them, when the former premier said they had nothing to fear before the previous election. They want to talk about what people do and say before elections and after elections. Where did the Leader of the Opposition speak up when nobody before the election was told about 24,000 public servants having to be shown the door under the Newman government? Where was that?

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr STEVENS: This matter, the number being quoted, has been to the Ethics Committee already. The Leader of the House should know better and should advise his Treasurer. I ask that the Treasurer retract that number and give the correct number.

Mr SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. I call the Treasurer.

Mr PITT: This again is scaremongering by the Leader of the Opposition. It is scaremongering by all of those opposite. It is very disappointing. Let me say again very clearly to the Leader of the Opposition so he understands this: there is no change to the entitlements of public sector workers either in terms of long service leave or in terms of their defined benefit scheme superannuation entitlements. There is no change because it is all protected and enshrined in legislation that those commitments will be made by the government. The only people who are scaring public servants are those opposite. They are the only ones who have any concern. The public sector union is not concerned. I can certainly say that I have spoken and briefed—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. All right, members. We have had a good time. I now call the Treasurer. I ask the Treasurer to make sure his answer is relevant to the question. I urge members to control themselves or I may need to access the standing orders—standing order 253 or 253A. I call the Treasurer.

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, it does raise a pretty interesting question. I have in front of me the *Queensland Country Life*, the headline of which states, 'I'd be Premier if Labor told truth: Springborg'. I am very interested because we talk about what happens with pre-elections and mandates. In the world of Lawrence Springborg, the Leader of the Opposition, if we had not done what we said before the election, which is what he is trying to imply, somehow he would have made truth to the fact that Campbell Newman was clearly going to get rolled and called an election early so that the member for Southern Downs did not become the Premier. This is absurd. Those opposite are absolutely in chaos. Yesterday's budget showed everybody that there is a better way besides asset sales, besides mass sackings and besides raising taxes, fees and charges. He has his opportunity tomorrow to give his reply. Let us see what he comes up with.

Jobs

Ms LINARD: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise the House what the government is doing to strengthen Queensland's innovation sector and create jobs?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Nudgee for her interest in innovation and creating jobs in this state. On this side of the House we do want to talk about jobs, because we know how fundamental that is for families in Queensland, and it is also honouring an election commitment—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Coomera, I would urge you to control yourself.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. During the election campaign, this side of the House spoke at length about creating jobs. We know, because we have taken a hit in commodity prices, that we must diversify the economy. When I speak about diversifying the economy and creating knowledge based industries of the future, I think even the Leader of the Opposition agrees with me on that point because we must make Queensland the smartest state. We must make sure that we provide those jobs and opportunities that we need for the future. That is why the Advance Queensland \$180 million strategy is front and centre of my government's agenda. What it means is that we are seeking out those new, emerging industries. We are looking for new opportunities. We want to make sure that we are ready and we stand ready to make sure that we can create those jobs in those industries, but we also know that we need to assist business. That is why I am very pleased about Startup Queensland. People can come to Queensland with their new ideas, foster those ideas and create companies here in Queensland. Creating new companies means creating new jobs.

We know with biofuels there are emerging opportunities. After my recent trade mission and having visited the Pentagon, I know there is an opportunity for us to pursue a biofuels industry here in Queensland. I just came back from Townsville and Cairns, and the mayors are also prepared to work with me in relation to this aspect because we know they can deliver jobs in the regions—not just jobs for the south-east but also jobs in the regions.

I am adamant that we will look at our school curriculum. The Minister for Education will shortly release a discussion paper about teaching new and exciting subjects in our primary schools that will enable Queensland to be ahead of the rest of the pack in terms of other states and other countries in having new learnings that will go towards creating new jobs.

In agriculture, the Minister for Agriculture knows there are changing technologies happening across our state. If we can harness those new technologies, we can export those to the world. The Minister for State Development also knows that in mining we can export new technologies. If anyone doubts that we cannot create these new and emerging industries, I say to them to look no further than the LNG industry—a \$60 billion industry where we are now exporting to the world. It was Labor that created the groundwork for that, and it is Labor that will create the groundwork for these new and emerging industries.

Budget, Public Service Entitlements

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer to former Labor treasurer Terry Mackenroth, who also headed the government's transition to government committee, who had bipartisan support when he said, 'Liabilities such as employee long service leave entitlements are also fully funded.' Will the Treasurer advise the House why he did not level with Queenslanders at the ballot box and reveal that he was going to raid people's super and long service schemes?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. We keep hearing an inference in the question of raiding superannuation funds. The shadow Treasurer clearly does not understand what the concept of 100 per cent fully funded means, because 100 per cent fully funded means that there is enough money to pay each and every member in the defined benefit scheme. Of course, we know exactly how many are in that scheme. It is a closed scheme, and we know when they are going to be paid out.

An opposition member: When are they going to be paid out?

Mr PITT: In the worst-case scenario, which is the way this has been approached by the government, and certainly based on advice from the State Actuary, we know that the scheme is more than \$10 billion in surplus on a funding basis. We know that it is \$2 billion to \$2½ billion in surplus on an accounting basis. We know that you look at this on the basis of actuarial advice. Our fiscal principle, which is now part of our charter of fiscal responsibility, very clearly says that we will ensure that our long-term liabilities remain fully funded on the basis of actuarial advice.

The State Actuary has provided this advice. Either those opposite are challenging the integrity of the State Actuary, suggesting he is wrong, or I do not know where they are coming from. That is what happens with superannuation. Every three years you get actuarial advice which tells us very clearly that there is either an opportunity as an employer to either increase your contribution or decrease your contribution to see how the health of the scheme is.

This is the point: those opposite should have been looking at other measures besides what they took to Queensland, and that was selling Queensland off to the highest bidder, sacking people en masse and cutting front-line services right across our state. Let us not forget that they said we would otherwise have to raise taxes, fees and charges. The wannabe shadow Treasurer over there is whispering in the ear of the bloke next to his chair. I think everyone over there should be very concerned. I think there is a problem because the member for Clayfield—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Treasurer, we do not need you to bait the opposition. You may continue.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. What is your point of order, Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Speaker, my question was very specific and asked him to advise the House why he did not level with Queenslanders at the ballot box. He has not addressed that.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, I would urge you to respond to the specific question.

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, I will respond to his question specifically. We had a commitment to undertake a review of state finances. We took that review of state finances—and this should be very instructive for the member for Clayfield, who had a dodgy Commission of Audit done up—to the people and it recommended that we should consider this option. It is that simple.

Budget

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the increasingly popular Premier.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mirani; please put your question.

Mr PEARCE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Will the Premier outline what the government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I call the member for Mirani.

Mr PEARCE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is so loud over there. Will the Premier outline what the government's first budget has delivered for the state's west?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I now call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I would like to thank the member for Mirani for his question because I said to all of Queensland that I would be a Premier for all of Queensland. We know that out west people have been doing it really tough. Many of my ministers have been out there, as I have, visiting these western communities that have been going through very tough times due to the drought. So when my Minister for Tourism, the member for Mount Isa and I went to Winton just recently we were able to meet with a number of the mayors. They all came to Winton to meet with me and the Minister for Tourism to talk about what the government could do to assist farmers and people living in the western region. In fact it was commented to me at the time that they had not seen a Premier or a Deputy Premier in quite some time.

Ms Jones: Years.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In years, in fact. They mentioned to me that, if the government could look at increasing the roads package, it would create jobs in their community—jobs. So I am very pleased that as part of my government's budget we were able to deliver a \$40 million western roads package that will create jobs out in those western communities. Unlike the former government that axed RoadTek workers across the state, my government wants to make sure that we enhance those western communities. I am very pleased to see that the member for Warrego has welcomed the new roads funding from both the federal and state governments in her electorate. We are getting some endorsement from the other side of the House by members who are taking the politics out and who realise that this is the right thing to do for their communities. In fact I think the member for Gregory also made some comments about supporting some funding to the pastoral colleges that the Minister for Agriculture announced.

I want to place on the record that we still acknowledge that the communities are doing it tough and that my government is there to listen. This is a listening government and a government of consultation. I have consulted with the mayors and the local member, I have visited the Barcaldine area as well as Charleville and Winton and I have met those families firsthand, and all of that has impressed on me the need to create jobs in these communities. They are doing it tough. We have an outback tourism campaign as well that is encouraging people to go and visit out west, and I encourage members to do that and to promote that campaign out in their communities. We have \$40 million on the table and that is going to create jobs out in those western communities, and I would like to thank the members for Gregory and Warrego for their support.

Budget, Public Service Entitlements

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to a circular by Kevin Rudd's former chief of staff and under treasurer, Jim Murphy, which stated that the defined benefit scheme effectively ceases in 2035 for public servants, which I table.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 14 July 2015, from Mr Jim Murphy, Under Treasurer, to all TMR staff regarding the 2015-16 budget and Public Service long service leave obligations and suspension of annual employer contributions to the defined benefit scheme [784].

Will the Treasurer outline circumstances for public servants who can currently continue under that scheme until their effective retirement date up to as late as 2057?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. What the member is referring to is information provided by the Under Treasurer, who has a responsibility as manager of the fund to ensure that the government is able to continue to do what it said it was going to do and manage its long-term liabilities. This fund, as we know, has a finite group. We have seen what the curve looks like in terms of payout. I am happy to take the question on notice in terms of some aspects of the longer-run members of the fund because it is something I need to have a look at and get more detail to provide.

Mr Rickuss: You don't know.

Mr PITT: No, I would rather provide a real and proper answer to the member because this is something serious. What I have noticed is that those opposite have been using very emotive language around what is a very important issue. They have been using words like 'raiding' and all of those things—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr PITT: I take the interjection from the member for Glass House. He said that I used the word in my press release. The only reason we used it in the press release in inverted commas was that it was a quote from those opposite who said that people were raiding the fund. In no way, shape or form would we suggest that we would be doing that. This pattern of questioning allows me to continue with the previous answer.

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr PITT: The shadow Treasurer can carp on all he likes. What we know is that this fund will remain fully funded—more than 100 per cent fully funded—because of—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, I have already accepted that I will take that portion of the question on notice. Clearly, it is not satisfying enough for those opposite to have us answer a question in more detail to ensure that we give them a precise and proper answer. What we have done is provide a balanced and reasonable budget, but what we know is that those opposite do not know something reasonable and responsible when they get one. We are very happy to give them the response they are seeking. That is what this is all about. Mr Speaker, I am very happy to provide that response to the member but I reiterate again—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, I now warn you under standing order 253A. I ask you to stop obstructing the business of the House with your interjections. You are officially warned. I call the Treasurer.

Mr PITT: Thanks, Mr Speaker. I will make sure again that those opposite clearly understand that we have sought advice and that based on the advice we have made this decision. That is advice from the State Actuary. It is advice that looked at our review of state finances which gave consideration to long service leave. These are all reasonable and responsible things to do, particularly when those opposite say that they no longer want to sell assets in Queensland. I very much look forward to the budget reply speech tomorrow so that we can hear just how they are going to somehow not resurrect their old plan but come up with a new plan that is not ours, because clearly they are opposed to our reasonable, measured and responsible plan.

Budget

Mrs LAUGA: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier inform the House about any measures contained in this budget that will assist the communities of Central Queensland to recover from Tropical Cyclone Marcia?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I know that she has been a passionate advocate in terms of ensuring that the people of Central Queensland get their fair share, particularly in light of the devastating experiences they suffered earlier this year when Tropical Cyclone Marcia crossed the coastline. I also pay tribute to the member for Rockhampton for his very, very passionate advocacy for the people of Rockhampton.

I am very pleased and proud to announce that it is the Palaszczuk Labor government that has listened to the people of Central Queensland, the people of Keppel and the people of Rockhampton, and we have heard their concerns in terms of delivering social infrastructure for their communities that responds to the devastating experiences they suffered from Tropical Cyclone Marcia. Of course I am talking about the \$25 million allocation in this budget for Yeppoon for the foreshore redevelopment and

the \$15 million in this budget for Rockhampton for the CBD revitalisation project, which is critical and important. When I went up to Rockhampton and met with Councillor Bill Ludwig, Councillor Margaret Strelow and local business and community leaders, I got to understand how important these projects are for the local communities, not just in terms of generating jobs—and both projects will generate about 400 construction jobs—but also in terms of what it means for the local communities and their recovery after Tropical Cyclone Marcia.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is a government that listens, it is a government that cares and it is a government that delivers. In stark contrast, what did Tony Abbott's Liberal National Party government say to the people of Central Queensland when they asked for assistance? When we went to the federal government and said that we need assistance for iconic projects in local communities, we need assistance for farmers, we need assistance for local businesses and we need assistance across all four councils and shires up to the amount of \$198 million, what did the federal government come back with? A \$27 million allocation to be shared by the state. That is a government that has turned its back on the people of Central Queensland. Tony Abbott and the Liberal National Party care naught for the people of Central Queensland. They flicked them off to the Stronger Regions Fund pool and then they denied them through the Stronger Regions Fund pool any money for their projects. We are the only government that is prepared to stand up for the people of Central Queensland. I am very proud of that allocation in this year's budget.

Budget, Great Results Guarantee

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Education. Yesterday's budget slashed the \$299 million committed for 2016 for the Great Results Guarantee initiative, a program widely praised by school principals, and I ask: how are principals now going to fund the programs that schools have developed under this initiative to improve the numeracy and literacy levels of their students?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I can assure everybody in the House that I did not ask the member opposite to ask me this question. I can give that guarantee up-front; I did not slip this over to him to ask me. I give this assurance to the Leader of the Opposition: I think your job is safe. All I say to the member for Everton is that—was it the Great Results Guarantee that he was talking about, the GRG money? That is on page 12 of Budget Paper No. 4—Great Results Guarantee money. It is there in black and white on page 12 of the budget papers. Oh dear, member for Everton! Honourable members can imagine my surprise—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I cannot hear the minister.

Ms JONES: Honourable members can imagine my surprise when I saw the press release come out from the member for Everton claiming that the GRG money had disappeared from the budget papers—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: It is in black and white in the budget papers, BP4, page 12.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: What is very interesting about this—and I am taking all of those interjections—is that the member claims that the money disappeared. I say to him that in their last budget—how much money was there?

Mr Dick: How much?

Ms JONES: There was \$67 million in 2013-14 and \$64 million in 2014-15. How much is there in our budget, honourable Premier? \$93.5 million! So not only is it not being slashed or disappearing from the budget, but there it is—\$95 million, an additional boost. I think that Jake Smith has some questions to answer today. I think that maybe Jake Smith wrote this question for the member for Everton.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business, we do not need your assistance. I call the minister.

Ms JONES: So, Jake, that is a tick for you, buddy. In all seriousness, when it comes to education, this demonstration by the shadow minister that he did not even bother to read the budget papers 24 hours after the budget—

Mr Dick: Twelve pages.

Ms JONES: I take that; it was 12 pages in and he could not see the money. I give him this assurance, as I have said publicly on the record—if he would like to go and check that, too—we support the GRG funding, which is federal government funding, to our schools. It has been reported in this budget in exactly the same way it was reported last year, except there is a budget increase. That is the only change that has happened in this budget. I assure honourable members that we will commit the \$299 million in full to our schools.

What we have seen here today is an opposition that clearly does not care about education. While we deliver the largest Education budget in history, they could not even be bothered to read the budget papers.

Budget, Jobs and Investment

Mr FURNER: My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer outline how the Palaszczuk government's first budget is getting on with delivering jobs and investment across Queensland?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know he is a strong advocate for his electorate of Ferny Grove. The take-home message from the Palaszczuk government's first budget is that there is more money coming in than there is going out. That allows us to fund those projects and services that, of course, we need across the state. This is an infrastructure budget and it has an infrastructure spend—\$10 billion in capital investment—which is supporting 27½ thousand direct jobs. Whilst we are getting on with the job of delivering jobs and investment across Queensland, those opposite are somehow stuck in purgatory between asset sales and a new plan, not knowing whether they should be moving forward or backward. We can see from their confused reactions when the budget was handed down yesterday that they were absolutely in shock. Mainly they were looking at the former treasurer saying, 'Why didn't you think of this?' Obviously the brickbats will be out and no doubt they will be having all sorts of issues.

It is an approach that does not involve asset sales, mass sackings, cuts across-the-board to service delivery and a tax on workers. That is what we have delivered. Put simply, we are going to continue to fund the sorts of services we need and the projects we need. We will continue to put our case to the federal government to make sure that we get our fair share of federal government funding for infrastructure in Queensland. However, it is not just those opposite who are a bit confused. What we are getting is mixed signals from the federal government regarding projects in Queensland. Last week we saw in an article the Prime Minister telling us regarding the potential stage 2 of the Gold Coast Light Rail—

"There is a very clear and obvious way the State Government can secure a contribution if it wishes ...

"We are not in the business of funding urban public transport other than through asset recycling.

"If the State Government is so keen to have a Federal Government contribution to the light rail they can do what the ACT Government did, which was to sell off some assets to trigger asset recycling."

The federal government has double promised the same pot of money in its northern Australia paper released last month. It states that it will provide targeted funding for priority projects and will—

... be achieved as a result of an expected \$800 million underspend from the Asset Recycling Initiative, primarily as a result of the Queensland Government's decision not to participate in the initiative.

The Prime Minister is effectively telling the people of Queensland to sell assets in exchange for the hope of sharing some funding that he has already allocated elsewhere. It is little wonder the self-proclaimed 'Prime Minister for Infrastructure' does not use that particular title much anymore. As the federal government dithers and apparently continues to support asset sales as a precondition of its funding in Queensland, we are getting on with the job of finding ways of getting these projects moving. As we have talked about, our market-led proposals framework is about considering genuine partnerships with the private sector to deliver projects such as Cross River Rail. Business needs certainty regarding a pipeline for future projects and that is exactly what the Palaszczuk government is delivering on many fronts.

Budget, Road Toll

Mr EMERSON: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. I am sure that everyone in this House wants to see a cut to our state's road toll. Can the minister explain why the budget is predicting an almost 20 per cent increase in fatalities on state roads this financial year compared to last year?

Mr BAILEY: First of all, can I say what a cheap question from the opposition. This government takes seriously doing absolutely everything we can to deal with the road toll. For the member opposite to come in here and start to politicise this issue is a pretty base act.

I presume that the member is referring to the service delivery document. In that document it is very clear that our standards, compared to last year, have reduced. When the member reads the budget document he will see that. With regard to the road toll we have been very active in only five months of this government. We have had our road safety forum. In April we consulted stakeholders—we invited them into the parliament—and we have introduced a range of new measures. We have brought in double demerit points for those using mobile phones or being distracted while driving—something that research shows three out of four people do at some point during their time driving. We are acting on that front. We are also toughening the learner driver laws. The risk of fatality for new drivers is huge, so we have made the test for open licences tougher. The risk facing young drivers is this: they make up 14 per cent of the road toll from age 16 to 21, yet they make up 31 per cent of fatalities. We are working with young people to come up with solutions, to communicate with them about the kinds of messages they want to listen to in the digital age so that we can get that road toll down for young drivers. We are doing that as well.

We are also starting a citizens task force to look at ways to engage the community on difficult road safety issues. We have recently had a collaboration event at the Powerhouse—

Mr EMERSON: I rise to a point of order. This is a very serious question and we are not getting an answer from the minister. We all want to see the road toll cut in Queensland. Unfortunately—

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order? It is not opportunity for a speech or a debate.

Mr EMERSON: The budget papers very clearly show and the question very clearly is: what does—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Indooroopilly, this is not an opportunity for you to have a debate. What is your point of order?

Mr EMERSON: Mr Speaker, the question was very clear: why does the budget show a predicted increase of almost 20 per cent in fatalities on the state's roads this year compared to last year? The question is very straightforward.

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order. The budget papers clearly do not show an increase in the number of fatalities on the road, and I would like the honourable member to stipulate which budget paper he is talking about.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! My ruling is that there is no point of order from the member for Indooroopilly and there is no point of order from the Deputy Premier. I call the minister. You have 51 seconds remaining.

Mr BAILEY: In the table on page 11 of *Queensland Budget 2015-16 Service Delivery Statement: Department of Transport and Main Roads*, it clearly shows that the target for 'fatalities per 100,000 population on State-controlled roads' is 3.24. The fact is that the target under the previous LNP government was 3.35. How dare you come in here and mislead this House! For 'hospitalised road casualties per 100,000' the actual number last year was 148 and our target is 145, which is again less and a better target. If the honourable member wants to be regarded seriously in this place, he should read the budget papers themselves and tell the truth instead of misleading the House.

Budget, Regional Hospitals

Mr BUTCHER: My question is to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister advise the House how regional hospitals, including mine in Gladstone, will benefit from the state budget?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Gladstone for his question. At least one member of this House can read the budget papers and get it right. What a great member for Gladstone he is turning out to be! We knew that Gladstone was a Labor town, and he turned in one of the biggest returns of any candidate in the election. What a fantastic result! He stood against the sale of the Port of Gladstone too, I might add, and the people of Gladstone responded to that.

Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia, and Labor has a very long and proud history of rebuilding and refurbishing hospitals in Queensland. Look to the past and look to the hospitals that we have rebuilt or upgraded: Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Mount Isa and of course

Townsville, where we rebuilt an entire new hospital for that city. What a pleasure it was to be up there last Friday with the Premier when the third and fourth stages of the upgrade to that hospital were officially opened and the vision of the last state and federal Labor governments came to life.

In this budget we have \$180 million over four years for our Enhancing Regional Hospitals Program, which is a great program that will help refurbish and modernise ageing and out-of-date hospitals. That work will occur in Roma, Caloundra and Hervey Bay, and there is an important project to refurbish the emergency department of the Gladstone Hospital. I have been out to Roma—just around the corner from the Leader of the Opposition's electorate—and I have seen the structural defects in the hospital which were ignored by the Leader of the Opposition when he was the health minister. We will deal with those structural defects and the backlog of maintenance issues. Hervey Bay's emergency department will be expanded, and in Caloundra we will refurbish and accommodate service delivery changes for the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital. This budget allocates \$193 million for the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital transition funding so that services can be reconfigured across the Sunshine Coast area to prepare for the opening of that hospital. Once the ICT and Nambour Hospital are finalised we will make the necessary allocations to complete those important projects. We have also provided additional funding of \$2.3 billion over four years for Health, and that will include additional operating funding for the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service to allow for expanded services after the opening of the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital.

It is only Labor governments that will properly fund regional hospitals and it is only Labor governments that will properly fund the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital, which is something of which we are very proud.

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergence Services

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the police minister's answer to a question yesterday where she said it was appropriate to direct a question to the Premier about whether the minister was doing a good job. My question to the Premier is: is the Minister for Police doing a good job?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, she is. In relation to our budget, the minister has been working very hard to deliver the needs of the Police Service, Corrective Services and emergency services right across this state. As I said publicly today at our post-budget lunch, all of my ministers are working hard. Do I have confidence in every one of my ministers? Yes, I do, because we have delivered a good, solid Labor budget that is creating jobs, looking after our communities right across this state, catering for our growing communities and making sure that families across the state get the best access to quality health and education services. But whilst I am on my feet let me talk about the budget, because it is very interesting today that the member for Indooroopilly—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. My question was not about the budget; it was about whether the police minister is doing a good job. She has answered the question. I suggest the Premier sit down. I am satisfied with the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is budget week; let me talk about the budget.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier, and I would ask the Premier to make sure that her answer is relevant to the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are delivering extra police on the beat, we are delivering vehicles for them to do their job and body cameras as well. I know that the police minister has been talking a lot about that, because we know how important it is that police have the vital equipment they need to do their job.

But whilst I am speaking about the police budget, it is very interesting because it appears that those opposite, the member for Indooroopilly and the member for Everton, have been set up by the Leader of the Opposition's office today. They are asking dodgy questions. They have not done their homework. These are questions they should be asking their leader.

Education

Mr PYNE: My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister please outline to the House what the government is doing to ensure that every Queensland child has access to a quality education?

Ms JONES: What a great privilege it is to be standing again on my feet in this House to talk about the largest—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Burleigh, you are now warned under standing order 253A for your obstruction to the business of the House and your interjections. I call the Minister for Education.

Ms JONES: As I was saying, it is such a privilege to be on my feet again talking about the record investment in Queensland schools in this budget. The largest Education budget in the history of Queensland has been delivered by the Palaszczuk government. This is what we are all about, and it is wonderful that the member for Cairns is able to deliver on what we have promised.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: You do not want record spending on education; is that what you are saying? Is that the problem?

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Minister, please do not bait the opposition. I would ask you to answer the question.

Ms JONES: As I was saying, it is great to be in this House with the member for Cairns, who is just as passionate as I am about education. We are so pleased that, when you read your budget papers, member for Cairns, you saw that we are delivering a new special school for Cairns. This is something which is long overdue, and I am very proud that it is our government that is delivering that. That is because, as we have said here today, we are making a record investment in education. I was at a school today with the Premier talking about the \$300 million above normal funding for maintenance in this budget. There is more than three-quarters of a billion dollars for maintenance in our schools over the next four years. In addition, we have record investment in capital works this 12 months. On top of that, we will be delivering 2,500 extra teachers over the next three years, including 875 teachers against growth.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection. That is right: when they were last in government, when they got rid of the allocative model—I see the member for Townsville nodding because he was a principal and he understands what the rounding down actually meant in schools. It meant 180 fewer full-time positions in our schools.

What we are seeing here today is an opposition that keeps wanting to interject because this is the first time we have really seen the key difference when it comes to education between this Labor government and the former LNP government and the shadow minister, who cannot even be bothered to read the budget papers.

An opposition member: You are making it up.

Ms JONES: I made it up? Was that the interjection? I am happy to give the member mine. I table the budget papers for the honourable member in case he does not believe—

Mr Dick: Page 12.

Ms JONES: Page 12 of BP4. I table it for the shadow minister.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland Budget 2015-16: Budget Measures—Budget Papers No. 4, page 12 [\[785\]](#).

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: I answered that last time when you asked your question. I put that firmly on the record.

(Time expired)

Gas Prices

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines. Having regard to the imminent threat of rising gas prices in Queensland and the devastating effect this could have on large industry gas users, particularly in areas not connected to the national electricity grid, will a gas reserve policy or similar mechanism be used to avert this serious threat to hundreds of millions of dollars in royalties to the state budget?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Mount Isa for his question. I note his keen interest in the gas industry. I also note how important the gas industry is for Mount Isa and for fostering new industries in Mount Isa.

The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of supporting businesses and industry to create jobs. I am pleased to report that our latest initiative is the development of a gas action plan to fire up growth and jobs in the gas industry where it flows not only at the wellhead through its potential uses in the CSG and LNG industries overseas but also in gas-fired manufacturing and our booming LNG industry in our state. The terms of reference for the Queensland Gas Supply and Demand Action Plan are available now online. We will have a draft issues paper out in October this year.

In direct response to the question asked by the member for Mount Isa, I am sure gas reservation will be part of the terms of reference and will be adequately discussed in this action plan. The final plan will be completed early next year, obviously after extensive consultation, which this government is proud to commence—unlike those opposite.

This action plan will be an overarching strategy to maximise exploration. It will drive development. It will keep gas costs down and get maximum economic and jobs benefit for Queensland. A key part of this plan will be looking at future opportunities. Global demand for Queensland gas, led by Asia, no doubt is increasing. By 2018 Queensland is expected to be the fourth largest LNG exporter globally, and by the end of the decade Australia has the potential to be the world's leading LNG exporter. On the domestic front, natural gas demand on the Australian east coast is forecast to grow at a staggering 16.5 per cent each year.

Our action plan will examine the full spectrum of gas demand, businesses and employment opportunities in Queensland beyond what is already happening in the pipeline with liquefied natural gas production at Gladstone. By the time our action plan is released we will also know the outcome of the process currently underway in the Northern Territory government with respect to the proposed pipeline connecting the Northern Territory to the east coast network. The Palaszczuk government is strongly supportive of this pipeline because it knows that extra supply can also drive down the price of gas.

With gas such an important part of Queensland's future, I turn to the you-beaut Real Economic Plan of those opposite. I searched the economic plan and the word 'gas' turned up in a graph and in a rebate for concession card holders. Unfortunately, apart from a few vague references to the need to diversify the Queensland economy, there are no ideas and definitely no plans. I will send those opposite a copy of our plans.

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has now expired.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer to standing order 63(1). This is a matter of natural justice that has been denied to a member of this House by Labor members. Under that standing order, I seek leave to move a motion to allow the police minister, the member for Bundamba, to tell us whether she really did sign a false document.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you have not sought leave. You must seek leave to move a motion without notice. I understand that is not the wording you used. Do you have a motion there?

Mr SEENEY: That is not what the standing order says, but in accordance with your ruling I seek leave to move a motion without notice to allow the police minister to tell the House whether she falsified a document. This is an opportunity that was denied the police minister by Labor members of the PCCC who voted against providing natural justice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted to move a motion without notice.

In division—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you are aware of the standing orders. The same rules apply while the division bells are being rung. I would ask you to curtail your comments across the chamber.

Later in division—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The question is that leave be granted to move a motion—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the House was not in his seat when the bells stopped ringing.

Mr SPEAKER: He was in the chamber.

Mr SEENEY: He was not in his seat. As I understand the standing orders, members need to be in their seat when the bells stop ringing. So, Mr Speaker, I would ask that the Leader of the House's vote not be counted. The member was not in his seat.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment. Thank you, member for Callide.

Mr SEENEY: The standing orders—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, I have heard you—

Mr SEENEY:—are very clear that members have to be in their seats.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide! Member for Callide, I have heard your point of order. The advice I have received is that the member was in the chamber. As long as he is in his chair when the votes are being counted, that is all that is required. If you want to debate the matter further or raise the matter further, member for Callide, I invite you to meet with me after the resolution of this matter. I will read for the benefit of all members standing order 106 relating to procedure for a party vote. Standing order 106 states—

(1) When the bars have been closed, the Speaker shall state the question to the House.

(2) To cast their votes, members must sit in their allocated places in the Chamber. Unless they have advised their Whip that they intend to cast a contrary vote, each member of the parties that make up the government or official opposition are deemed to be voting to support the response of their party members given at the time the Speaker originally put the question.

Thank you, member for Callide. The question is that leave be granted to move a motion without notice, for which a division has been called. Members must be in their allocated seat.

AYES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeneey, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 45:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 1—Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr Seeneey: Not allowed to speak.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, is that a challenge to my ruling? I understood I heard you say, 'Members are not allowed to speak.' Were those the comments that you made?

Mr Seeneey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, I invite you after we rise to come to my office and we will have a conversation.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Contempt of Parliament by a Member

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (4.14 pm): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising as the acting chair of the PCCC. The member for Callide has raised matters that are currently before the committee. I refer to standing order 211.

Mr Seeneey: Did not.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! One moment. The member for Sunnybank has the call.

Mr Nicholls: He can't think of what to say.

Mr RUSSO: I can. Mr Speaker—

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. One moment. The member for Sunnybank has the call and then I will call the member for Clayfield.

Mr Seeney: It was a public meeting Monday morning. Don't you remember?

Mr NICHOLLS: To the point of order, Mr Speaker: clearly the member for Sunnybank does not have a matter of privilege because he has not been able to say anything for about a minute now and he has not been able to either look at his mobile phone, his tablet or get guidance from anyone else. There is no matter of privilege, Mr Speaker.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr RUSSO: Mr Speaker, the matters that the member for Callide has raised in this House are matters that are currently before the committee and therefore should not be raised in this House in the manner that the—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Sunnybank, I would invite you to write to me about these matters and I will consider these matters.

Mr Seeney: You're referring to a public meeting on Monday.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, if you want to write to me as well, I invite you to write to me about these matters and I will also consider your submission. If any other member wants to write to me, I will consider your submissions as well!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No, no finger-pointing, member for Callide.

Mr Seeney: What about the police minister?

Mr SPEAKER: I know it is budget week and we still have another couple of days to go. We might now proceed to private members' bills and I call—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you have had a good go. I would ask you to—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, please!

ELECTORAL (REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (4.16 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Constitution of Queensland 2001 and the Electoral Act 1992 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 [\[786\]](#).

Tabled paper: Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [\[787\]](#).

I am privileged to present the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015—the first piece of genuine electoral reform legislation to be presented to this parliament. This bill is designed to bring about three principal changes to the method in which the boundaries of electoral districts are redistributed. Firstly, it is proposed to increase the size of the Queensland Redistribution Commission from three members to five members. Secondly, it is proposed that that commission be invested with the power to determine the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly subject to a maximum increase of five additional districts. Thirdly, it is proposed that the commission can amend the additional large district number—currently defined in section 45(2) of the Electoral Act as two per cent—up to four per cent.

Queensland needs a contemporary Electoral Act that meets the challenges of a rapidly changing society and accommodates the reasonable expectations of its citizens. With an electoral redistribution due to commence early next year in accordance with section 38 of the Electoral Act, it is imperative that any reforms be introduced and debated as soon as possible. The Queensland Redistribution Commission consists of three members: a judge or former judge of a Commonwealth, state or territory court as chairman; the chief executive of a department or its equivalent; and the Electoral Commissioner. As it is proposed the commission be given the power to determine an increase in the number of electoral districts, it is proposed to increase the commission by two members. This will achieve two objectives. Firstly, it will broaden the skill base of the commission to ensure that the issues demanding examination during any discussion of an increase in the number of districts will be subject to additional expert scrutiny. Secondly, it will extend membership beyond those who are, or have been, dependent on the government of the day for their appointment to their substantive positions. This will allow greater community involvement and bring to bear the influence of other formal qualifications or practical experiences.

For these reasons it is proposed that the new members must have qualifications or experience in one or more of demography, statistics or regional and town planning. While those skilled in law or public administration have a valid contribution to make, others with different, but complementary, skills or experience have much to offer a process that has become central to the operation of our electoral system. These particular skills are central to an understanding of the patterns of population movement throughout the state and the potential impacts of those movements. A new commission so constituted would bring a degree of intellectual rigour to the redistribution process that would have obvious benefits for the people of Queensland.

I note with interest that Dr Paul Williams of Griffith University also called for an increase in the size of the commission in an article in the *Courier-Mail* of 16 June this year. He wrote—

The first reform should be a broadening of the Redistribution Commission itself from its current three members. A wider representation beyond the Electoral Commissioner, a judge and a senior public servant would give the Commission fresh eyes.

It is further proposed that, in the interests of transparency, the appointments of all commissioners, with the exception of the Electoral Commissioner, who has already undergone a separate appointment process, be subject to the approval of the leaders of all recognised parties represented in the Legislative Assembly. This extends existing arrangements whereby the appointments are only subject to consultation. This additional provision will greatly increase community confidence in the bipartisan nature of the entire redistribution process. The broadening of the commission's membership would bring a significant element of professionalism to that body's work.

The second significant reform relates to the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly. Two issues arise in relation to this. Firstly, is there a need to increase the number of districts and, secondly, if so, what mechanism should be adopted to bring this about? The number of electoral districts stands at 89. In 1972, the size of the Legislative Assembly was increased from 78 to 82. A further increase to 89 was effected in the redistribution preceding the 1986 election. A review of the enrolments and number of seats in each mainland state parliament indicates that Queensland has a relatively high number of electors per member of parliament.

Figures earlier this year reveal that, at 33,430 electors per member, Queensland has the second highest ratio, exceeded only by New South Wales at 34,339. The other three states range from 29,736 electors down to 14,868 per member. In addition, of course, Queensland is the only state without an upper house. At the same time the growth in enrolments in Queensland in recent decades has far outpaced the increase in the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly. Since the size of the House was increased in 1986, the average number of electors in each district has virtually doubled—17,565 electors to 33,521, an increase of just over 90 per cent as at 31 May. It is also instructive to note that, at the time of the 1986 election, the average enrolment in each district was virtually the same as at the election in 1983 despite the addition of seven districts. The increase in the size of the Assembly simply accounted for the increase in enrolments and made no allowances for increases in the future.

These statistics point to a need, at a minimum, to examine whether an increase in the number of electoral districts is justified. Both Dr Williams in his *Courier-Mail* article and the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Laurie, in his paper, *Size matters—the problem of proportionally shrinking parliaments*, presented

at the Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in July 2008, argue for an increase to occur. Indeed, Mr Laurie has argued that this is more than a mere mathematical question but suggested that a larger parliament would result in a more effective, more representative legislature. Mr Laurie's proposal in 2008 was for the addition of some 10 seats to this House.

It should also be noted that the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission—or EARC—recommended in November 1990, at recommendation 7.64, that a periodic review of the number of members of parliament be undertaken by an independent electoral authority every seven years. The second issue relates to the manner in which any increase in electoral district numbers is determined and gives effect to this recommendation by EARC. This bill proposes that the Redistribution Commission, in its enlarged form, be given the power, within certain limits, to determine the number of districts. In the interests of transparency, it is submitted that neither the parliament nor the executive have the final say in this matter. This represents a significant change from current law but signals a significant depoliticisation of the process of fixing the number of electoral districts.

It is proposed that the commission be permitted to increase the number of electoral districts by up to five and within the prescribed range of 89 to 94 at the time a redistribution occurs. Such an increase would only follow proper examination by the commission. It is for this reason that it is proposed to insert a 30-day period for public submissions followed by a 30-day period for consideration by the commission of this issue before the formal redistribution process commences.

The third significant part of this bill concerns the treatment of electoral districts in the more remote northern and western parts of Queensland. The Commission of Inquiry into Possible Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct—the Fitzgerald inquiry—reported in 1989 at page 370 that a review should be conducted into electoral arrangements, including the justification for retaining the then zonal system. Consequently, current arrangements, outlined in section 45 of the act, owe their genesis to the work of EARC into the electoral system. EARC's report recommended, amongst other things, the abolition of the then existing four-zonal electoral system and its replacement by a system based on a single quota with a particular concession applying to districts over 100,000 square kilometres in area. In justifying its recommendation, the report stated at paragraph 10.148—

Deviation from the principle of equal suffrage may be justified on the basis that it contributes to good government. If on the material available to it, the Commission is persuaded that a strict application of equal suffrage will prejudice the quality of representation in certain areas of the State then the Commission would have to give serious consideration to recommending some form of weightage to ensure the quality of representation is not prejudiced.

EARC pointed out that the issue was not simply one of a member of parliament being able to communicate with his or her electors but those electors having direct personal access to their representative. EARC quoted with approval the submission by the Queensland Council of Civil Liberties at paragraph 10.168—

The strongest case for representation for remote areas is the difficulty for the representative to adequately service a small population spread over a vast area. This presents problems for such a representative both as a trustee for the people's interest and their delegate in the assembly.

Acknowledging the benefit of additional facilities and technology, EARC reported at paragraph 10.191—

The application of equal suffrage throughout Queensland will prejudice the quality and effectiveness of representation in the most sparsely populated areas of the State.

To overcome this inequality, EARC proposed that a 10 per cent variation from a statewide quota apply but that, in the case of districts greater than 100,000 square kilometres in area, the enrolment be the sum of the number of electors and a number equalling two per cent of the area of the proposed district expressed in square kilometres.

Contemporary problems for those living in these particular areas are as challenging as those that applied 25 years ago and these still cannot be overcome simply by additional facilities and technology. It could also be argued that the absolute and relative decline in the population in remote regions places even greater pressure on the people living in these areas to have their voices heard. This problem is greater than that identified in 1990. Should the existing provision not be amended, it is likely that significant increases in area will apply across the five districts concerned in an effort to increase enrolments. The likelihood of the district of Mount Isa, for example, having to cover the vast bulk of Western Queensland cannot be discounted. The continuing decline in the population in the north and west aggravates the problems identified by EARC.

To overcome these, the bill proposes granting the Redistribution Commission the power to increase the additional large district number from two per cent to up to four per cent. This measure reaffirms the commission's primacy in matters relating to the state's electoral system and limits the power of both parliament and the executive. Just as EARC was given significant authority 25 years ago, it is acknowledged that the commission should enjoy a similar position in 2015 and beyond.

This bill is designed to increase the transparency and fairness of the electoral process. It covers sections of the act that have received little attention over the past quarter of a century and which, after the passing of a quarter of a century, are crying out for modernisation and renewal.

There is an urgent need to update these provisions to account for changing circumstances. To delay any longer invites the calling into question of this important part of the electoral process. This finely balanced parliament is, I believe, the best environment in which to consider parliamentary reform. The provisions of this bill will need to survive a review by a bipartisan committee, then will need to pass through this House where no single party holds sway. If passed, the members of the Redistribution Commission will need to be acceptable to all parties represented here and, once appointed, they will carry out their tasks independent of political influence—in my view, a process in which the people of Queensland can have the utmost confidence. The bill represents important steps in improving accountability in Queensland's political arena. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Mr WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (4.30 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 Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date



Mr WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (4.30 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 by 11 September 2015; and
2. That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended to ensure all remaining stages of the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 be completed by 5 pm on 29 October 2015.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Budget, Public Service Entitlements



Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.32 pm), by leave: Returning to the member for Maroochydore's question earlier that related to the defined benefit scheme in terms of employer contributions and what the end date may be, as I said during question time, I think there has been enough misinformation about this issue across the chamber and I wanted to make sure that I gave an accurate response to her question. I will always endeavour to ensure the accuracy of my response. In response, I am advised that the vast majority of current members of the defined benefit scheme are expected to have retired by 2035, which is consistent with what we have said. However, the scheme will continue until the retirement of the last of the current members of the scheme. That is going to be determined when the last person retires.

Mr Stevens: It could go to.

Mr PITT: Yes. To answer the member's question further, what we know is that the longer the scheme is running the easier it is to fund it because there is a defined number of people in the scheme and it is a defined benefit scheme. I again reassure the broader Public Service, particularly the 50,000 members of the defined benefit scheme, that their entitlements are safe. There is no concern from anyone in this government in terms of any of the advice from the State Actuary. I should also add that the State Actuary has indicated that he conducts an interim review on an annual basis. So whilst we do have the three-year reviews that are published, the State Actuary does undertake an interim review on an annual basis in addition to the required triennial review process of the funding position of the defined benefit scheme. The triennial report is released to the public in a triennial interim report which, of course, has been an internal Treasury document. We will be releasing it publicly from this year. We want to give absolute certainty that we will be providing up-to-date advice from the State Actuary about the health of the scheme to ensure that this is not going to be an issue that is cause for any concern to members of the defined benefit scheme.

It is very certain from our point of view that we are very careful with our information about this issue. It is an emotive issue. We do not want to see any misinformation. I will always be very careful about how we respond to specific questions to ensure that we do not startle anyone or give them undue concern.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor



Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.34 pm): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from His Excellency recommends the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PAUL de JERSEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled

A Bill for an Act to amend the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 15 JUL 1015

Tabled paper: Message, dated 15 July 2015, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [788].

Introduction



Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.35 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [789].

Tabled paper: Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [790].

Queensland's workers compensation scheme is an important economic driver for our state and jobs and should not be amended without careful consideration. Successive Labor governments have sought to create a fair, sustainable and efficient scheme by balancing low premium rates for employers with good benefits for injured workers, and to promote durable return-to-work programs. Since the Beattie government was first elected in 1998, the scheme has been monitored, adjusted and finetuned

in response to the prevailing economic conditions. But that all changed when the ideological extremity of the former government overruled the findings of its own LNP dominated Finance and Administration Committee's inquiry into the operation of Queensland's workers compensation scheme. I was the deputy chair of that committee. Shamefully, the LNP threw out this balance by introducing a greater than five per cent threshold to access common law that unfairly reduced the rights of workers when there was no sound or genuine policy reason or need to do so.

The threshold introduced by the LNP unjustly denied access to common law rights to many workers permanently injured due to negligence on the part of their employer. To some, a permanent impairment of one per cent, two per cent or three per cent may not sound significant, but let me detail at least one real life example that highlights the utterly reprehensible nature of those changes. I will not give personal details, but I have permission to use the real details of the case. A 36-year-old plumber sustained an injury after the introduction of the threshold when he fell heavily to the ground from a ladder while trying to access a roof on a private residence. His employer had failed to implement a safe system of work and the worker had not been trained in how to safely tie off a ladder. Had the employer done so, his injuries could have been prevented. The worker tore the meniscus in his left knee and badly injured his calf muscle such that it required surgery which subsequently resulted in disfigurement. Both these injuries were assessed at a total of three per cent permanent impairment. The worker has had surgery, has undergone physiotherapy and hydrotherapy without significant benefit. He continues to experience significant pain daily. His injury has meant that he can no longer do plumbing work and he lost his well-paid plumbing job. It is unclear whether he will ever be able to return as he is unable to stand for long periods due to his injuries. This worker's future job prospects are in doubt which impacts on his ability to provide for his young family.

This case highlights the injustice caused to a worker with a low permanent impairment who lost out and will continue to lose out in the future due to the LNP's unfair threshold. For this worker, the restriction on being able to seek common law damages from a negligent employer through the courts is a right that should never have been restricted.

This bill aims to restore fairness and balance to Queensland's workers compensation scheme. I have previously advised the House that premiums will be able to be maintained at \$1.20 per \$100 of wages paid—the lowest in the country. I am pleased to advise that the government will continue to work with the WorkCover Queensland Board to maintain these low premiums. But, importantly, the bill also reinstates common law rights for all injured workers who can prove negligence on the part of their employer by removing this unfair common law threshold. This restores the balance established under previous Labor governments. Again, I reiterate that the 2013 legislative amendments were unnecessary, offensive and opposed by not only this government but the legal community and even some well-known LNP figures.

In response to increasing common law claims numbers and the financial pressure that those claims were placing on the scheme, in 2009 the then Labor government undertook a wide-ranging review. The outcomes of that review resulted in the 2010 amendments to the act which were aimed at applying downward pressure on common law claims. This was achieved by introducing greater alignment with the Civil Liability Act 2003, caps on the amount of general damages, costs consequences on unsuccessful plaintiffs in order to discourage speculative actions, as well as abolishing strict liability for breach of specific statutory duties.

The effect of these 2010 amendments was considered by the parliament's Finance and Administration Committee in its inquiry into the operation of Queensland's workers compensation scheme conducted over 2012-13. That LNP dominated committee recognised that imposing a common law threshold would improperly take away rights from one group of Queenslanders that are available to other Queenslanders. The committee also considered that a threshold should not be imposed, as the full impact of the 2010 amendments on common law claims had yet to be fully realised.

The impact of the 2010 reforms on the cost of common law claims is now clear. Between 2009 and 2014, there was a 15 per cent reduction in the number of common law claims lodged in the scheme and a 10 per cent reduction in the average annual cost of a common law damages claim. This clearly indicates that Labor's 2010 reforms have achieved and continue to deliver ongoing savings and improvements to Queensland's workers compensation scheme, without attacking the basic entitlements and rights of workers.

Labor went to the Queensland state election committing to remove the unfair threshold if we were elected to government and to work with industrial organisations and the legal community to seek a swift and calm transfer to the new workers compensation system, with consideration of the rights of injured

workers and the timing of workers compensation payments. To achieve this commitment, a stakeholder reference group was established that consisted of representatives from employers, insurers, unions and the legal community. The views of this group informed the government's decision on the timing of the removal of the common law threshold, which will be for all injuries that occurred on or after the date of the Queensland state election.

The government is taking further advice from the reference group as to how we can mitigate the negative impact on workers who were injured between 15 October 2013 and 30 January 2015 who are unable to access common law damages. The majority of the group advised the government that they are concerned with the unfairness caused to those workers who were denied an opportunity to access common law damages and are working on a proposal that addressed this unfairness, balanced against the objective of maintaining the financial viability of the workers compensation scheme.

This bill also fulfils a commitment from this government to provide greater certainty of coverage for Queensland firefighters by introducing deemed disease provisions for certain latent onset diseases. The provisions will apply to current or former firefighters who are diagnosed with one of the schedule cancers on or after today. Under these changes, if a firefighter develops one of 12 specified cancers and meets the qualifying period of active firefighting service, then the cancer will be deemed to be work related. This means sick firefighters will not have the burden of proving that their cancer is the result of their firefighting work, ensuring they have more timely access to compensation benefits.

These amendments will apply to all active permanent and auxiliary firefighters and to all active rural fire brigade members and volunteers. A volunteer's service will be considered to be active firefighting if they have attended at least 150 such exposure incidents. Volunteer firefighters who contract one of the 12 specified cancers and have attended 150 exposure events will be entitled to access common law damages and have the same entitlements as permanent and auxiliary firefighters. No other deemed disease scheme in Australia offers volunteer firefighters unfettered access to common law damages.

The former government had three long years to deliver on this important legislative reform for Queensland's permanent, auxiliary and volunteer firefighters, and it failed to do so. They did nothing. With this bill, the Palaszczuk government is ensuring that those firefighters who contract one of the specified cancers are given the financial security to look after their families, allowing them to focus on fighting the disease.

The government has also listened to privacy concerns with the current legislative entitlement, which gives prospective employers access to a prospective worker's claims history. This government holds concerns about how these claim history summaries may be impacting not only on a worker's privacy but also on how they may be used against workers in their future career prospects. In the interests of fairness for all parties, we believe it is best that copies of an individual's claims history not be available to prospective employers. As such, this bill removes that option from the act.

The bill also makes a number of other minor miscellaneous amendments that will improve the day-to-day operation of Queensland's workers compensation scheme. For example, the amendment bill will provide greater discretion for the Workers' Compensation Regulator to consider special circumstance reasons for the late lodgement for applications for review. This bill demonstrates that this government is not just interested in but is also listening to the concerns and opinions of Queenslanders. Queensland workers lost their rights and their voices under the former government. In stark contrast, this government believes access to a sustainable and fair workers compensation scheme is a basic human decency for all Queensland workers. This bill will restore fairness and balance to Queensland's workers compensation scheme and our democratic process.

First Reading

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.44 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 Finance and Administration Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

**PUBLIC HEALTH (CHILDCARE VACCINATION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL****Introduction**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.45 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 and the Public Health Act 2005 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health and Ambulance Services Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [791].

Tabled paper: Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [792].

This bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to better protect young and vulnerable Queenslanders from vaccine-preventable conditions. It will amend the Public Health Act 2005 to clearly protect approved childcare centres if they decide to exclude children whose immunisation status is not up to date. The bill will also amend the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 to ensure that the Health Ombudsman has the information-gathering powers necessary to perform his duties effectively.

Vaccination is a critically important public health strategy and is a key health priority of the government. Immunisation has long been recognised as one of the most successful public health interventions introduced in Australia, enabling community health to be maintained and protected by the reduction and eradication of vaccine-preventable conditions. Queenslanders support immunisation. This is validated by high childhood immunisation rates in Queensland of approximately 92 per cent. However, over 15,000 Queensland children aged under five are not fully immunised, which falls short of the 95 per cent target required to achieve herd immunity for diseases such as measles. Herd immunity prevents the transmission of highly contagious conditions, such as measles, and protects those who are not immunised, such as babies who are too young to be immunised and people who are immunosuppressed.

Labor has long recognised this as a problem we need to address. During the 54th Parliament, when in opposition, the member for Bundamba introduced a private member's bill in similar terms to this bill that would have empowered childcare centres to refuse enrolments from children who are not vaccinated. Sadly, the then government chose to vote down that private member's bill and offered no alternative legislative change in this area. I am proud to be part of a government that is now prepared to make reforms that are aimed at improving immunisation rates in our community.

The bill makes a number of amendments to the Public Health Act 2005 to promote immunisation and protect children, their families and those who work with children against vaccine-preventable conditions. The bill authorises approved early childhood education and care services to exercise a discretion to refuse, cancel or place a condition on the enrolment or attendance of a child whose immunisation status is not up to date. The Public Health Act 2005 currently protects a childcare centre from liability where the centre excludes a child with a contagious condition or if the child is at risk of contracting such a condition. A childcare centre is also free to exclude a child solely on the basis that they are not fully immunised. However, such a decision does not attract any legislative protection from liability.

The bill does not require the childcare centre to exclude a child. Instead, the bill protects the centre from liability if, after following a prescribed process, a child's enrolment or attendance is refused or cancelled on the basis of their immunisation status. This process involves the childcare centre requesting the parent provide an immunisation history statement. This statement, issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, specifically notes whether the child's immunisation status is 'up to date' or 'not up to date'. There are many ways in which such a statement may be obtained, including online or at Medicare offices. Should a parent have difficulty obtaining the statement or if they prefer to only deal with their local healthcare provider, as may occur in remote Indigenous communities, the bill extends the meaning of an 'immunisation history statement' to include a statement about a

child's immunisation history given by a recognised immunisation provider. This process may further include an agreement between the childcare centre and the parent on a reasonable time frame to obtain an immunisation history statement or provide a catch-up schedule approved by a recognised immunisation provider.

Even if the parent fails to produce the statement or the statement reveals the child's immunisation status is not up to date, the childcare centre may still enrol the child or allow the child to attend. Childcare centres are encouraged to take into consideration a child's circumstances when utilising their discretionary power under the act. If the centre reasonably believes the child is a vulnerable child, and refusing enrolment or attendance would not be in the best interests of the child, they may choose to enrol or accept their attendance despite the child's immunisation status not being up to date.

At its heart, this bill empowers approved education and care services with the ability to make decisions about who they allow into their care. The bill will only apply to education and care services approved under the Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act 2011 and the Education and Care Services Act 2013. This includes family day care services, kindergarten services, long-day-care services, limited hours care services and outside school hours care services. As unregulated or unapproved education and care services are often short-term, ad hoc arrangements—for example, nannies and babysitters—the proposed legislation will not extend to unregulated or unapproved services. I also wish to indicate that the government is committing to a review of the operation of the legislation after two years to monitor how it has performed against its objectives and whether any further changes are necessary.

The bill also contains an unrelated health legislation amendment, to the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, to clarify the Queensland Health Ombudsman's information-gathering powers. Presently, this act gives the Health Ombudsman power to require a person to give information in the course of an investigation. However, the Supreme Court recently ruled that this did not extend to compelling a person to attend and answer questions. Without such full powers, the Health Ombudsman may be unable to effectively undertake investigations into serious healthcare complaints.

The amendments will expressly empower an authorised person to require a person to attend before them, at a stated reasonable time and place, to answer questions or produce documents. The amendments retain existing safeguards, being that a person may refuse to answer a question or produce a document on the ground of self-incrimination. These amendments will ensure the Health Ombudsman's powers are consistent with the information-gathering powers of the former Health Quality and Complaints Commission and the provisions in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, which regulates less serious disciplinary proceedings for registered health practitioners in Queensland.

The amendments will apply retrospectively to validate notices already issued under the existing provisions. Applying the amendments retrospectively will ensure that information obtained and decisions made since the act commenced in 2014 are not invalidated because of defects relating to the issuing of notices. The amendments will give certainty to those persons who have been involved in matters before the Health Ombudsman, being matters involving serious healthcare complaints.

Persons who have not complied with notices requiring them to attend and answer questions during this time will not be unfairly impacted. The bill makes clear that a person will not have committed an offence for failing to comply with such a notice prior to these amendments commencing. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.53 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee.

GUIDE, HEARING AND ASSISTANCE DOGS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (4.53 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015 [793].

Tabled paper: Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [794].

Guide, hearing and assistance dogs are special working dogs trained to allow people with a disability to participate in all aspects of society. They perform tasks and functions that alleviate some of the effects of a person's disability and enhance the person's independence. The impact of these working dogs cannot be underestimated, and I am continually amazed at how much they can change a person's life.

In April this year we joined the rest of the world in celebrating these dogs and the talented people who train them by participating in International Guide Dogs Day. In doing so, we showed our appreciation for the important roles guide, hearing and assistance dogs play in the community. The theme this year centred on the idea that guide, hearing and assistance dogs can go anywhere. I am very proud to say that Queensland is at the forefront of this agenda and a big part of our success is our very own Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009. This act is all about promoting access rights for people with a disability who rely on guide, hearing and assistance dogs, as well as setting a standard of quality and accountability of training services for these dogs.

In late 2013 a stakeholder panel, consisting of a broad cross-section of key government and non-government organisations, was convened to review the act. I am very happy to say that the panel concluded that the act was working well and only proposed modest administrative and legislative recommendations to make the act even better.

For completeness, the administrative recommendations include developing a joint communication strategy between government and the industry to increase awareness of the act as well as improving the public access test, which confirms the dog is effective and safe in public places, public passenger vehicles or places of accommodation and is able to be controlled by the handler. The legislative recommendations focus on two main objectives: firstly, improving the access rights of guide, hearing and assistance dog users; and, secondly, simplifying and streamlining processes for both people with a disability and the industry.

The most significant legislative change is transferring the issuing of handlers' identity cards from government to the sector. Presently, there is duplication happening as some training institutions are also issuing identity cards. Only government issued cards are recognised under the act. Amendments will authorise approved trainers and training institutions to issue these cards, as opposed to the government. This will reduce red tape for the handlers as they will be able to apply for a card directly from the person or institution that trained their dog.

Government will maintain an oversight role by setting minimum requirements around the issuing of the cards themselves and having the ability to suspend or cancel a trainer's approval status under the act if there is evidence that cards are being misused. There have been calls from the community about a gap in the act that it does not recognise alternative handlers who support the primary handler to control the dog. An example of this is a child with autism, whereby the child's parent needs to help the child to control the dog.

I am very proud to say that another key reform of the bill will address this issue by extending access rights under the act to a handler team. This team will include the person with a disability, their dog and an alternative handler who supports the person to control the dog.

To round off the review recommendations, other minor amendments are being made which will have very positive impacts. This includes removing the need for dog users to prove their disability every time they renew their handler identity card—a small but important change. Proof of disability will only need to be shown when the dog is initially certified. This simple change will make what can be an overly bureaucratic and onerous task easier.

Another minor amendment will provide flexibility for the chief executive of the department to call upon expert advice in the approval and standard setting processes. Currently, the act provides for the convening of an advisory committee. However, since the commencement of this act, this body has never been established. As a result, the bill repeals a number of unnecessary and unused provisions and recognises the power of the chief executive to consult with any entity they consider appropriate.

Lastly, approved training institutions will be able to certify a dog of a shareholder, director or employee of that institution. This removes unnecessary restrictions in the certification process and promotes access rights for people with a disability.

Separate from the review, my department also took this opportunity to improve the monitoring, investigative and enforcement provisions in the act. Changes are being made which will provide authorised officers with the necessary powers to handle any future complaints.

Amendments to part 8 of the act will equip authorised officers with a greater continuum of powers to investigate, monitor and enforce compliance with the act. These will cover cases where my department is dealing with the most cooperative of business to instances where a business is refusing to cooperate with our investigation.

So, all in all, the review has been a meaningful exercise, and I would like to acknowledge and thank the review panel members for their passion and commitment, as well as my departmental officers for the work undertaken to get this act to where it is. The review has generated great outcomes for people with a disability and the sector. The introduction of this bill is the next step in making these outcomes a reality. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CJ O'ROURKE (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (5.00 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 Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ORGANISATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Land Court Act 2000, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014 and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [795].

Tabled paper: State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [796].

I am pleased to introduce the State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The primary amendments in the bill deliver a key Queensland government election commitment to restore community objection rights in relation to mining projects. These rights were removed by the former government in the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014, which inserted a new section 47D into the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971.

Section 47D of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act commenced on 24 October 2014 and applies to all existing and newly declared coordinated projects. It has the effect of preventing any objections to the Land Court being made about an environmental authority application for a proposed mining activity that has been subject to the Coordinator-General's assessment.

This government made an election commitment to restore community objection rights relating to mining developments as soon as possible not only to the local landholders and the community but also more widely to Indigenous groups and those concerned about environmental issues such as water pollution and land degradation. The proposed amendments will support sustainable and appropriate developments—importantly along with the jobs and infrastructure they bring—while also ensuring the community is aware of and has appropriate input to them. The changes will set the scene for a productive relationship with resource companies by helping to lessen anxiety towards resource development among landholders and agricultural stakeholders.

There has been media coverage of stakeholder groups seeking urgent action from this government to restore mining objection rights. The repeal of section 47D of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act will importantly restore community objection rights relating to environmental authority applications for certain mining proposals that have been evaluated by the Coordinator-General by restoring the status quo prior to the commencement of section 47D on 24 October 2014. Urgent consideration of the amendments by parliament in the current sitting week will respond to the call for urgent action from concerned stakeholder groups.

I acknowledge the petition received on Monday by the Speaker of this House from over 4,000 Darling Downs residents urging the government to reinstate the mining objection rights that were stripped away from them last year by the former LNP government. Well, we are listening. This government committed to restoring these community objection rights, and this bill is the first step. I understand that residents of the Darling Downs are concerned about the New Acland Coal Mine Stage 3 Project. Landholders and community members deserve the right to be heard and to object to this mine expansion project if they so wish. It is their right for this objection to be heard in the Land Court.

The immediate urgency for the repeal of section 47D of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act in this bill is the restoration of community objection rights in time for these to apply to the New Acland Coal Mine Stage 3 Project. This project is currently in the environmental authority process and would have been the first coordinated project for which section 47D of the State Development Act would apply. Section 47D, if not repealed, may also apply to other projects in the short term.

During the preparation of this bill, my department investigated whether retrospective provisions were required in relation to the New Acland project. The department concluded that retrospective amendment would not be required, if the relevant amendments in the bill are enacted prior to a decision being made on the New Acland project environmental authority application. To date, no decision has been made. Further changes are needed to address the remaining uncommenced provisions in the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act, and these are being considered to ensure the government's commitment is fully met.

Consultation was undertaken with key stakeholder groups to outline and discuss the government's election commitment to introduce legislative changes related to the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act, including the repeal of section 47D of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act. Stakeholders included environmental and community groups such as Lock the Gate, the Environmental Defenders Office, the Basin Sustainability Alliance and the Wilderness Society; resource sector peak bodies such as the Queensland Resources Council and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association; and rural groups such as AgForce Queensland and the Queensland Farmers' Federation.

The bill also amends the Land Court Act 2000 to address issues arising from the Supreme Court decision in *BHP Billiton Mitsui Coal Pty Ltd v Isdale* [2015] QSC 10. In that matter, the Supreme Court found that certain matters referred to the court under the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Environmental Protection Act 1994 were not 'proceedings' for the purposes of the Land Court Rules 2000 but, rather, in dealing with these matters, the Land Court was performing an administrative function. These matters related to objections to mining lease applications and associated environmental authorities.

The Supreme Court ruling has created some uncertainty about the scope of section 35 of the Land Court Act which provides protection and immunity for the Land Court members in presiding over 'proceedings'. Urgent amendments are necessary to put the statutory protection for the Land Court

members in performing all their judicial and administrative functions, including dealing with referral matters under several pieces of legislation, beyond doubt. This reflects the legal position that was thought to have existed previously. The Supreme Court decision may also have implications for other provisions of the Land Court Act and the Land Court Rules which are currently expressed to apply to 'proceedings'.

The bill includes mechanisms to address this. A transitional regulation-making power has been inserted in the Land Court Act to enable the making of transitional regulations to apply specific provisions of the act to matters referred to the court under various statutes, as necessary, until more permanent measures can be put in place through amendment of the act. This will mean any limitations on the Land Court's ability to deal with these matters can be dealt with expeditiously, following appropriate stakeholder consultation.

The bill also includes amendments to ensure the existing rule-making power in the act enables the making of rules specifically applicable to the Land Court's administrative functions. The bill will also correct a technical error in section 47B of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act identified by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel during drafting of the bill.

This bill reinstates the community's objection rights relating to environmental authority applications for certain mining proposals that have been evaluated by the Coordinator-General by restoring the status quo prior to the commencement of section 47D on 24 October 2014. It is a critical step forward to supporting individuals and community groups to have a voice on mining activity and any potential impacts of this mining activity on local communities and the environment. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. AJ LYNHAM (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.08 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.

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.08 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the State Development and Public Works Organisation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 be declared an urgent bill to enable the bill to be passed through all remaining stages at this week's sitting.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (5.09 pm): I must rise to speak against the motion moved by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. I stand to speak against the motion because the assertion he has put forward before the parliament is a misnomer. He suggests in his introduction of this bill into the House that the provisions of this bill will reintroduce the right of individuals or organisations to have a matter to which they object that has been considered by the Coordinator-General referred to the Land Court for adjudication. He asserts through his introduction of the bill that it will reintroduce the right for the Land Court to make a decision about matters which have been considered under an EIS or a coordinated proposal from the Coordinator-General and then referred to the Land Court.

Prior to the amendments that the former LNP government moved during the consideration of the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014, it was possible for an objector to have a matter referred to the Land Court, but the Land Court had no jurisdiction to amend conditions placed on a project by the Coordinator-General. The amendments that I put through the House as the former minister for natural resources and mines—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand the points that the shadow minister is making in his contribution, but I am concerned that they are outside the frame for the debate that is before the House. The debate before the House is the question of the urgency of the

bill. He is going to the matter of the substance of the legislation. I was quite patient in giving him an opportunity to come to the point of where this was a matter of urgency. He continues to be addressing issues that might more properly be dealt with in the debate on the legislation, and I ask that you bring him back to the matter before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Hinchinbrook, I bring you back to the motion before the House.

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Quite clearly, in giving—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have not given you the call yet. I give you the call now.

Mr STEVENS: Would you like to call the member for Mermaid Beach?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Mermaid Beach.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. In speaking about the undue haste with which this bill is being pushed through, the member is quite rightly backing up his argument which this House requires for decent debate to give substance to the reasons behind the member's objection to haste. Quite clearly, he is entitled to put a framework around the reasoning why it is not necessary for the bill to be rushed through the House. I find the member is giving quite a proper and fit description as to why the urgency of the bill is not required.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the Leader of Opposition Business referring to haste, and perhaps he might have a contribution to this debate that is before the House.

Mr Stevens: I will.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: They were the exact sorts of words that I had not heard from the member for Hinchinbrook. Perhaps he might make it clear that these issues that he is raising pertain to the question of urgency.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am going to make a ruling on this. The member for Hinchinbrook will limit his scope in terms of the motion before the House and keep it precise to the urgency of this particular motion.

Mr CRIPPS: I would be delighted, Mr Deputy Speaker. If the Leader of the House had not been so trigger-happy, he would have heard me move directly to the matter to which he raised an objection. That is, because the minister was unable to articulate—and, quite frankly, articulated incorrectly—what the substance of the amendments that he is proposing to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 will achieve, it goes to the point about the complexity of the amendments and the issues at stake during the debate on this bill.

The point that the Leader of Opposition Business made is quite right: in considering those matters, the previous parliament had the benefit of a referral to the relevant portfolio committee, a report from that portfolio committee within a reasonable time frame and had the opportunity to consider that amendment following a full debate of the issues in that legislation.

The second point that I would make is that there is another matter contained in the amendment bill which relates to amendments to the jurisdiction of the Land Court. I grant that the minister has made the point that these uncertainties have arisen as a result of a Supreme Court decision. It is also legitimate that from time to time amendment bills are brought into this House which need urgent consideration as a result of decisions of courts, and urgent amendments are required.

I can confirm for your benefit, Mr Deputy Speaker, and for the benefit of all members of this House, that no approach has been made by the minister to the opposition in relation to this matter prior to the introduction of the bill. Yet the minister asks for the bill to be declared urgent, for there to be no robust or significant referral to the portfolio committee so that all the matters that need to be considered in relation to his amendment, first of all, to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act and also to the Land Court Act 2000 can be considered by this parliament and an informed decision can be made.

I cannot agree that this is an urgent bill. In fact, in introducing the amendment bill to the parliament today, the minister was forced to recognise and acknowledge the true motivation for the urgency of the bill, and that is the pressure that the government is feeling from green groups. It is the pressure that the government is feeling from green groups—people who this week have presented a petition to the member for Nicklin, who has had it tabled in the parliament. A petition from 4,000 people, whoever they may be and from wherever they may reside, is the true motivation for the Minister for State Development

and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines coming into this parliament, moving the amendment bill and demanding that this parliament consider it an urgent bill. That is the true motivation. It is not the election commitment, as the explanatory notes accompanying the bill which we have in front of us tend to suggest, because the petition that was received by the member for Nicklin and tabled in the parliament this week is not mentioned in the explanatory notes.

The true nature of the pandering that this government is undertaking to the member for Nicklin is now on parade for all to see. There can be a petition presented to the member for Nicklin and brought before this parliament, and the government will run cap in hand to introduce an amendment bill to satisfy the demands of those people who signed that petition. What sort of democratic process is it to demand that the normal processes of this parliament be curtailed in response to a petition that is given to a member on Monday, with some fanfare and media coverage, tabled in the House, and in walks the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines to satisfy the demands of a particular part of the community?

I wonder how the constituents of the member for Condamine will feel about this matter or the constituents of the member for Nanango, or the constituents of the member for Toowoomba South or the constituents of the member for Toowoomba North—those communities which stand to benefit from the project which was named by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines in his introductory speech who will be directly affected if the passage of this bill goes forward without proper scrutiny and the robust processes normally associated with the consideration of an amendment bill.

Mr Deputy Speaker—Mr Speaker, I apologise; I did not see you come to the chair. It is not acceptable to the opposition that this motion that the bill should be declared an urgent bill should be accepted by this parliament. I cannot recall the number of times that members of this parliament, including the member for Nicklin, have stood in this parliament and demanded when governments have moved urgency on certain bills that the bills be referred to the proper portfolio committees and go through the proper scrutiny processes that those bills deserve.

I cannot recall the number of times we heard that speech made by those members who are now sitting on the government benches. They accused the then government of arrogance and of not following due process, but now we have a situation here in this parliament where the relevant portfolio committee will not have more than two days to consider the provisions of this amendment bill.

Mrs Frecklington: Shame.

Mr CRIPPS: It is a shame because, as I acknowledged earlier, there is an amendment to the Land Court Act 2000 which the minister says is necessary to consider urgently because of a decision of the Supreme Court. But this bill is contaminated by the presence of politically motivated amendments as a sop to the petition that was presented to the member for Nicklin earlier this week and tabled in this parliament. That is a regrettable matter.

I can say, as I said earlier to the House, that no consultation occurred with the opposition prior to the introduction of this bill into the House and the demand from the minister that it be declared urgent—none. Under the proper processes and conventions that have been followed in this parliament for a long period of time, bills that need to be considered urgently as a result of court decisions to secure the certainty of decisions for people's rights and natural justice are often facilitated by both sides of the House as expeditiously as possible. But we face the invidious position in this parliament now of having an amendment bill put before us that contains not only that urgent amendment to clarify a matter after a Supreme Court decision but also an amendment that is very politically motivated and clearly motivated by events that occurred earlier this week in the public realm. Those events were named and nominated by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines as the motivation for the government bringing forward this amendment bill and requesting the parliament declare it an urgent bill.

This is unacceptable and it is totally in contrast to the highfalutin attitudes and appeals to democratic principles that were previously made by a number of Labor members who now sit on the government benches. They are running away from those things right now to give comfort and succour to the extreme green movement, and this continues to undermine opportunities for economic development in communities like the electorate of Nanango and Condamine and other communities that will benefit from the economic development that will come from the project that was specifically named as being impacted upon as a result of the potential passage of this amendment bill. I think it is a disgrace. I think we should call it for what it is. I urge all members to oppose the declaration of this bill as an urgent bill.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.22 pm): The member for Hinchinbrook has spoken very clearly about the background and the reasons as he knows the full content and the outcomes of what the minister is seeking. I do understand the newness of this particular minister into the House in terms of the processes this House certainly has tried to abide by in delivering good outcomes for the legislation of this parliament.

On numerous occasions, the words ‘hubris’ and ‘arrogance’ were mentioned by those members opposite when they sat on this side of the House, and that particularly occurred when the last government was in place. Quite clearly, the motion that the minister has put forward represents great arrogance and hubris in that it is a very quick-fire, mates decision to pre-empt a matter, and the reasoning behind the urgency of this bill has not even been properly espoused. If a matter has resulted out of the Supreme Court decision, it should go back to the relevant committee.

Time and time again in the last parliament, those members opposite—and I think there were nine of them at the time, as I recall—said that due processes should be followed. However, that has been quite clearly abandoned under their newfound arrogance and hubris as they look after their green mates and get this through in a hurry without going through the proper political processes that they so readily recommended we should go through. They have not pointed out one reason as to why this should not go through the normal processes that this House has endorsed as being the proper processes for consideration of any changes.

There are many stakeholders who will be affected by the decisions that the minister proposes to rush through this House I believe on Friday. There is no valid reason to support the urgency of this motion—none whatsoever. There is no valid reason why the minister should, on his training wheels, try to push this thing through in the dead of night, if you like, without going through the proper process of referring this to the committees that are involved in this matter. There is no valid reason why he should be pursuing the political interests of one particular section of his community to endorse his popularity in this particular area.

I will not debate the bill, but the government is talking about getting jobs and if this affects jobs in Queensland then it should be properly investigated by the relevant committees. They should be able to weigh up and make recommendations to this parliament. There is no valid reason for this. The minister has not espoused one particular valid point as to why in budget week we should have this bill coming forward urgently, other than absolute political bias in the matter, and that is not enough to circumvent the proper political processes of this parliament. We will be opposing this motion.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.26 pm): I rise to address the urgency motion and the manner in which this bill is being put forward. There are many people in my electorate who would like to know lots of things that go on in this place and they would like to be afforded the opportunity to be able to address those things through a proper and due process. This is a government that said it would be open and accountable. These are not the actions of an open and accountable government.

Ms TRAD interjected.

Mr WATTS: I will take the interjection from the member for South Brisbane about my electorate because there are many people in my electorate who would be concerned at the urgent manner in which we will be addressing this bill. They would be concerned about the sneaky and sleight-of-hand action that this government is using to try to pass legislation in this very busy budget week. The parliament has due processes to discuss things so that good legislation can come forward, evidence can be heard, legislation can be debated and the community can contribute. This process is clearly being rushed through because of pressure from certain groups. It is clearly payback for the vote of those groups at the election. The urgency of this is a complete shame on those who are abusing the position they have been given by the people of Queensland. They are abusing it in a sneaky and sleight-of-hand manner to try to pass something through—

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr WATTS: Say that again. Come on, I am happy to take your interjections. I am very happy to hear them, so please bring them forward because I think the people of Queensland would like to hear a debate on this. They would like to understand and they would like to make sure that this place operates correctly. That is what this government promised. This is not the first occasion that the government has not delivered on its commitments to be open and accountable. This is not the first time. I ask people to look back at the things that the Premier said. She said she would be open and accountable and she said she would do certain things with our committee structure, but here we find

our committee structure being abused not for the first time by this government with a sneaky piece of legislation being slipped in during budget week hopefully under the cover of other debates that are going on out there in the community.

I think this government will be held to account by the people in the electorates that will be affected by this legislation. I urge the minister to make sure that this legislation goes through the due process. He should not join his colleagues in becoming a sneaky minister who is willing to change the processes of this parliament in order to slip things through. It is well and good that the member opposite points, but he stood here in this place and he said exactly these same things. So who is it who has the two faces? He is sitting there on the other side now, completely hypocritically. Someone who criticised exactly this now stands up and bluntly says, 'No, no, no, it was okay for me to criticise when I was in opposition, but in government I want to be sneaky. I will join the ranks of those sneaky people. I will join the ranks of the people who don't want to be open and accountable. I will join the ranks of the Premier in being sneaky and abusing the committee process and in not being open and accountable with the people of Queensland.' That is why I will be opposing this motion, because it is not open and accountable for the people of Queensland. The minister himself has said exactly the same, yet here he is sitting in this place as a hypocrite, rushing things through, making sure the people of Queensland do not get to hear about them in the correct manner.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.30 pm): In rising to oppose the urgency of this motion, I again reference the issues which were raised earlier by the Leader of Government Business, the shadow minister and also the member for Toowoomba North. This government has not clearly made out its matter of urgency. Indeed, in my time in here I have seen certain things transition backwards and forwards. I see on the other side tonight a certain indication of hubris and creeping arrogance of which they accused another government not so very long ago.

I refer to a letter of undertaking, which was addressed to the member for Nicklin and was signed on 5 February this year. In the area of integrity and accountability it states—

Labor has made a commitment to principles of integrity and accountability and, in particular, has made a commitment to what have been referred to as the 'Fitzgerald Principles'. The use of urgency motions to force Bills through the Parliament, bypassing proper consideration in the committee system was a hallmark—

and I quote from the letter—

of the Newman LNP Government. Labor commits, as a principle, to not use urgency motions to bypass or truncate the committee system.

It goes on to say—

Any deviation from this commitment will be negotiated with the crossbench members of Parliament.

One can only assume—

Mr Bleijie: It is Labor's letter.

Mr SPRINGBORG: It is the letter; it is a matter of public record. I have not inaccurately—

A government member interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I am happy for the member opposite to come and read it. Does the member for Nicklin object to the context of that?

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Leader of the Opposition. Member for Lockyer, the Leader of the Opposition does not need your support. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No, Deputy Premier, do not bait us. Members, we have a lot more work to do. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPRINGBORG: That was on the first page of what was a four-page letter from the Premier to the member for Nicklin in the articles of undertaking in forming the government in Queensland. One can assume by that only that there has been full and proper consultation with members of the crossbench, and that may very well be the case. The thing that concerns me most is the implications that have been made by the now Premier in the letter of undertaking to the member for Nicklin. She implies all sorts of concerns about a process which seeks to truncate what is due and proper process of the parliament, and that is to use urgency motions to bypass the normal committee consideration of

legislation. Indeed, I am most concerned that so early in this government's term in government as a minority government in a hung parliament it is displaying this sort of hubris and disregard for things that it previously repudiated. Again, we have not seen the demonstration of urgency, particularly in the context of that letter of undertaking by the Premier to the member for Nicklin. We do acknowledge the concern which existed in the electorate last year around this issue with regard to those proposed changes. Many of those were wrong in context and were wrong in inference, but certainly did contain and build some concern within the community. There was an element of misunderstanding around some of those things. There were issues of concern which have been raised.

Given those particular concerns and the fact that we saw that legislation, those opposite cannot seek to address those concerns without going back to a proper and due process of parliamentary committee consideration. If it is the argument on the government's side of the parliament that the balance was shifted far too far one way, surely the argument here is that the real risk of rushing this legislation is that the balance will be shifted far too far the other way, particularly against a backdrop in which a government is claiming that it is unashamedly focused on jobs and job creation in Queensland. I think that those communities that are affected by this proposal, which were specifically named tonight by the minister, would be very, very concerned about this. Let's look at not only the people who may be concerned about their view that certain rights have been suppressed or impeded in some way, but also the fact that only a few months ago almost 800 people marched through the township of Oakey in favour of this particular proposal. We are here talking about 700 jobs that could be immediately affected as a consequence of this and also what is a significant flow-on effect across many communities of the Darling Downs.

Whilst this government may make out urgency, if the government gets this wrong, the unforeseen consequences of this are going to be quite devastating for that community and will be quite devastating for sovereign risk and also certainty in investment. That is something which should be of major consideration to people. That is why there should be appropriate consideration through a full and proper committee hearing so that we can get the balance right, notwithstanding the fact that many of the concerns that were raised last year—and some of them may have been legitimate—were misrepresentations of the fact.

This is about making sure that the government does not rush this; that they do not just claim urgency and shift the balance on one side. I can say that for some people who will be celebrating this, there will be many people who are going to be affected directly by this; their livelihoods are going to be affected by this as well as the sovereign risk in investment. They are going to be most concerned about what this means around this investment and also certainty into the future.

Based on the undertaking which was indicated to the member for Nicklin by the now Premier in the letter of 5 February this year, I would argue that there should be some degree of reticence. Indeed, there should be a leg rope, a shackle, on just declaring this as a matter of urgency in this parliament without a proper and full discussion about why that should be the case. We certainly have not heard this here today. We certainly do know that there are major concerns around this. The implications are not just the appeasement of one side; it is about getting the balance right. The implications are not just directly surrounding the case of the project that the minister mentioned previously, but in getting the legislative criteria, the policies and the regulations around this right. It is absolutely critical for sovereign risk and also investment in other major projects around Queensland.

I indicate that the LNP would be somewhat open to considering what are proper amendments and considerations around these issues based on concerns which have been raised. However, we certainly cannot be part of a due and proper consideration in which members opposite have a chance to go through all of the factors and talk to all of the parties if they are going to introduce legislation here at around six o'clock on a Wednesday and then debate it and pass it through parliament, through all of its stages, by Friday. It is wrong for this government, after it has been elected, to then say in budget week that it is going to turn over a new leaf, that it will be consultative and respect the will of the people—which was not clear at the last state election—and that it would be prepared to walk away from the things it was concerned about in the past, and yet come in here and replicate it so early in its term.

I think that there are a number of players in the parliament who should be concerned—not just members of the government and not just crossbenchers—about the principles enunciated in that letter of 5 February; therefore, I would argue against urgency. What is wrong with having proper committee deliberation so that we can make sure we get the balance right on this? If the argument is that the balance shifted too far one way, then let us get the balance right in the middle and not too far the other way. Therefore, urgency should be opposed.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (5.40 pm): If the Leader of the Opposition has proven anything through that speech tonight, he has proven that he can speak for a long time on something about which he knows very little. Let me explain why this matter is urgent. As someone who sat on the previous Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee which looked into the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill—the vehicle by which section 47D was proposed to this parliament—let me speak to it. Section 47D never, ever went to the parliamentary committee. Section 47D was snuck in at 11 minutes to midnight—

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order. Quite clearly the minister is going on about the bill itself. The Deputy Premier has just basically said that we know nothing about it and she is now going to explain the matter to us, which we do not need. The matter of urgency is what we need to hear about.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I think that the Leader of Opposition Business is showing himself to be in support of the points that I was making earlier about how important it is to speak to the urgency motion. It is very, very clear that the Deputy Premier is speaking to the urgency motion in reflecting on the way in which these urgent matters have been dealt with in the past. That was something that the Leader of the Opposition did uninterrupted and at great length.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, will you stop interrupting, please, or I will ask you to leave the chamber under standing order 253A. This is notice of an official warning. I understand the Deputy Premier is speaking to the urgency of the motion. I call the Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: I am going to the issue of the urgency of the motion, because section 47D rescinded people's rights to object to environmental approvals given by the Coordinator-General.

Mr CRIPPS: I rise to a point of order. I was directed to speak to the urgency of the motion moved by the minister by the Deputy Speaker who sat in your chair previously. I was attempting to explain the context of the matter when I was interrupted by the Leader of the House, and now the Deputy Premier is speaking to the exact matter that I was trying to speak to before I was directed by the Deputy Speaker who sat in the chair immediately prior to you resuming your seat. I ask only for consistency in rulings from the chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, there are many members in this chamber. I am happy to allow any member to speak on this matter if they choose. If you believe you have been unable to articulate your case on this motion, perhaps another member will be able to pick up where you were unable to articulate. I am happy to listen to the Deputy Premier put her case on the reason for urgency. If any other member wants to speak to the reason for urgency, I invite you to get on the speaking list and let me know that you want to speak before I call the minister. I call the Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: The urgency in this matter is that there are matters before the Coordinator-General which go to the heart of environmental approvals that will be issued by the Coordinator-General. Under the old regime before the LNP changed the legislation, people had a right to object to issues contained within the environmental authority issued by the Coordinator-General. These rights were taken away without any consultation at 11 minutes to midnight by those opposite. The urgency here is that there is a public expectation out there that Queenslanders can have a say on issues contained within environmental approvals which are due to be released by the Coordinator-General. There is urgency in giving rights back to Queenslanders absolutely, and we stand by that urgency.

The other matter is that the Land Court has come to the government and said that they need security and immunity for Land Court members. There is a necessity for this parliament to be responsive and to be respectful of the issues raised by the Land Court. Of course these matters are urgent because we took a pledge to the people of Queensland that we would reinstate their rights, which were taken away at 11 minutes to midnight without any consultation by those members opposite. We stand by our commitment to the people of Queensland. Of course this is urgent, and we are giving this parliament and those members opposite a whole lot more time than they gave the parliament—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, I warn you under standing order 253A for your disorderly conduct. Your interjections are not being taken. That is the first warning. I call the Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: We stand by our commitment to the people of Queensland. It was out there in the public domain for months and month. We will reinstate the rights of Queenslanders to have a say in the environmental authorities issued by the Coordinator-General. We stand by that and this bill will enact it.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member for Burleigh. I understand the member for Kawana wants to speak. If any other member wants to speak, I urge you to let me know before I call the minister to close the debate.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.47 pm): My apologies: I have only come into the chamber as this debate started and I have not had time to read the bill. None of us have; it has been fostered on us at one minute to midnight on a very busy week, as we have heard from other members.

I want to talk about the urgency of this bill. I was on the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee in the last parliament, and there were numerous times when, during the Regional Planning Interests Bill, we discussed those sorts of issues about the rights of people to appeal and the rights of people to have their say in court decisions and Coordinator-General decisions about mining approvals. We just heard the Deputy Premier say that the people of Queensland have a right to be heard. Where is their right to be heard if this is pushed through in this sitting of parliament rather than going out into the regional areas and giving people the opportunity to have their say?

This government has been elected since 31 January. They have had plenty of opportunity to bring this bill forward and put it out there for discussion so that people can voice their opinions. The government has had six months to bring this forward, put it out there and give people time to consider it. The previous committee spent months touring around Queensland talking to people. We went to Toowoomba, and we sat down with people in that area and gave them the opportunity to have their say. All we are saying here, Mr Speaker, is that people from all areas of Queensland, environmentalists, mining companies—everybody deserves the opportunity to have input into this.

During the previous committee's investigation into these things we heard there were vexatious attempts made to hold up the process of mining approvals, and those things add years and years to the development approval of mines. I do not know how many times we heard today that this government is about jobs. The resource sector in this state provides a lot of jobs. Those opposite would have to admit that. What is it that those opposite want to do? They want to rush this through and take away those opportunities from those people. They are not really serious about jobs at all; they are there to kow-tow, as other members have said, to the extreme green movement. That is what they are doing here. They are coming into this chamber and trying to push this through at one minute to midnight in budget week.

Over the past three years in parliament, on numerous occasions, the crossbenchers and the members of the then opposition complained that maybe the people of Queensland were not getting their say. Where do those people stand on this issue now? All we are saying is that the people of Queensland should have the opportunity to have their say. Is that really wrong? Do the majority of the members opposite think the people of Queensland should not have a right to be heard on this matter? The previous government felt that they should. Do those opposite think they should not? If those opposite want the people of Queensland to have their say and be heard on issues, they should not support this motion.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.51 pm): I have a little experience in urgency motions before the House. I recall that we passed the criminal gang law reforms through the House after an urgency motion. Before all of the new members interject, they should know that the Labor Party actually voted for that urgency motion and voted for those bills that night. Before they all interject and say how terrible it was, they should check the voting record because the Labor Party actually supported the criminal gang laws in Queensland. An urgency motion was moved at the beginning of the week and the bills were passed before the end of that week.

Many members on this side of the House have been in parliament a lot longer than I have. I have been here for six years. We have seen many urgency motions, most notably under the regime of Anna Bligh, particularly with the green schemes and the agriculture sector, where they were pandering to the Greens. You only have to search *Hansard* very quickly to find debate and dissension from Labor members about urgency motions in the past three years. In one debate they were crying out loud that it was against democracy, that it was antidemocratic. 'How dare you come in here and move an urgency motion to pass legislation!' They also used to guillotine debate. Andrew Fraser was the biggest for guillotining debate. I remember that in fact he guillotined the asset sales debate.

Today the honourable member for Hinchinbrook has, in a very thorough way, pointed out the elements of the legislation and highlighted what is at stake here. I point out to the honourable minister in terms of the urgency motion that I am advised by the honourable member for Hinchinbrook that the legislation he introduced was to clarify that the Land Court actually did not have jurisdiction for that particular matter. The Land Court never had jurisdiction for that matter, and the legislation clarified that the Land Court did not have jurisdiction. Now the minister says today that this bill takes things back to the position as it was. You cannot give a court jurisdiction over something it does not have jurisdiction for. And you cannot send matters back there when the legislation says it does not have jurisdiction over them.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. I am not sure—it is more likely than not—whether the Deputy Premier had a little something to do with a letter of 5 February that Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk signed to the Independent member for Nicklin. I am sure the Deputy Premier had a little something to do with that letter, signed off by the Premier. The letter clearly stated how much they were against urgency motions and that if there were to be urgency motions then consultation would occur with the crossbenchers. Mr Speaker, I am not sure whether consultation took place with you as the member for Nicklin, but there are other crossbenchers. Was appropriate consultation undertaken with the crossbench? I am not getting any indication from the minister. I suspect that is a half no from the minister. I have given him 30 seconds to confirm or deny and he has not done it, so I will take it as a denial. That letter from the Premier was the basis on which Labor formed government in Queensland after the 31 January election. That letter from the Premier set out how opposed Labor is to urgency motions on principle and that an urgency motion would be moved in only the most extreme situation. I do not think we are dealing with the most extreme situation here.

Let me deal with the hypocrisy of the matter. As I said, there are a lot of new Labor members in this place. I raise this issue because those members, including the minister, the member for Stafford, and the Attorney-General, had a lot to say about when Campbell Newman and the LNP government moved urgency motions. We fought our case for the urgency motions and those opposite opposed them all the time because it was 'antidemocratic'. 'How dare you come in here!' I recall that they used really strong language: 'arrogance', 'hubris'. I remember all of those words. To use the same words to the Deputy Premier, how is this not arrogant? How is this not hubris? Why is it arrogance and hubris for the LNP to move an urgency motion but it is not arrogance and hubris for the Labor Party to move a similar motion?

An opposition member: Hypocrites.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. It is hypocritical. How can you have one rule for one side of parliament and one rule for the other side of parliament?

Mrs Frecklington: This is the Labor Party.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. It is the Labor Party. As I indicated, Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser were some of the biggest users of not only urgency motions but also guillotine motions.

The other issue I have with respect to this urgency motion is that the minister has moved that this bill be passed by the end of the week. There is to be no committee deliberation. The other thing Labor Party members talk about a lot, now and over the previous three years in opposition, is the committee process: 'If bills do not go to committee, the public do not know what is going on. How can the public have a say?' I remember the Premier saying, 'How dare you deny the public the opportunity to have a say on this legislation?' I remember it. Now look at the behaviour from the Deputy Premier.

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I called her the Deputy Premier. I am happy to call her 'member for South Brisbane'. That is fine. The reason she is acting the way she is is that she knows I am right.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. She always does. She knows I am right. I note the silence from a lot of members who were not in parliament for the past three years and prior. They will not know the process in relation to urgency motions or how the committee system was set up—in a bipartisan way, I might add. The committee system was set up in a bipartisan way such that legislation could go off to committees—

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General with respect to bipartisanship. She was not in this parliament—she was in the federal parliament but she got voted out of office—when a bipartisan committee formed the new committee system. The idea of that new committee system—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, member for Kawana. Deputy Premier, Leader of the Opposition and member for Hinchinbrook: if you want to have a conversation I invite you to go outside. We are about to start the private members' motion debate. Actually, I ask the member for Kawana to adjourn this debate so we can commence the private member's motion debate.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

MOTION

Ipswich Police Communications Centre



Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.59 pm): I move—

That this parliament supports the Ipswich police communications centre located at Yamanto and calls on the Queensland government to retain the Ipswich communications centre at its current location.

There is a very good reason why I move this motion, because this is an issue of importance for particularly the people of the Ipswich community and surrounding districts which are very well serviced by the Ipswich police communications centre located at Yamanto. In recent weeks we have seen an extraordinary outpouring of public support by that community for the retention of that police communications centre in that community. It is also very concerning that a very high-profile local public member of parliament is out there opposing the wishes of her community. Many people would probably not find it strange that the member for Bundamba regularly finds herself in circumstances of some controversy, many of which are of her own making, and that is certainly the case with regard to the situation surrounding the police communications centre which I and the shadow minister, the member for Kawana, had an opportunity to visit this morning. I certainly thank the Police Union official whom we had the opportunity to speak with this morning about the concerns that they raised. He spoke very passionately on behalf of the 27 staff who work there—those very dedicated police officers and the other support staff who are a part of that communications centre that should be retained at Yamanto.

It is also very true that the excuse used by the government to close down this centre is the Keelty review, which was undertaken a couple of years ago. I would remind members of this government that, notwithstanding the fact that we had that recommendation two years ago, the LNP government decided that it would not accept that recommendation and go ahead with that closure. There were other very significant and very poignant and proper recommendations which were made by former commissioner Keelty, particularly in the area of bringing the Queensland Ambulance Service within the broader Queensland Health portfolio. That is something that made sense and something we did. Indeed, other recommendations made by former commissioner Keelty were accepted by the government of the day. If anyone should doubt the level and depth of community concern, they need only look at what the current mayor of Ipswich—the very popular mayor of Ipswich—Paul Pisasale, has said about this. In amongst saying that the member for Bundamba is the worst police minister currently in Australia at the moment and possibly ever, we also have the local Labor members of parliament at a state level and a federal level standing up and revolting against this decision.

Today we had the opportunity to hear about the remarkable integration of that local police communications centre and how it works in perfect sync with the Ipswich Safe City cameras and all of the strategy around that. Today we were told about the situation the other day when a police officer was injured in the course of his duty by someone whom he tried to stop, but the person took off and the officer was injured. They were not able to immediately identify that person, but working with the Safe City people they were able to quickly track that person into a shopping centre and effect an arrest. We were also told of the circumstances today of a woman who rang the communications centre because she was very worried about her troubled son who was threatening to take his life. The police were not able to identify the person's locality reasonably quickly, but they were able to work with the Safe City personnel and track that person down, identify where he was and effect the necessary care and attention which resulted in a good outcome.

It is fair to say that these 27 front-line staff do a remarkable job. There is such extraordinary support for what they do in the community. There has been an amazing outpouring of concern and opposition which has been expressed towards this government's proposed closure of the Ipswich police communications centre. There should be an unequivocal message from this parliament tonight that this parliament does not support the closure of this centre and that this parliament supports the retention of this centre and its staff and the wonderful operations that they undertake in keeping the community of Ipswich and the surrounding districts safe. Because it is based at Yamanto, there is a real connection with that community that means real results and real support to that community.

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.04 pm): I move—

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

'the work done by the staff at the Police Communications Centres located at Yamanto, Innisfail and Mount Isa and calls on the Queensland Government to continue its consultation processes in relation to the Ipswich, Innisfail and Mount Isa Communications Centres in accordance with the agreement reached today at the Conciliation Conference at the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.'

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, with respect to rulings you have made in the past with respect to amending these motions, I draw to your attention that the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition is in relation to retention of the centre. The minister's amendment is to actually continue consultation to close the centre. I would put to you under the standing orders that there are two completely different contrasting points here and I ask that the amendment moved by the minister be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana, and I will refer to a copy of the motion and the amendment. I note there is no mention in the amendment of 'closure'. Can you clarify?

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The conciliation reached today at the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission was an action brought on because of the announcement by the minister and the Police Commissioner that the centre would be closed. The union then lodged an application with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to cease that closure and the minister has directly referred to that conciliation conference about the closure of the centre. The QIRC decision was directly in relation to the closure moved by the union to make sure that that closure did not happen.

Speaker's Ruling, Amendment Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. I am not aware of what you have just shared with me—I take it you are—and I will rule that the amendment not be accepted and that the debate will be about the opposition's motion. I call the Minister for Police to speak to the opposition's motion and not your proposed amendment please.

Mrs MILLER: Yes; thank you, Mr Speaker. Of course this is all about the Palaszczuk Labor government listening to the people and also consulting with them, which is something that the LNP never does.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Lockyer, you are warned under 253A. We have had a good go. We are into the serious business. I warn all other members for the next half an hour. The Minister for Police has the call.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much. It is fair to say that a lot has been said about police communication centres both in the media and in this House over the last few days and, unfortunately, not all of it is accurate. The Palaszczuk government is committed to keeping the people of Queensland safe. We are also a listening government and a government of consultation. After three years of the Campbell Newman approach, the people of Queensland were rightly sick and tired of being ignored and taken for a ride by him and those around his cabinet table such as the Leader of the Opposition and also the member for Kawana. But we went to the election promising that we would be a listening government and one that would always consult, and that is exactly what we are doing in relation to the police communication centres at Ipswich, Mount Isa and Innisfail.

For the benefit of the House, I want to take a moment to outline the facts surrounding this issue. Up until a few years ago, the QPS operated 22 police communication centres whilst the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Ambulance Service consolidated down to seven. After the QPS implemented the brand-new computer aided dispatch system, plans were made back in

2010 to identify a consolidation activity over the next seven years. In fact, under the former LNP government, under the watch of the Leader of the Opposition, the Warwick police communications centre, in his own electorate of Southern Downs, was moved to Toowoomba. But he said nothing.

The LNP has no credibility on this issue. LNP mate Peter Costello, in the LNP's sham audit following the 2012 election, recommended—

There are also opportunities to co-locate some policing infrastructure with emergency services infrastructure, including ambulance and fire stations and communications centres.

In fact, the so-called Keelty review, which Campbell Newman commissioned so that he could wrest operational control of the QPS from the commissioner, even recommended—

Further rationalisation of communications centres is feasible and offers improvements in service delivery, as well as a cost benefit ratio that is a practical and sustainable way of dealing with the substantial increases in likely demand.

...

The Yellow Cab fleet in Brisbane which services various areas of both Queensland and Tasmania from its Brisbane communications centre ...

So I ask: did the LNP want communication—police communications that is—run from Tasmania? The LNP's own report said—

The Review team believes that there needs to be only one Communications Centre with a second site for redundancy ...

We are not doing anything like that. In fact, in April 2013 it was publicly announced that the Ipswich communications centre would be relocated to Brisbane. These relocations have the LNP's DNA all over them. Its plan to relocate more communications centres went to cabinet, but the Newman government put it in the too-hard basket.

I appreciate the concerns raised by the local community. The Palaszczuk government listens to the community. We always listen. That is why last Saturday I visited the Ipswich communications centre to speak to staff and to listen to their concerns about any planned changes. Today, my office also spoke to the Queensland Police Union, assuring it that there would be ongoing consultation about this matter, and that is exactly what will happen. We will broadly consult with the local community staff and all the stakeholders.

Later this week—in fact, on Saturday—I will be visiting the Ipswich communications centre again. The Premier and I will be there and we will further consult with the staff. That way we can work together towards a solution that will be in everyone's best interests.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (6.12 pm): Those of us on this side of the House are certainly disappointed to see that the old member for Bundamba is not here anymore. She was far more entertaining in the last session of parliament. She gave us a heck of a lot more curry. Tonight, we have a very sedate and measured member for Bundamba. I suspect that she has been told to slow down, or pipe down—

Mr SPEAKER: : Member for Mansfield, I would urge you to speak to the motion and not bait the government, please.

Mrs MILLER: I rise to a point of order. I would like to say to this parliament that my father, who is 89 years old, is very ill and he is currently in hospital. That might explain.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Mansfield, would you please speak to the motion.

Mr WALKER: Yes. Thank you, Mr Speaker. The speech given by the member for Bundamba was peppered with the normal sorts of platitudes that we hear when this government is spinning its wheels and trying not to do anything. Tonight, I will pick two of them to speak to. The first was, 'We're listening to the people.' How many times have we heard that? 'We are a government that listens. We listen and listen and listen.' If the members of the government were listening to the people, they would be voting for this motion, because the people are saying that they want this centre kept open. The member for Ipswich and the member for Ipswich West, who were out there in support of just that only weeks ago, have really had the acid put on them tonight. If they are indeed listening to the people, as we have been told that this government is great at doing, they would have to be pretty hard of hearing to misunderstand what it was that the people were saying. So they are hoist on their own petard. If they say that they are listening to the people, they should listen and they should act accordingly rather than spin their wheels and continue with this mock consultation, which is not, in fact, listening to the people at all.

The other platitude that we have heard tonight is that the Labor government is committed to keeping the people of Queensland safe. That is an issue of interest to me as shadow Attorney-General, because I have been watching with interest the developments since this Labor government was elected as to whether it really is committed to keeping the people of Queensland safe. In that regard, I will make a number of points because, of course, the closing of this centre is related specifically to just that topic.

Firstly, the Attorney-General, in response to a petition from the former member for Gladstone, Liz Cunningham, said that Queensland's prison population was too high. We have heard from the police minister herself, who was talking about backing home detention for dangerous prisoners. Of course, at that time the Premier had to step in and intervene in relation to those comments, because it clearly was not the message that the Premier wanted to get out. But here we have two senior ministers in the government who are talking about the prison population being too high, dangerous offenders going off to do the gardens and paint rocks, yet claiming to take the high ground of being committed to keeping the people of Queensland safe.

After seeing yesterday's budget papers, this commitment to keep the people of Queensland safe has to be questioned even more. If we look at the budget allocation given to the CCC we see that seven of the staff in the criminal motorcycle gang unit of that organisation will not be funded going forward. That was funding that the LNP government had provided. If we look carefully at the task force that has been established by the Attorney-General to look into criminal motorcycle gangs we see the real story. It is backed up with the grant funding cut in the budget to the CCC for this reason and the lack of staffing being provided. We see that the elements of that task force, which Mr Wilson, the chair of the task force, said was all about whether the bikie laws should be tweaked, is, in fact, something very different. The agenda is very different, because the first of the required reporting from Mr Wilson and his team from the task force about criminal motorcycle gangs is how to repeal or substantially amend these laws.

These are laws that have kept Queenslanders safe and which Queenslanders strongly support. While we on this side of the House would certainly welcome a fair dinkum review that looked at whether the laws did, in fact, need some tweaking, as Mr Wilson put it, that is not what the government's task force is about. So I say that the sincerity of the members opposite in listening to the people of Queensland is a mockery. When we look not at what they say but at what they do, their sincerity in wanting to keep the people of Queensland safe has to be questioned. Right across-the-board with this government, when we look at what they do, their alleged consultation and listening and wanting to keep everyone safe is shown to be not the case. So I wish to speak strongly in favour of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition and I urge the House to vote for it.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (6.17 pm): I am opposing this motion on the basis that I support consultation. During the three years that the Newman government was in power—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Order, members! The member does not have a loud voice and I think she has a cold. I would ask you to be tolerant and allow her to speak, otherwise leave the chamber.

Ms HOWARD: During the three years that the Newman government was in power in Queensland, the people of Ipswich were forgotten. The region was taken for granted and we suffered from the callous and harsh decisions made by Campbell Newman and his arrogant cabinet. Many of those same ministers are still sitting in this House. The people of Ipswich will not forget and neither will I.

At the state election we promised to be a listening government, we promised to be a government of openness and accountability and we promised to be a government of consultation. We promised that we would not pick unnecessary fights and that we would show the people some common courtesy—courtesy that was not afforded even once during the long, dark three-year reign of the LNP.

This has been an important issue for my community. I want to place on the record my deep appreciation for the hard work that the Ipswich police do to keep our community safe. Unlike the LNP, we are not about playing politics with the livelihoods of hardworking public servants. When people began to raise this issue with me, it was clear to me that further consultation needed to be undertaken. That is why I requested a meeting with the police minister so that we could ensure that this happened.

I want to thank the police minister for taking the time to speak with me about the issue and her and the Premier for committing to further consultation. At the end of the day we all want the same thing: a modern and vibrant Police Service for the people of Ipswich. I also thank the Queensland Police Service for its commitment today to ensuring that further consultation with the relevant unions and stakeholders continues. I thank the police minister for making it clear to the commissioner that if police

communications centres relocate it needs to be consistent with this government's pledge to protect Public Service jobs and, importantly, that there be no net job losses for the people of Ipswich. This would be achieved by putting additional police on the beat in Ipswich. No-one will be losing their jobs. Options will be provided for any staff who wish to remain in Ipswich to transition to other roles in the local area. This is just the beginning of staff consultation.

The consolidation of communications centres is designed to leverage the benefits of new technology, such as the government wireless network, to ensure the best possible policing response for Queenslanders. I get that. We do not want Ipswich to fall behind. We want the people of Ipswich to stay safe and we want Ipswich officers to stay safe too. But what is very curious is that I understand the decision to relocate the Ipswich communications centre was actually made under the LNP government. No-one made a sound then. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kawana are shedding crocodile tears. They do not care about consultation. They never have. The Palaszczuk government is committed to our police, committed to the Ipswich community and is a listening and consultative government and that is why we will continue to work with the police unions and the people of Ipswich so that we can find a resolution in the best interests of all concerned.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.21 pm): I could understand the member for Ipswich making that speech if it was a speech on an amended motion moved by the government dealing with consultation, but if the member for Ipswich is not aware, the minister's amendment to our motion was not successful. Therefore, we are not debating a motion about consultation, we are debating a motion to retain the Ipswich communications centre in her electorate. That is what we are dealing with.

Mr Costigan: Leave it where it is.

Mr BLEIJIE: We are dealing with a motion to leave it where it is—I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday—leave the Ipswich communications centre where it is. The opposition does not want consultation, we want the government to make a decision and say it is staying and the 27 jobs are secure and stop the uncertainty and the heartache. I can tell members about the heartache. I was out in chilly Ipswich this morning with the honourable Leader of the Opposition talking to the people. We did a press conference. I thank the Police Union for allowing us the opportunity to engage with them and talk to them about this issue. It is a very important issue.

The member for Ipswich says she wants consultation. That is not what she said last week at a protest with 100 police officers. The member for Ipswich cannot say one thing in her community and then come in here and say another thing. The last Labor Party member who did that was Cate Molloy, the member for Noosa, and look what happened to her when she tried this little stunt. She would come in here and vote with the Labor Party and then her community would find out about it. I can assure the member for Ipswich that we will make sure that her community finds out how she voted on this motion.

The motion tonight is simple: do you support the Ipswich communications centre's retention in Ipswich? If you do, vote for the motion. If you do not support the Ipswich communications centre, then vote against the motion. But it will be voting against the motion at your peril, I can assure the member of that. The member for Ipswich West also attended the protest. They stood shoulder to shoulder with men and women in blue from Ipswich and said, 'We will do what we can to save your jobs in Ipswich and to save this centre.' Those two in this House stood up at that protest and made that commitment. They cannot come in here, as the member for Ipswich just did, and say 'I am going to oppose the motion', because effectively by opposing the motion they are opposing their own community. They are opposing the 27 police officers, the men and women in blue and the civilians at that centre, who will no longer have a job.

We know what the real issue is here. The consultation that was undertaken with the Police Union was this: a phone call was made from an assistant commissioner to the Police Union president. A message was left on the Police Union president's phone to give him a call back. Then the minister made the announcement. A message left on the Police Union president's phone was the consultation. The staff did not even know they were about to lose their jobs. The mayor, Paul Pisasale, did not know that he was about to lose the Ipswich communications centre that collaboratively works with Safe City. The member for Ipswich did not know she was about to lose the communications centre from her electorate. The member for Ipswich West did not know anything about it. They demanded a meeting and they attended the protest. If they are going to stick to the commitment, I say have the courage of their convictions and vote to support their communities, vote to support the police officers.

As I said, the real issue here is there was no consultation. The police minister made the decision. The police minister cannot fool Queenslanders by laying all this at the feet of the Police Commissioner. The police minister would have known about this. She would have been told by the commissioner. The

police minister came out and said, 'I can't talk about this. This is an operational matter. It is operational. I can't talk about it.' But then finds five minutes on the clock to talk about an operational matter tonight. When did it not become operational? Was it not operational when the Premier intervened and said the minister did not consult properly? I really need to know from the police minister what is operational in her mind and what is not because there is a fundamental difference between operation in the police minister's office and the Premier's office. Can they not speak to each other in terms of consultation?

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: If the member is talking about separation of powers, why did the Premier intervene? She had a lot to say about this matter. We support this motion because we support the men and women in blue at the Ipswich communications centre. We will retain it in government. I urge those members, particularly the members for Ipswich and Ipswich West, to vote to support their communities tonight. Do not consult with the communities, support the communities tonight and vote with this motion.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak against the motion. The Palaszczuk government can stand on its record as a listening government. Unlike the previous LNP government, we are listening to the people of Queensland. We are committed to listen as we steer Queensland toward a better, brighter future. Our budget sets out a clear path towards the future.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Ipswich West and honourable members, I cannot hear the member for Ipswich West speak. I am in your hands. I now call the member for Ipswich West.

Mr MADDEN: We said we had a plan to grow the economy and to deliver jobs now and into the future. We said there was a better way, one that kept our income-generating assets in public hands. We said we would continue to listen and we are. That is why I support the government in continuing to listen to the concerns of the Ipswich community about the plans to relocate the Ipswich police communications centre to Brisbane and to continue to consult with local communities about the plans to relocate the Innisfail and Mount Isa communications centres.

I fully support the government's plan to revisit this issue. I also understand and share the concerns of staff. The previous LNP government had a bad track record on keeping promises. They told public servants their jobs would be safe—then went ahead and sacked 24,000 public servants. Shame! Many people have told me stories about being tapped on the shoulder as they turned up for work and told to pack their desks and in some cases being escorted out of the building. There was no warning, no consultation. Again the Palaszczuk government has committed to no forced redundancies and will keep this promise to Queenslanders.

I am pleased to be part of a government that listens. I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government has committed to listening to the concerns of the Ipswich community about the police communications centre. It is the right thing to do. It is the only thing to do. I pay tribute to the hardworking staff who operate these communications centres. They are a lifeline for people in times of emergencies. Their job is not nine to five. They work in what can sometimes be a very stressful environment. They are compassionate people, caring and, importantly, know how to reach out to people in crisis. For that we owe them a huge debt of gratitude. I understand that the consolidation at Ipswich communications centre follows similar arrangements at the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and other locations in the west, but I also acknowledge the concerns over the planned relocation of the Ipswich, Innisfail and Mount Isa communications centres.

I support the government's action in delaying this decision and consulting with the community. I too want to work with the staff, the police and the local community so that together we can work towards a solution that will be in everyone's best interests. The Premier has also spoken with the Police Commissioner, Ian Stewart, about the planned relocation of the Ipswich Communications Centre. The Premier told the commissioner that there needs to be more consultation. I fully support and endorse the Premier when she said that you need to bring the people with you when you are making a major decision. I was also pleased to hear that the bottom line is that no-one from Ipswich will be forced to move from Ipswich and that if they want to stay in Ipswich they will stay in Ipswich. There will be full and frank consultation. That means that the communications centre will not move until then.

I will also commit to working with staff, our local community and the police towards a solution. I fully appreciate the importance of maintaining a communications centre that meets the needs of our local community. The staff who take these calls—calls from people in distress—have my utmost support and admiration. Their job is not easy. They are there for the community in times of trouble and I want

to ensure that the community is there for them. That is why I am pleased that any plans will be put on hold until there is full and frank consultation with all parties. I want the best outcome for Ipswich and the residents of Ipswich West.

Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

In division—

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! While the bells are ringing, I inform members that Terry Gygar, a former member for Stafford, is in the gallery with students from the Bond University law school. Welcome.

AYES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 44:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

Resolved in the negative.

Proceedings suspended from 6.36 pm to 7.35 pm.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ORGANISATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order

Resumed from p. 1363.

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (7.35 pm), continuing: I refer members to my contribution before the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (7.36 pm): The members on this side of the House have had a lot to add to this debate, so I will be quite short. In speaking against the urgency of this bill, I would like to say that there is a diversity of views in the community and everyone has a right to be heard. Why is this issue so urgent that the minister needs to rush it through the House this week? Mr Speaker, as you are well aware, I know about this matter quite intimately as the project that the minister referred to resides smack bang in my electorate; the electorate that I am extremely proud of, as the minister knows. Over three years I have canvassed this issue quite extensively within my electorate. I stand in this House today because of the support of the people whose livelihoods are linked to the issue that is before the House.

I want to address the fact that the community can still have a say. The community has had a say in relation to these projects. Adjoining landholders do have a say. Farmers in the area have had a say. That is why the footprint of this mine is some 63 per cent smaller. The landholders did have a say. Tonight in this House I have not heard anything to explain why this issue is so urgent. The minister and the Deputy Premier have said that they are definite that this legislation must be passed urgently, but why are they scared of the people? Why are they scared of the people of the Nanango electorate? Why can't they take this to my community and hear their concerns? Unfortunately, their ears have been closed since I have been on this side of the House.

The member for Southern Downs and Leader of the Opposition talked about some 800 people walking through the streets of Oakey. I believe that there were quite a few more people than that. I have heard that there were in the vicinity of a couple of thousand people showing their support. They were genuine locals. They were the people who can and do have their say against projects that affect their back door. They are not the people living in New South Wales, they are not the people living in Far North Queensland and they are not the people living in the middle of the minister's electorate. This concerns the people in my electorate. If the government are so interested in their concerns, why don't they go out to my electorate and talk to those people, instead of bringing this urgency motion before the House to try to wreck their livelihoods and some 700 jobs? However, it is not just 700 jobs that are at stake; this project affects thousands and thousands of jobs right around the Darling Downs area.

I finally want to touch on what the Leader of the Opposition talked about and that is the honourable Premier's letter to you, Mr Speaker, dated 5 February. The Premier comes into this House and tells us that they are a government that listens and she is a Premier who listens.

How is this listening to the people of my electorate? They are not getting a say on this urgency motion. They are not getting a say on this bill that will be rushed through the House. It is hypocritical of those on the other side of the House and the Premier to move this urgency motion. It allows no time for anyone to do anything before we debate this bill on, I imagine, Friday.

There was no consultation with the opposition. I have had an opportunity over the dinner break to talk to the shadow minister, the honourable Andrew Cripps, about this. Has he heard from the minister? He was not even given the courtesy by the minister of half an hour before the motion was moved in the House, the minister saying to him, 'Shadow minister, let me consult with you. Let us not be arrogant about this. Let us not be hypocritical. Let us consult.' Common courtesy was not extended to the local member whom this affects the most nor the shadow minister for mines. This is an absolutely hypocritical government. I urge the House to vote this urgency motion down.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (7.41 pm), in reply: Unlike those opposite, I rise to speak solely to the urgency of this bill. I point out the hypocrisy of those opposite, especially the member for Nanango, when they say that everyone has a right to be heard. That is what we are doing. Everyone does have a right to be heard.

I cannot wait for the debate on this bill later this week. This will be the first ever debate on this amendment. Section 47D of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act never went to committee. It was introduced as an amendment in the consideration in detail stage at 10 minutes before midnight. There was no debate and no committee consideration.

Once the bill is debated later this week it will be the first time that stakeholders and members of the community have a chance to debate the amendment. The repeal of section 47D will importantly restore community objection rights relating to environmental authority applications for certain mining proposals that have been evaluated by the Coordinator-General by restoring the status quo prior to the commencement of section 47D on 24 October 2014—a day in infamy.

These objections are not about changing the Coordinator-General's decision, but about the Land Court considering and making recommendations on decisions required to be made by the relevant ministers on a project's environmental authority and mining lease.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: You do not understand your own legislation. People have always had the right to object to an environmental authority that is considered by the Land Court. The Land Court considers the objections before it and makes recommendations to the relevant minister.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: He does not understand his own legislation. Therefore objectors' rights are important and meaningful. This is about equity and fairness and restoring people's right to object. That is the urgency. Section 47D is, for the first time, about to actually come into effect in terms of the consideration of a matter to go before the Land Court.

The government made an election commitment to restore those community objection rights relating to mining developments as soon as possible not only for local landholders and communities but also for the wider catchment, Indigenous groups and those concerned about environmental issues. The government acknowledges the petition of 4,000 residents of the Darling Downs given to the Speaker seeking to have their rights restored to object to mining projects, specifically in time for New Acland coalmine stage 3 which is currently at the environmental assessment stage.

The urgency is not about the Acland process in itself. This bill says nothing about my views regarding that process. That is critical for people to understand. This is simply about restoring those rights to people—restoring rights to farmers, restoring rights to landholders, restoring rights to the community that you are supposed to represent. The community is calling for a restoration of objection rights for mining development. That is why this government is progressing these amendments as a matter of urgency. The amendments contained in the bill relating to the repeal of section 47D are required urgently to restore objection rights in time to be applicable to the New Acland project.

There is no alternative to the amendments being considered in the current sitting if there is any chance for concerned members of the community to exercise their democratic right to object to the Acland mine expansion proposal about to come before the Land Court. This is the first project to be impacted by section 47D but there are others of course.

The amendments to the Land Court Act 2000 are also critical for consideration in this sitting to provide certainty regarding immunity for Land Court members in exercising all their judicial powers and administrative functions and the operation of the Land Court Act and rules in relation to matters referred to the Land Court under various statutes. Importantly, the amendments are proposed to be progressed urgently to ensure that the Land Court's consideration of mining lease applications relating to significant mining projects is not delayed. I commend my motion to the House.

Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

AYES, 46:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.

QUEENSLAND TRAINING ASSETS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY REPEAL BILL

Resumed from 21 May (see p. 807).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (7.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I rise today in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. The Palaszczuk government campaigned hard on our Rescuing TAFE election commitment because we knew that ensuring access to vocational education and training for all Queenslanders—no matter where they live or how much money they have—is the correct and responsible course to take.

This bill is the first step in delivering on our significant reforms to Queensland's vocational education and training sector, which suffered so much damage under the ideologically driven assault by the LNP. I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its detailed consideration of the bill. I note that the committee received a detailed briefing from the Department of Education and Training, considered written submissions from stakeholders and invited selected stakeholders to a hearing before preparing its report. I also thank these stakeholders for taking the time to examine the bill and provide their valuable input.

The committee has prepared a comprehensive report on the bill, which was tabled on 7 July. The government notes that the committee was unable to reach a majority decision as to whether the bill be passed. This bill ensures the Palaszczuk government can deliver on its promise to restore TAFE Queensland to its rightful place as the premier public provider of vocational educational and training in this state by ensuring that TAFE retains access to the TAFE assets into the future. The bill will also ensure that TAFE Queensland delivers quality training now and into the future across the whole of this state.

Let me make this clear: we are not attempting to repeal this legislation just for the sake of it. We are doing this because, overwhelmingly, it is what Queenslanders want and it is what they deserve. Everywhere I have travelled across the state, both in opposition and since coming to government, I have been constantly approached by individuals and organisations complaining about the direction in which QTAMA was taking the training sector and asking how long before it could be abolished.

I truly believe that had the LNP been re-elected Queensland would not have a TAFE system into the future. The LNP do not see a role for government in the provision of vocational education and training and spent 2½ years doing everything in their power to starve our public provider of VET. I have seen the damage that was done to our TAFEs in this state and we have seen the significant damage that has been done to TAFEs in other states under conservative governments. We were not going to stand by and let that happen in Queensland. They cared little, if at all, that TAFE offers the chance for a better life to those in remote areas of this vast state and to some of Queensland's most disadvantaged people.

The Palaszczuk government, through our Rescuing TAFE policy, is working rapidly to reverse the damage done, and the QTAMA Repeal Bill is just one part of our comprehensive suite of reforms that will rebuild the public VET sector. How can those opposite honestly claim that this body was not created to sell off our assets? The act even states that QTAMA is looking to rationalise the assets. These are weasel words for a sell-off.

QTAMA was set up as an independent statutory body to which Queensland's training assets were transferred in 2014 under the then minister for housing and public works. QTAMA was placed within that portfolio by the former government as they claimed that Public Works were better positioned to provide advice on asset management. This is despite the fact that the Department of Education and Training manages more than 1,200 state schools across the state. Surely this qualifies it to manage our training assets.

Despite what the LNP claim, those opposite do not support the public provider of VET. While in government they did all they could to undermine TAFE's ability to participate in the VET sector. QTAMA was set up as an arm of the former government's asset sales agenda and at the very least it had the objective of pushing the public provider out of our public assets. This is further supported by the former government's commitment to 100 per cent contestability of funding in the VET sector that was being forced upon TAFE.

Repealing the QTAMA Act is the Palaszczuk government's first important step in regaining TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of vocational education and training in Queensland. I ask that the bill be read a second time.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (7.56 pm): Tonight I am speaking on behalf of the opposition against the repeal of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill. The establishment of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority, or QTAMA, was one of the most important reforms of the vocational education and training sector undertaken by the LNP government. QTAMA was part of a series of reforms all aimed at creating a contestable VET market.

In government we set up a Skills and Training Taskforce—experts in the sector who told us that TAFE was not competitive and would not survive without major reform. This independent Skills and Training Taskforce recommended that we set up a separate specialist entity with expertise in infrastructure management to efficiently manage TAFE's assets. We took the advice of the experts and worked hard to set up QTAMA.

We took this action so TAFE Queensland could focus on what it does best—its core business: the delivery of quality training for Queenslanders—and not be limited by the responsibilities of having to look after assets. To create the much needed revitalisation of TAFE assets, the independent task force recommended removing the assets from the control of bureaucrats in the education department and allowing asset management experts, who could apply a level of commerciality, to apply their skills.

QTAMA was going to enable TAFE Queensland to be more competitive, more responsive, more innovative and more flexible. After years of Labor neglect, the training sector in Queensland was withering on the vine. Many TAFE campuses in regional Queensland were empty and more money was being spent on administration than on training—clearly an unsustainable model.

QTAMA delivered on the LNP government's commitment to increase front-line services by giving all existing and prospective training organisations equal access to VET facilities. It was a stronger and more sustainable way of managing our training infrastructure and had the capacity to substantially boost the availability of VET in the regions. Now it has been dumped because yet again this Labor government has delivered for its union masters. Minister D'Ath is only focused on making sure her union masters have what they want—protected workplaces and inefficient and wasteful service provision, not what the people of Queensland deserve, particularly in regional areas.

The people of Queensland need a vibrant and efficient VET sector with both public and a wide range of private training providers delivering quality and well-targeted training programs that result in Queenslanders gaining employment or being even more valuable to their existing employers. This

objective was consistent with the nationally agreed reforms articulated in the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform under COAG. Let us not forget that it was the previous state Bligh Labor government that was happy to sign up to greater contestability with their friends in Canberra when in power federally under the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform. Any impacts on contestability risk putting Queensland at risk of losing \$260 million and nearly 100,000 training places.

The Minister for Training should understand the national partnership because she was a member of the former Labor government that advocated for greater contestability—an agreement that sought to achieve an improvement in training accessibility, affordability, participation, qualification completions and facilitating the operation of a more open and competitive training market. The repeal of QTAMA is a step away from the aims of the national partnership.

Before and during the election campaign the unions staged what seems to have been a successful campaign to scare the community about the impacts of QTAMA. It is important to put on the record a few matters. The first thing we need to understand is that, despite what the unions have said, not one public training asset was sold under the QTAMA governance model. There were plenty of underutilised land and buildings in the assets of TAFE, but not one of those were sold under the QTAMA governance model. There were plenty of opportunities to use that unused land. The member for Cleveland told me about a block of land in the Cleveland area for which negotiations were taking place to have it transferred to the Department of Health for future hospital needs, but unfortunately there was not enough time to facilitate that transfer.

I know of another transfer that took place in Townsville, in Pimlico. I visited a site up there which had facilities that were quite embarrassing. Some of the buildings cannot be used because they are unfit for humans. I understand that the minister has transferred it to the Department of Housing and Public Works for an initiative that I was very enthusiastic about, which was NRL House in Townsville. I am very hopeful that the current government will continue that. It is a great program for Indigenous students to come from their communities to Townsville under the guise of Rugby League but at the same time receive a great education and learn more about the life skills that are necessary to lead a successful life. I am hoping that that will take place.

Another fact which is important that Queenslanders understand is that there were no cuts to TAFE courses, no course fee increases and no job losses as a result of the formation of QTAMA, despite the misleading claims to the contrary.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr MANDER: That is a very good question, member for Lockyer. As confirmed by the CEO of TAFE Queensland during the committee hearings, absolutely no rent was paid by TAFE to QTAMA. The whole idea of the legislation that went through was that TAFE would get a subsidised rate of rent for the first two years to give them a chance to adjust to the new model, and right of this moment not one bit of extra rent has been paid by TAFE to QTAMA.

The other startling piece of information that I think is relevant to this debate is that the number of VET training placements across the whole sector has increased over the last 12 months, despite a lot of rumour-mongering put about by the unions.

QTAMA was going to increase the utilisation of Queensland VET assets, resulting in increased revenue from those assets. This could have been ploughed back into funding desperately needed campus upgrades and maintenance or even paying for more training delivery. QTAMA was going to provide more efficient and effective management of expenditure associated with state VET assets as a result of a sharper focus on efficient asset use, cost control and contract management.

QTAMA was going to enable TAFE Queensland to focus on excellence in service delivery without having to concern itself with the complexity of managing a substantial asset portfolio. It would have been free to choose any facilities that it wanted to use. Now, unfortunately, all this reform is going to be lost. Once again, under Labor we will see a TAFE system that has no chance of being fixed and will continue to wither on the vine. The LNP worked hard to make training more accessible for students and in line with what business needs, not training for training's sake but training for jobs.

As a result, TAFE usage has increased to 65 per cent whereas under Labor when the assets were managed under the old model they were 60 per cent empty—totally underutilised. This Labor government has failed to understand that TAFE cannot continue to operate as it did a century ago. Many TAFE campuses are ageing, crumbling relics. Standing back and throwing money might keep union bosses happy, but it will fail the people of Queensland, particularly those seeking employment or wanting to make themselves more employable.

What are we doing now under this government's plan? Those assets will be going back to the department—people who have no expertise in asset management; people who put us in this situation in the first place. The repeal of the QTAMA legislation is a disgrace. The people of Queensland will realise that it is a huge mistake. I speak against the bill.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (8.07 pm): I rise tonight to endorse the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. The committee has been unable to reach a majority decision on the passage of the bill being passed. However, the committee has reached a unanimous acceptance of the report, as we strive to do in this committee and on every occasion thus far we have been in a position to reach that decision.

The committee received evidence from some 60 individuals and organisations who made submissions to the committee. As chair of the committee, I thank those individuals and organisations who lodged written submissions on this bill. I also thank the Department of Education and Training for its advice, all witnesses who appeared, the secretariat and committee members.

This Palaszczuk Labor government was elected on commitments—commitments to jobs, commitments to training Queenslanders to fill those jobs and commitments to not sell our assets. Today, consistent with being elected, this Palaszczuk Labor government will again deliver on our election commitments. One of the significant commitments made by this government is our plan to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier public training provider of VET in Queensland. Unlike those opposite, we know public providers play a vital role in the delivery of VET in Queensland. Likewise, private partnerships with business needs are crucial in ensuring delivery of quality training now and into the future. Evidence delivered by TAFE Queensland at the hearing explained the importance of this arrangement.

I now turn to some of the evidence provided both through submissions and at the hearing. I point to what I deem to be the most credible evidence at the hearing provided by Ms Schmidt from TAFE Queensland. She expressed concerns about restrictions to industry training partnerships as a result of QTAMA. At the hearing she stated—

... the further development of our business is absolutely dependent on our ability to have sustainable partnerships into the future, whether that be with other private training providers, other public training providers or, in fact, the industry itself. The complexity of the arrangement with QTAMA made it very difficult to continue some of those partnerships, and I saw some evidence of that in some of the other submissions. Also, our experience was that tri-party arrangements where the landowner was involved sometimes diluted the ability and the potency of that—

Later in the hearing in answer to a question about whether those partnerships were at risk, Ms Schmidt responded—

I think all of those partnerships have been put at risk. Some of them we may have lost.

Furthermore, in TAFE Queensland's submission to the committee, they provided evidence on three partnered arrangements with Santos, Komatsu and the Queensland Gas Company. The coal seam gas partnership, which was established in 2012, supported Santos's diversification into the coal seam gas sector. This partnership also built on Santos's longstanding relationship with TAFE Queensland. This partnership additionally provided a contribution from Santos of \$1 million worth of specialised equipment for TAFE Queensland, establishing a purpose built training facility at its Acacia Ridge training centre. Also, mutually beneficial outcomes were there for TAFE Queensland staff being mentored by Santos industry experts, with Santos gaining extensive knowledge in Australian quality training framework processes and compliance requirements. TAFE Queensland also gained a unique insight into the safety practices of Santos and aligned its safety procedures accordingly, building on its already excellent safety record.

I recall that Ms Schmidt raised concerns of workplace health and safety over the complexity of the arrangements of QTAMA and TAFE Queensland over the responsibilities of their staff in this area. So what does this mean for Queensland? This arrangement and the dedicated partnership provides for high-quality training, with an expectation of delivering 40,000 jobs in regional Queensland communities, which is now considered to be the benchmark of CSG training.

Like Santos, Komatsu Australia benefitted from partnerships providing two dedicated classrooms and one workshop bay to train apprentices, with Komatsu donating high-value equipment to enable TAFE Queensland to deliver training for Komatsu's diesel-fitting apprentices. In addition, TAFE Queensland was able to design training in relation to the specific Komatsu equipment provided. However, this machinery was also available for use by other apprentices undertaking their training through TAFE Queensland on the basis of an agreement reached between the parties. The donated equipment is provided from current industry stock, ensuring apprentices have access to the latest heavy

automotive technologies. Under the QTAMA model, this industry donated equipment was transferred to QTAMA on 1 July 2014, and TAFE Queensland was restricted from renting out classrooms within state owned training facilities to other parties. So we start seeing by this process and this evidence the difficulties of having QTAMA and TAFE Queensland in parallel and the effect QTAMA has on important partnerships with industries.

While researching this bill, it became apparent to me of a deliberate conflict of interest of Ms Claire Field, the former chief executive officer of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training. ACPET is the national industry association for independent providers of post-compulsory education and training for Australian and international students. At the same time as Ms Field was CEO of ACPET she was selected by the previous LNP government as an appointed member to the Newman government's Queensland Skills and Training Task Force—a task force set up to review and fundamentally alter operations and outcomes of Queensland's vocational education and training sector. I suggest there was a conflict of interest, with direct competition of a private training organisation against the Queensland government VET provider.

Other views that were expressed at the hearing came from the Queensland Teachers' Union. We heard the member for Everton talk about unions earlier. The union indicated in their evidence—

... the effect of QTAMA was to strip TAFE institutes of their assets, and to open up TAFE campuses for use by private for-profit providers. Additionally, some Queensland TAFE campuses were sold in part or in total. The abandonment or significant downsizing by TAFE of provision in certain courses and in certain geographical areas was significant.

The committee noted that, despite some campuses having been sold or leased by the previous state LNP government, whilst QTAMA existed no campuses were sold, though some were earmarked for sale. I contend that many were earmarked for sale under this QTAMA model.

This government has committed \$34.5 million over the next three years through our Rescuing TAFE policy to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state as well as internationally. The Rescuing TAFE package includes many significant commitments over the next three years, including creating 100 new full-time equivalent teaching and support staff positions, investing \$5 million to establish a fully independent training ombudsman, providing \$4 million for training in emerging innovative industries as designated by Jobs Queensland and the repeal of the QTAMA Act 2014.

I, like many in the Palaszczuk Labor government, was fortunate enough to hear from concerned educators and students from TAFE Queensland in the lead-up to the election campaign. We listened because that is what good governments do. That is what Labor does. We listened to those insidious stories, where the LNP government stood by and allowed educators to be terminated in the TAFE system, losing years of trained staff. Additionally, we heard from students about increases in course fees which put education beyond the reach of those most needy. I listened to TAFE students arriving from their train journey at the Grovely train platform. Students informed me of the price rises in course fees at the Grovely TAFE. The Grovely TAFE is on the boundary of the seats of Ferny Grove and Everton, but no doubt the member for Everton was not listening to the same stories I was told. Young students told me of the increase in course fees and the impost of those fees. They told me about the alteration of some of those courses. These were young students doing the agriculture course at the Grovely TAFE.

QTAMA was created by those opposite to enable the sell-off of Queensland's training assets to the highest bidder and to remove the access of TAFE to its own premises and its own equipment and to lease it out directly to the competitors of TAFE. This legislation was introduced with no consideration by the former government for the long-term survival of TAFE Queensland and no thought to the Queenslanders who rely on TAFE for training or the businesses who benefit from a well-trained workforce. Once these assets are sold, once there are long-term leases in place, there is no going back. This means that any future growth by TAFE Queensland would be restricted by a lack of facilities. Those opposite claim they are committed to the survival of the public provider in Queensland, yet they created QTAMA as a body to flog off our public training assets and give private registered training organisations the inside running. We opposed this act when it was introduced last year, and we made it very clear that we would repeal it as soon as the opportunity arose. The arrogance that those opposite showed in government continues to exist today. The lack of listening to the community continues. Repealing this legislation will save the government over \$430,000 per year in wages paid to the board whose sole purpose was to sell off public training assets.

The former government had an agenda to sell our training assets, privatise VET delivery in Queensland and force TAFE Queensland out of the training market. Basically, the former LNP government, with the advent of QTAMA, set up TAFE Queensland to fail. The Palaszczuk Labor government has a very different agenda. We want TAFE Queensland to continue to deliver quality vocational education and training far into the future because Queenslanders rightly believe that we need a strong public training provider of VET. It benefits individuals by helping them attain the skills and training they need to get work. It supports families, strengthens communities and is vital to give us a productive and skilled workforce we need to grow and prosper into the future. We will enable this through our Rescuing TAFE package, of which the repeal of the QTAMA Act is just the first step. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (8.19 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr RYAN: Already the member for Lockyer is interjecting. Maybe if he actually listened, he would learn something. Maybe he should go to TAFE; he might learn something there as well.

As the explanatory notes indicate, this repeal bill forms part of the Queensland Labor government's Rescuing TAFE election commitment to return control of Queensland's training assets to the relevant government department and to restore TAFE Queensland as the state's premier provider of vocational education and training. This repeal bill will reinstate the priority position of TAFE Queensland to access state-owned assets and ensure that TAFE Queensland continues to play a leading role in the vocational education and training sector. This repeal bill is a necessary component of the Queensland Labor government's commitment to reverse the ideologically driven plans of the previous LNP government to gut TAFE Queensland and the public provision of vocational education and training in Queensland. As the explanatory notes also indicate, part of this Labor government's Rescuing TAFE election commitment will be achieved through this repeal bill by, among other things, repealing the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act and abolishing the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority, also known as QTAMA, and transferring the assets, liabilities and records of QTAMA to the Department of Education and Training.

As mentioned, this repeal bill forms part of the Queensland Labor government's Rescuing TAFE election commitment. Given the way that the previous LNP government was treating TAFE Queensland, there is little doubt that TAFE was certainly in need of rescuing. As the parliamentary committee heard from some witnesses during its inquiry regarding this repeal bill and as the Attorney-General indicated in her introduction speech, the introduction of QTAMA was just another part of the LNP's ideological attack on TAFE as the public provider of vocational education and training in Queensland. As the Attorney-General also stated in her introductory speech, under the previous government's approach to vocational education and training, there were public concerns about the attack on TAFE teachers, the running down of our campuses, the cutting of subsidies, the increasing fees and the systematic attack on our TAFE system in this state.

There were many competing views presented to the committee in reviewing this repeal bill and I encourage all members of this House and the community to view those submissions. However, for the purposes of this contribution, I will refer only to some of those submissions that were made before the committee. Prior to the 2015 Queensland state election, I heard many concerns from the community about how the previous LNP government was treating TAFE and how the previous LNP government was dealing with public training assets, and it is very important to put these concerns in the context of this repeal bill. The reason I say this is because the previous LNP government's motivations for introducing QTAMA must be seen in the context of the LNP's broader attack on TAFE as a public vocational education and training provider. Members of this House will no doubt recall news reporting under the previous LNP government that some TAFE campuses were to be closed and sold off. With these plans and in the context of what had also happened, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that the previous LNP government wanted to increase privatisation of the provision of vocational education and training at the expense of TAFE and at the expense of the principle that vocational education and training should be publicly available like it is for primary schools, secondary schools and universities. In fact, everything that the previous government did was geared towards increasing privatisation in the VET sector.

To be publicly available, it is essential that course fees be affordable, that facilities be appropriately located for Queenslanders living all over this state, be it in rural or remote areas, and that there be appropriate staffing levels in those facilities. As stated in TAFE Queensland's submission to

the committee, TAFE Queensland is the state's most experienced provider of vocational education and training, with over 130 years of experience in delivering training and managing the state's portfolio of training assets. Unfortunately, that history appears to have counted for nothing under the previous LNP government and obviously continues to count for nothing under this current LNP opposition. TAFE Queensland's submission to the committee highlights the full extent of the previous LNP government's so-called five-year VET action plan. According to that submission, this action plan included: the creation of QTAMA to achieve the objectives of providing access to public training facilities on a commercial basis and to improve utilisation rates by managing public infrastructure, again on a commercial basis, including the disposal of assets among other things; transferring the public assets previously managed and occupied by TAFE Queensland to QTAMA, including the land, buildings, equipment, training material, teaching aids and other assets of TAFE Queensland; introducing 100 per cent contestability for government subsidised training, thereby putting additional pressures on the courses offered by TAFE Queensland and the fees associated with those courses; deregulating those course fees, thereby allowing vocational education and training providers to increase fees; and, among other things, introducing a new investment framework with varying levels of government subsidy for a lower number of subsidised training courses.

In its submission to the committee, the Queensland Teachers' Union suggested that the combined impact of the decisions made by the previous LNP government contributed to a significant reduction in the number of students enrolled in TAFE and a significant increase in course fees. It is in this context that we can see that all of these actions of the previous LNP government, including the introduction of QTAMA and the transfer of all of TAFE's assets to QTAMA, are connected. As the Queensland Teachers' Union President, Kevin Bates, said in the *Brisbane Times* on 7 September 2012, TAFE being the public provider of technical and further education meant that there were unique costs associated which have to be factored into a rationalisation. He stated—

"It's not just the physical facility that is a concern for us, it's also the other unique responsibilities that TAFE has—providing libraries, student counselling services, there's a whole range of support services that TAFEs provide that private providers don't ...

"Selling TAFE assets without factoring that into the equation is not going to be helpful for Queensland where there's already a skills shortage and our economic prosperity is going to be determined by how well we can respond to that skills shortage."

Notwithstanding the above, a further critical concern with the QTAMA model is that from 1 July 2016 TAFE would be required to pay full commercial rates to occupy QTAMA facilities. In a contestability framework, such a requirement is arguably geared towards making those facilities available to private providers at the expense of TAFE. The committee heard at its public hearing that examples of this had already occurred at the Toowoomba and South Bank campuses, where TAFE Queensland was forced to make space available for private providers. Of additional concern to me is the effect that the QTAMA model may have had on existing and future partnerships between TAFE Queensland and industry. At the public hearing, the committee heard that partnerships between Santos, Komatsu and Queensland Gas Company, for instance, had been put at risk by the introduction of the QTAMA model and, in fact, may have been lost. If we are to believe that there should be a public provider of vocational education and training in Queensland, then in my view the position of that public provider, TAFE Queensland, should be given some weight.

In its submission to the committee, TAFE Queensland made the following comments about the QTAMA model, among other things: that the QTAMA model restricts industry training partnerships; that QTAMA's proposed introduction of full commercial rates for regional facilities from 1 July 2016 will have long-term implications for regional, rural and remote training delivery; that the QTAMA model creates a disincentive for training providers to invest in training infrastructure due to the lack of long-term ownership or tenure; and that the model has not met its intended purpose with only a limited number of additional leases secured with private operators.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Attorney, the committee secretariat, all of the submitters, the department and other committee members for their respective contributions to this debate.

The Queensland Labor government is a consultative government. Unlike the LNP, this government is not about dividing and conquering. This is a truly syncretic government bringing Queenslanders together and working for a better Queensland. We continue that work today by reinstating the priority position of TAFE Queensland to access state-owned assets and to ensure that TAFE Queensland continues to play a leading role in the vocational education and training sector. TAFE needed rescuing from the LNP, and this week with this repeal bill and a great Labor state budget we saved TAFE. I encourage all members of this House to support this bill.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate before the House regarding the Queensland Training Assets Management Repeal Bill 2015. In this debate tonight I will touch on three areas: firstly, I will provide some background as to why the previous government introduced this bill; secondly, I would like to talk about student participation rates; and thirdly, I will give overviews of some of the submissions we have put into the report.

QTAMA was established in 2014 to provide for the effective and efficient management of state-owned training assets, primarily for the provision of vocational education and training in accordance with sound commercial principles. QTAMA was established to be the owner and manager of the state's training assets and to enhance competition by providing access to public training facilities on a commercial basis for all registered training organisations in Queensland, thereby removing a significant barrier to market entry. It was also established to address any public perception that TAFE Queensland has an effective monopoly with the Queensland VET system through exclusive access to public infrastructure and to improve utilisation rates by managing the public infrastructure on a commercial basis, including implementing disposal processes for obsolete or underutilised assets.

Put simply, the previous LNP government put in motion a management system of the assets in need of further usage that in turn provided additional training courses through the utilisation of these underused facilities, creating a revenue injection into the government's fiscal stream that resulted in more people attending further education. At the end of the day, isn't it about training people to get ahead in life? Isn't it about people furthering their skills and training so that they can progress in life? I could understand that, if student numbers were declining and things were not working out with QTAMA, then this would be a bill that you would want to repeal. But the interesting fact is that student participation in Queensland was on the increase, and after the LNP'S reforms we had started to see an increase in student participation, which is what the reforms to TAFE were all about.

This leads me to our committee hearing, where Mr Rod Camm spoke positively about the growth. He stated—

In Queensland the last public data that was available by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research shows that private sectors are winning about 13.6 per cent of funding in Queensland and with that they are delivering 35 per cent of the student numbers. You would estimate over the last year or so that has probably grown a little bit, that is for sure. In Queensland the student numbers are growing compared to the fact that they are reducing nationally, so that is a good sign that the reform agenda—

implemented by the former LNP government

—is largely going well.

The other thing I find interesting is the reference to TAFE saying that QTAMA was terrible and it was not working out, because in their submission TAFE recommends that assets be transferred back but kept separate from training and delivery. Is that not what is currently happening?

The third point I would make regarding the hastiness of this bill is that it was only introduced on 1 July last year, which is only a nine-month period. Even the Department of Education has stated that, due to the short time it has been in operation, there has been no opportunity to review its effectiveness and efficiency. I do know that in that nine months there have been agreements reached on over 12 tenancies and money was coming in. Mr Rod Camm further stated—

Certainly satisfaction rates are higher and student numbers are growing in Queensland by 4.9 per cent compared to a 3½ per cent reduction nationally.

Under the former LNP government we have more kids in Queensland wanting to go to TAFE. He further stated—

If you have read the media about some of the poorer behaviour of some providers down south, that has not happened in Queensland. The market has been managed better.

I see this bill as an assault on private providers. It is not allowing access to both public and private providers, and this is the argument. When my colleague the member for Beaudesert asked the Together Union—or it could have been the Independent Education Union—about union membership in public and private providers, certainly in private providers there was not nearly the interest in union membership or actual union membership, which makes me wonder if this is not a push for union membership and making sure that membership numbers are there for the unions.

I think it comes back to the fact that student participation has actually increased. The Department of Education stated—

As at 31 March 2015, publicly funded student participation had increased 5.3% compared to the previous year.

The arguments about QTAMA being terrible and people dropping out in droves is simply not supported by the data. The member for Morayfield said that there had been a reduction in TAFE Queensland student numbers. People were leaving TAFE but they were going to private providers, and maybe that was because they were offering a variety of courses.

When I was speaking to Carers Australia, they said they were able to put on extra courses for industries that were crying out for skilled workers. Their courses filled up very quickly and they had a job placement rate of 95 per cent. Isn't that what this is all designed for? QTAMA is one of the reforms instituted by the LNP, and we have the evidence to support its success.

My next point relates to utilisation. At the end of the day, this is taxpayers' money and those responsible for it need to ensure we get value for money. I am hearing that Maryborough TAFE was being utilised only six per cent of the time. The rest of the time it was just left there. There were more staff in the car park than students. That is not sustainable. Are government members serious about skilled workers or about creating jobs, jobs, jobs? Where the argument of those opposite comes unstuck is that student numbers were increasing. The data clearly shows that. So student numbers are increasing and there is better utilisation of public assets.

My colleague the member from Everton also dispelled some of the myths about QTAMA being a vehicle to disguise the sale of state assets. That is simply not true, because QTAMA had not listed any sites for sale, which was a concern of one of the submitters.

A government member interjected.

Mrs SMITH: Whether this is about us losing the election I do not know, but the change is not based on QTAMA. If it is about student participation, the numbers had increased. You cannot argue against that. If you argue, it would be a dumb argument. You are supposed to be the smart state, not the dumb ones.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Mount Ommaney, there may have been some unparliamentary language there. I will ask you to withdraw. I also remind you of your obligation to direct your comments through the chair.

Mrs SMITH: Thank you for your guidance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there a conditional withdrawal there?

Mrs SMITH: I withdraw. I turn to the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform, agreed to by COAG under the Gillard government. I refer to page 5 of the report, which mentions 'encouraging responsiveness in training arrangements by facilitating the operation of a more open and competitive training market'. That is very clear.

At the end of the day, we just have to say that this is not a smart decision. It is actually a very dumb decision when we see student participation increasing and better utilisation of the state's facilities. Certainly there has not been enough time allowed to determine that QTAMA is not working. Again, we can dispel those myths that were raised in some of the submissions but not substantiated.

I will take some time to highlight some of the good work we did in government with regard to reform of TAFE. I refer to the establishment of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority, QTAMA. The reform of TAFE—let us be clear how it came about—came after an industry task force reviewed TAFE. The experts on the independent Skills and Training Taskforce told us that TAFE was not competitive and would not survive without major reform. The independent Skills and Training Taskforce recommended the establishment of a separate specialist entity with expertise in infrastructure management. TAFE itself has said that it wants to see that occur. To revitalise TAFE's assets, the independent report recommended removing the assets from the department's control. When you are leasing out you are getting money back in, but there are also issues of building maintenance, and that money was going to be reinvested.

It all goes back under the one. When we came to government we saw the state of the school maintenance program, with \$360 million worth of projects not completed. Why would we allow our TAFEs to run down? We were actually allowing that stream of finance to come in to do that that was not taking away from the education sector.

I think this bill has been rushed into parliament. I remember that committee members received papers late on a Friday afternoon for an early Monday morning meeting. I do not think sufficient time was allowed for members to read over the numerous submissions. I just cannot understand the haste to pass this bill when there is better utilisation of our TAFE and more student participation. The current set-up has not been allowed to run long enough to see the full intended benefits. I will be opposing the bill, as I suggest everyone else should.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (8.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. The Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 amends the Further Education and Training Act 2014 by inserting provisions that repeal the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act 2014, the QTAMA Act, and providing for transitional matters.

In July 2014 the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority, QTAMA, was established as a statutory body under the QTAMA Act. The training assets and liabilities held by the then department of education, training and employment were transferred to QTAMA. QTAMA's functions include owning, managing and providing state training assets for vocational training, VET training, to TAFE Queensland and other training organisations.

QTAMA's purpose under the existing legislation is to manage the state's training assets on a commercial basis. There is no requirement under the QTAMA Act for QTAMA to prioritise the interests of TAFE Queensland as the primary public provider of VET in Queensland. TAFE Queensland is treated as another provider operating in a contestable VET market.

QTAMA was one of a suite of reforms to the VET sector implemented by the Campbell Newman government during 2013-14 all aimed at creating a contestable VET market. In this context of change, as well as establishing QTAMA, other reforms to VET impacting on TAFE Queensland included a move to a fully contestable model of service provision to increase efficiency; establishing TAFE as a statutory body rather than the previous 13 TAFE institutes, two of which were statutory bodies and 11 part of the department, to place it on a stronger footing to operate in a contestable market; and establishing a Ministerial Industry Commission, MIC, to provide industry advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning. This was dissolved from 14 June 2015 with its functions to be delivered by Jobs Queensland.

Queensland's VET system includes an extensive network of public and privately owned training providers. One of these is TAFE, the government owned VET provider with a network of six regions delivering training from Thursday Island to the Gold Coast, from Bundaberg to Roma and across the south-east. Training is delivered from more than 50 locations, which is down from 95 campuses in 2013-14. The network also includes the Australian Agricultural College Corporation, delivering agricultural education across five campuses; more than 900 RTOs, including privately owned colleges; and local government, schools, community bodies and industry enterprises. The QTAMA board, which ceased on 30 June 2015, consisted of six members. The annual wages for the QTAMA board and the chief executive officer in 2014-15 were in the order of \$430,000.

A number of submitters expressed serious concerns that the QTAMA model has impacted detrimentally on students through increased course costs and reduced availability of course offerings. The Queensland Teachers' Union submission to the committee included that the effect of QTAMA was to strip TAFE institutes of their assets and open up TAFE campuses for use by private for-profit providers. Additionally, some Queensland TAFE campuses were sold, in part or in total. The abandonment or significant downsizing by TAFE of provision of certain courses and in certain geographical areas was significant.

The QTU also submitted that the formation of QTAMA has resulted in TAFE industry specific classes being forced out of purpose-built facilities. The QTU provided various examples, claiming that TAFE students studying at Maryborough in trade workshops were forced to move to a retrofitted art facility. Further, it reported plans in Toowoomba involving the relocation of the automotive students from a custom-built, six-year-old state-of-the-art facility to a retrofitted shed at a cost of \$150,000. The Independent Education Union of Australia, the IEUA, advised that consultation with its members had indicated that there had been a withdrawal of government supported TAFE programs and of VET revenue general funding in particular, resulting in a reduction in the number of school based students accessing VET programs, particularly in rural and regional areas and urban areas where local TAFE facilities have been closed. TAFE staff advised that between 2011 and 2014 the number of government funded TAFE students decreased from 304,300 to 264,100—a decrease of 13 per cent. The decrease in TAFE students identifying as having a disability was even more stark. Between 2012 and 2015, the numbers decreased from 8,183 to only 4,644—a decrease of 43 per cent. In its submission the Together union submitted, presumably in respect of VET in schools, that the impact on students has also been significant with no ability for parents or students to have any certainty over course costs or whether those courses enrolled in would even exist in the following term.

The Queensland government's election commitment Rescuing TAFE program commits to a repeal of the QTAMA Act, returning control of Queensland's training assets to the relevant government department and investing \$34.5 million over three years to restore TAFE Queensland as the state's

premier provider of VET. To implement this election commitment, the objectives of the bill are to repeal the QTAMA Act and abolish QTAMA; transfer the assets, liabilities and records of QTAMA to the Department of Education and Training; and provide for all other transitional and savings arrangements as a result of the QTAMA bill. The government's intent is that TAFE Queensland will have priority access to state owned training assets. This will support TAFE Queensland in its planning and delivery of quality education to the community and reinforce TAFE Queensland's role in the VET market.

As outlined by the Attorney-General in her first reading speech on 21 May 2015, the Palaszczuk government was elected on a commitment to jobs. We are a government that is focused on reducing Queensland's unemployment rate, creating jobs and training individuals to meet industry demand today and into the future. The government's election commitments and the budget before the House highlight the crucial role of the vocational education and training sector in building the Queensland economy by delivering well trained workers to address the needs of industry. Central to this is our plan to regain Queensland TAFE's reputation as a premier public training provider of VET in Queensland. Unlike those opposite, we believe that the public provider plays a vital role in the delivery of VET in Queensland and we need to ensure that it is able to deliver quality training now and into the future.

The Palaszczuk government has committed \$34.5 million over the next three years through the Rescuing TAFE policy to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state as well as internationally. Our Rescuing TAFE package includes many significant commitments over the next three years, including creating 100 new full-time equivalent teaching and support staff positions, investing \$5 million to establish a fully independent Training Ombudsman, providing \$4 million for training in emerging innovative industries as designated by Jobs Queensland, and the repeal of the QTAMA Act. QTAMA was created by those opposite to enable the sell-off or long-term leasing of Queensland's training assets to the highest bidder and removing access of TAFE to its own premises, its own equipment and leasing it out directly to the competitors of TAFE. The legislation that created QTAMA was introduced with no consideration by the then government as to the long-term survival of TAFE Queensland and no thought to the Queenslanders who rely on TAFE for training or the businesses that benefit from a well trained workforce. Once these assets are sold, once there are long-term leases in place, there is no getting them back.

When in opposition the Labor members opposed the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act 2014 and we made it clear that we would repeal it as soon as the opportunity arose. QTAMA added an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy for TAFE with the sole objective of commercially exploiting TAFE campuses and selling or leasing them off. Before the election in January of this year TAFE students, parents of TAFE students and the employers of TAFE graduates made it clear to me that they were seriously concerned about the attack on the TAFE system by the Campbell Newman government, the attack on TAFE teachers, the running down of our campuses, the cutting of subsidies, the increase in fees and an apparent systemic attack on the TAFE system by the then government. Repealing the QTAMA legislation will save the government over \$430,000 per year in wages paid to the board and the CEO whose sole purpose was to sell off or lease public training assets. The Palaszczuk government wants TAFE Queensland to continue to deliver quality vocational education and training far into the future, because Queenslanders rightly believe we need a strong public training provider of VET. TAFE students, parents of TAFE students and employers of TAFE graduates should expect no less. TAFE benefits individuals by helping them attain the skills and training they need to get work, it supports families and strengthens communities and it is vital to provide industry with the productive and skilled workforce it needs to grow and prosper into the future.

As I said in my first speech, increasing employment opportunities in Ipswich West is my No. 1 priority, so I will be making sure that Ipswich West jobseekers are provided with every assistance possible to connect them with employers. Now more than ever, skills, training and experience are what employers are looking for. My electorate has a proud and long association with TAFE Queensland and the vocational training sector, so I will be doing everything possible while I am a member of parliament to support the students and staff of TAFE Queensland, particularly my local TAFE college, TAFE Queensland South West. In all of this I want to make sure that the people who often find themselves at a disadvantage are not left behind. In particular, I will be doing my best to make sure that people living with disabilities are included in Labor's plans to rescue TAFE. I commend the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 to the House.

 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (8.57 pm): I rise to speak to the QTAMA Repeal Bill 2015 as not just a member of this House but also as a parent. Local, quality, affordable training is vital for communities such as mine—Bundaberg. The history of how our TAFE system became so broken, neglected and ignored was a deliberate act by the former LNP government to dismantle it and exclude

from education those who could not afford it. QTAMA was the vessel through which our TAFEs went from large vibrant providers to shadows of their former selves, crowded out by private providers who popped up overnight in TAFE buildings which were no longer a Queensland government asset. QTAMA was established by the QTAMA Act 2014 and its purpose was to own, acquire, manage and provide training assets on a commercial basis and, of course, as was the intent, TAFE could not afford to lease its own buildings and was forced to allow other providers to share its premises. The impact of this was palpable in my community. I was visited by TAFE teachers who were scared for their jobs as many of their TAFE colleagues had lost their jobs when the courses were slashed or moved to the south-east corner of Queensland. Some of these teachers had dedicated their lives to learning their trades and the areas of expertise and had decided to serve their community by passing on this knowledge and experience, so it was no wonder that they were distraught by the decisions of the previous government to destroy the sector they loved and, along with it, their jobs. They had seen their colleagues discarded after giving years of loyal service to successive governments. They knew that it was a matter of time before their livelihoods were at risk and their students unable to continue their studies.

Their worry for their students was significant and they knew that to voice their concern was to expedite the end of their own teaching career in the vocational education sector in the Public Service, such as the distaste for feedback by the previous LNP government. As I went about my community, I heard from numerous students, with story after story of how the actions of the previous government had led to their inability to continue their studies. I spoke to Dianne, a single mother of a six-year-old daughter. Dianne had completed the first year of her diploma at the Bundaberg TAFE campus. Dianne told me how she was unable to continue her studies as the course that she was studying was no longer available in Bundaberg. If she wanted to continue or finish her diploma, Dianne had to travel to the Sunshine Coast to do so. Of course, because of her circumstances, she was unable to do this. I also spoke with a mother of a year 12 student who, because of the changes made to TAFE by those opposite, had to extend her mortgage to be able to afford to pay the thousands of dollars in fees that were being charged.

What about the third-year mature age apprentices who now have to travel to Brisbane to do their TAFE modules to allow them to complete their apprenticeships? Just last week I had two small-business employers of apprentices come into my office to see me and tell me of the impact on both of their businesses as their apprentices have to leave Bundaberg to do their training. So just when they need their apprentices to be able to come in and work around their TAFE time in their busy periods, they do not have them nearby; they are over 400 kilometres away in Brisbane. So a mature age apprentice with a family has to find money to pay for accommodation in Brisbane as well as finding their rent money in Bundaberg and leave their family and their children. On an apprentice's wage, that is an outrage.

Prior to the election, I campaigned to restore our TAFE in Bundaberg and support the QTAMA Repeal Bill 2015. I stood with TAFE teachers and students outside our Bundaberg TAFE campus. The Bundaberg community was enthusiastic in its support of us. I would also like to thank the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills for coming to Bundaberg to show her support to my community by rallying alongside us. As a passionate supporter of affordable, accessible training options for all people in my community, I am proud to stand here today to speak in support of this important bill.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (9.01 pm): Let me start by saying how much I value the TAFE system of education. TAFE is very much appreciated as it provides valuable hands-on learning for those going into careers that do not require a university qualification. My wife, Michele, is a proud graduate of TAFE, which has given her the opportunity to earn a diploma in beauty therapy. TAFE is a valuable and much valued institution in my community. But what is not valued are the buildings or facilities that are either not used or underutilised. That is what QTAMA was designed for. It was about the efficient management of TAFE resources. It is not about TAFE courses, it is not about TAFE's decisions on how it chose to amalgamate campuses and restructure, it is not about how many teachers, librarians and other staff TAFE chooses to employ. QTAMA has not forced TAFE Queensland off any site. As the department informed the committee—

Campuses that have been closed were not a direct result of QTAMA, but were decisions made by the Department prior to the establishment of QTAMA, or by TAFE Queensland in response to local training needs and demand, and whether the assets were fit for purpose.

The chief executive officer of QTAMA, Peter Gallagher, told the committee—

Rather it is tenants, such as TAFE Queensland, that would decide that the site was no longer needed as part of their training program.

QTAMA is about the efficient management of facilities. According to the department—

QTAMA is required to manage the state's training assets on a commercial basis, and is not required by legislation to prioritise the interests of TAFE Queensland.

On that basis the only conclusion I can draw is that, despite what members from the government try to say, this bill is not about the survival of TAFE; this bill is purely about paying back and pandering to their union masters.

QTAMA was established to make sure that taxpayers' dollars were being used to the best and most effective use for local students and communities. It is a responsibility that all of us in this chamber should carry—a responsibility to carefully, prudently, judiciously and wisely dispense those dollars to get the most and best for our communities. Let me give members an example of the judicious use of using TAFE facilities. As I have raised previously in this House, the University of the Sunshine Coast has established a presence in Gympie. In 2013, it opened a campus in Gympie with 45 students, offering two bachelor degrees and a tertiary preparation pathways program for those seeking to gain skills to qualify for entry to university. The university built its own purpose-built facility. Today, the university is wanting to expand and lease facilities that are on the campus of the Gympie TAFE Queensland East Coast, which has reduced and downgraded courses, leaving some of its teaching facilities not used or underutilised. Through demonstrating the crucial need for a tertiary education facility in Gympie and its surrounding districts, the university has now expanded its intake to 217 students in 2015. The students attending the university there now study a wide range of degrees, including bachelors of nursing, primary education, business (marketing), and commerce (accounting). This year, it has also introduced first-year courses for bachelors of social science, social science (psychology), social welfare, human services, counselling and arts.

I am very supportive of the educational opportunities that the university has provided for both recent school leavers and mature age students who have embraced the opportunity to study in Gympie rather than travel away to study. In fact, my daughter is able to study locally for a bachelor of commerce at the Gympie campus of the University of the Sunshine Coast. She is able to live at home and has gained part-time employment at a local accountancy firm.

Gympie has a high level of unemployment, with a rate of 8.3 per cent, and the Wide Bay region has an unemployment rate of 10.1 per cent, which is the highest of all 19 regions within Queensland. Gympie registers an unemployment rate of 16 per cent for young people, which is also above the Queensland average. Compounding the problem for school leavers and mature age students is that educational qualifications in Gympie are among the lowest in Queensland, with only 13.5 per cent of people in Gympie having a bachelor degree compared to 21.6 per cent for Queensland. The federal government's recent commitment to upgrade the Bruce Highway to Gympie, together with the economic development strategy of the Gympie Regional Council demonstrates the need to improve economic activity in this region and thus support employment opportunities for locals. As I said, the university would like to further expand its presence in Gympie by using more of the TAFE campus facilities. It wants to introduce more courses in Gympie next year—next year. That is in seven months time. However, this bill will delay, if not prevent, the university using those facilities and increasing those educational opportunities for Gympie residents.

As I said before, the university wants to lease facilities that were previously on the campus of the Gympie TAFE Queensland East Coast. The facilities are available, because TAFE courses had been either reduced or downgraded, leaving some of its teaching facilities not used or underutilised. In fact, currently, one building is completely empty. That building was empty because of a decision of TAFE. The university has already approached the government to secure leases of those buildings. It wants to upgrade the facilities and the buildings to modern standards so that students in the Gympie region can be offered a secure and wide range of educational opportunities. What is the response from this government? It has told the university that its proposals cannot be considered at this time. It has told the university that it will have to wait. It has told the university that it will have to bide its time waiting for yet another review. The government intends to undertake a review to formulate a comprehensive asset plan for the next 10 years. How long will it take? In the Labor Party's own document, *Rescuing TAFE*—

That plan is expected to be implemented from July 2016.

That is yet another year to wait. Queenslanders could be justly cynical about how long the government will take to undertake its review, because it has not been quick off the mark in decision-making for anything since January. This review is despite the fact that QTAMA had already developed an asset management plan, as required under the QTAMA Act. The QTAMA plan identified short, medium and long-term actions.

Reports vary in terms of figures relating to how much TAFE Queensland utilises the assets that were built for it. They range from 40 per cent to 70 per cent. Even if we accept the 70 per cent occupancy rate that TAFE claims, then there are either 30 per cent of the facilities not utilised or underutilised, or else it could be upwards to 60 per cent of facilities not in use. I am talking about empty spaces and buildings that Queensland taxpayers are funding. I am talking about facilities that are in need of upgrading and maintenance. Would it not be better to conduct a review of the utilisation of those assets, which is what QTAMA is doing currently, before undertaking the 10-year strategic plan?

The government is putting the cart before the horse. Interestingly, if TAFE's claims of its occupancy rate of 70 per cent are true then it is leasing the space for almost half the commercial rate. That is because a 40 per cent occupancy has been assumed when the rents were set for 2014-15 and for 2015-16. This bill provides cold comfort to the high school students of Gympie, to the mature age students of Gympie, to the businesses of Gympie and to the university. The university needs to have certainty that it could access those facilities so that it can start to offer courses for students next year. There is no certainty in these proposals.

With a local employment rate that hovers around two to three per cent above the state average, providing opportunities for local students and mature age adults to improve their learning outcomes will help to address the ability to secure fulfilling careers. Almost 70 per cent of the students at the USC Gympie campus are mature aged, demonstrating that the previous lack of a local higher education facility had impeded the likelihood of those students gaining further education. The university would also like to cater for overseas students at the campus which would help increase economic activity in the region.

If members opposite value TAFE as much as they claim, they would keep QTAMA because it aims to ensure that TAFE is not a bottomless pit of wasted Queensland taxpayers' dollars. QTAMA is about efficiently and cleverly targeting TAFE resources so that all facilities are utilised to their optimum for the students, whether by TAFE educators or other educators. The use of facilities by the University of the Sunshine Coast in Gympie is testament to the success of finding a sensible use of surplus TAFE facilities. This bill is purely about the government paying back and pandering to union masters. In closing, I thank the other committee members and public submitters to the committee. I urge those opposite to vote against this bill.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (9.11 pm): I rise to support the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill, the bill that will return control of Queensland's training assets to the Department of Education and Training and will help to restore TAFE as the premier public provider of vocational education and training in Queensland. I give this support knowing that I have in turn the full and very passionate support of the Bulimba electorate behind me, because of all of the things that Campbell Newman and his LNP government did to destroy the very essence of what Queenslanders hold dear, their intent to destroy the TAFE system induced one of the greatest responses from my local community during the state election campaign.

QTAMA was symptomatic of what was happening in TAFE generally and to a great extent the way the LNP treated the Queensland people in general: their sneaky carving up of TAFE assets so that they could get them ready for sale, their dressing up of asset sales as if they were about something completely different, their disregard for the needs of people who suffer disadvantage, a failure to address the training needs of people in rural and regional areas, their assumption that everything in life fits neatly around a profit and loss statement, their focus on numbers rather than people and their lack of recognition of the role that public education and training has in providing equality of access and opportunity for all Queenslanders and for their future. What the LNP did to the TAFE system in Queensland—the attack on TAFE teachers, the running down of our campuses, the cutting of subsidies, the huge hikes in fees with no notice to students, the poor regard for the training needs of people in rural and remote communities, the sacking of teachers in the middle of courses leaving students with no opportunity to finish, and many, many more appalling examples—that damage is going to take a long time to undo. I know this bill will not address all of those things, however it is the first step in the Palaszczuk government's Rescuing TAFE commitment which we made during the election campaign. It was wonderful to see that commitment highlighted in this week's budget with the announcement of more than \$750 million to assist up to 37,000 extra Queenslanders a year to access skills to be job ready, including \$160 million to support the rebuilding of Queensland's TAFE system and restoring it as the premier public provider of VET in Queensland. Achieving this recognises the important role that TAFE plays in local communities and supports the government's aim of raising the average level of education obtained by Queenslanders, opening up more options for their future employment, because that is what this government is about: jobs—jobs now and jobs for the future.

QTAMA was established by the LNP government to manage training assets on a commercial basis. This was never going to mean equality of access across Queensland for vocational education and training because sometimes the issue is not about dollars. As the only public provider, TAFE Queensland can provide training where other training organisations would not to some of the most disadvantaged people and to people in regional and remote parts of Queensland, but there are costs involved in doing that. The QTAMA model did not make shoring up the role of TAFE Queensland as the public provider of VET its priority. I noted that a number of the submissions to the legal affairs committee commented on why the QTAMA model was never going to work in guaranteeing equality of access or quality of opportunities available. From TAFE Directors Australia—

In our view, QTAMA's purely commercial approach is not cognisant of the broader economic and social benefits generated by public training infrastructure. TDA is not aware of any evidence based review or research that has recommended this approach to public training asset management, even though many reviews of VET have been undertaken by states and territories to inform Governments' policy approach to improving students' learning experiences and the outcomes of VET, including asset maintenance and utilisation.

From the Independent Education Union—

The vast majority of changes introduced by the LNP government simply copied those in other jurisdictions, without acknowledging the clear evidence that movement to enhanced privatisation and commercialisation has been directly linked to a decline in quality of programs and providers.

And from TAFE Queensland—

establishment of a property manager to achieve commercial returns on education or training assets has not been successful anywhere in Australia or the world.

Yet again we see the decisions that were made by the LNP were all about numbers on a page and not about people. The provision of skills and training to Queenslanders to help shore up their futures is not an academic exercise; it is about real people. I hear the opposition members—I heard the member for Everton—saying that TAFE Queensland's financial obligations did not change under QTAMA and so there should not have been any impositions on them. However, that situation was only going to be the case until the middle of next year and then they were going to be paying full commercial rates for rent. We need to save TAFE Queensland now because it is just too important. By repealing the QTAMA Act we are confirming the importance of having a public provider in Queensland of skills and training—that is, TAFE Queensland—and we are granting TAFE Queensland priority access to the facilities it needs, providing it with certainty to plan training delivery across the state. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (9.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. This bill reflects an election commitment made by this government to the people of Queensland to restore TAFE as the premier public provider of vocational education and training in Queensland after an unprecedented ideological attack by those opposite. This ideology-driven reform process by the former LNP government was not about improving and strengthening Queensland's vocational education and training sector, it was not about ensuring that all Queenslanders—metropolitan, rural and regional alike—had access to a quality training sector, and it certainly was not about encouraging jobseekers to upskill in order to access economic opportunity. No, it was about reducing its own outlays and cost shifting. One only has to look at interstate examples to know that this does not work. I note the submission by TAFE Queensland 'that establishment of a property manager to achieve commercial returns on education or training assets has not been successful anywhere in Australia or the world' and second the comments made by the member for Bulimba in this regard.

The bill before the House will repeal the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act 2014, the QTAMA Act, and upon commencement will dissolve the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority and its board, return control of Queensland's training assets to the Department of Education and Training and provide transitional and savings arrangements for legal proceedings, legal relationships and the annual report.

The government, through this bill, will reinforce TAFE Queensland's leading role in the VET market by ensuring that it has priority access to state owned training assets to support planning and delivery of quality training to the community. We were elected on a commitment to jobs, to reducing Queensland's unemployment rate by keeping jobs, creating jobs and to skilling individuals to meet industry demand now and into the future. Vocational education and training is education and training

for work and is a vital part of Queensland and the nation's broader educational network that includes schools, universities and adult and community education. TAFE Directors Australia estimates that more than one person in every street in Australia is enrolled with TAFE, describing graduates as the heavy lifters in our economy, and as small business owners, major creators of employment.

This government committed \$34 million over the next three years to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state. The vocational education and training sector is vital to building the Queensland economy by delivering the well-trained workers required to address the needs of industry and fulfil the commitments we made to Queenslanders.

I have already spoken in this House about jobs being the No. 1 issue raised with me by constituents during the recent election. TAFE was also a key concern raised. For me, one of the most troubling conversations I had while campaigning was with an elderly couple who approached me at a mobile office and asked desperately how they were to afford to support their grandson through TAFE in an environment where TAFE funding and teachers were being attacked, subsidies cut and fees increased. This bill once again reinforces TAFE Queensland's position as the leading public provider of VET in Queensland and, in conjunction with the creation of 100 new full-time equivalent teaching and support staff positions, will support the government's aim of raising the average level of education obtained by Queenslanders and putting them on a path to employment.

TAFE Queensland has an additional role to play in providing training where other training organisations will not, often to some of the most disadvantaged Queenslanders and in regional and remote parts of Queensland. In my former role with the national regulator of the vocational and education training sector, I recall having a number of conversations with privately-run registered training organisations about the demand-driven nature of running a commercial training provider. One RTO that immediately comes to mind indicated that they were withdrawing from a particular certificate III qualification because it was not making them any money. It was not commercially viable. There is nothing wrong with that. They are a commercial business that must make decisions in the best interests of ensuring their continued operation. However, the issue is that they were located in a regional town. The qualification was the entry qualification required to obtain entry into more advanced agricultural studies, which was the main qualification required to gain entry to employment on surrounding properties.

I note the reflections made in this regard in the TAFE Queensland submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that cited the medium and long-term implications for regional, rural and remote training delivery with the QTAMA model not reflecting the additional costs and challenges of providing training in these localities. Full commercial rates for regional facilities were to be sought by QTAMA from July 2016. I am certain that, like other regional members, the member for Dalrymple appreciates the importance of having quality training providers in his electorate. Only last year I was in Charters Towers talking to young vocational education and training students who were desperate to obtain qualifications and realise their dreams of staying on the land. TAFE Queensland has a vital role to play in providing training where other training organisations will not, including in regional and remote parts of Queensland and to some of the most disadvantaged Queenslanders.

The 2015-16 VET investment plan provides a clear statement in this regard that, as a government, we will ensure that investment in VET leads to tangible employment outcomes now and into the future, as well as providing opportunities for disadvantaged learners to participate in skills and training. Beyond the abolition of QTAMA, the Palaszczuk government has committed to conducting a utilisation audit of all Queensland training assets and develop a 10-year asset management plan. That 10-year asset management plan will outline options for the future use of training assets and establish a framework for long-term training asset management, investment plans and funding requirements. The plan will be developed and implemented in consultation with key stakeholders and it will follow an audit of all training assets to support development of the plan, expected to take effect in July 2016. This commitment is in keeping with the findings of a number of reviews of the Queensland VET sector and TAFE Queensland over the past decade, which advocated for more effective management and utilisation of state training assets.

This bill reflects an election commitment made by this government to the people of Queensland to restore TAFE as the premier public provider of vocational education and training in Queensland. The bill before the House will go some way to doing this by dissolving the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority and its board and returning control of Queensland's training assets to the Department of Education and Training. Those opposite had an agenda to sell our training assets, privatise VET delivery in Queensland and force TAFE Queensland out of the training market. As

someone who holds a VET qualification and worked in the national VET sector, I know that we need a strong and vibrant TAFE to ensure that we have a world-class education and training sector in Queensland into the future. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr KRAUSE (Beaudesert—LNP) (9.23 pm): This bill represents an ideological attack on the ability of people to get the training they want and choose, and also on private sector non-TAFE training providers in this state. In 2012 QTAMA was established as part of the national reforms on training put in place by COAG under the former federal government. One of the objectives of QTAMA was to be the specialist owner and manager of the state's training assets and to enhance competition by facilitating access to state owned training facilities by all parts of the VET sector, including TAFE and other commercial providers.

Mr Rickuss: To drag them into the 21st century.

Mr KRAUSE: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. QTAMA was one of a suite of reforms introduced to the VET sector in the term of the last government, including reforms that came out the 2012 industry-led skills and training task force that looked at funding and training places in areas where trainees were needed and jobs were required, that is, where there was a shortfall in skills. That task force was led by industry because it creates jobs. Industry creates jobs and the private sector creates jobs. It is very sensible to develop a training market with the goal of providing employees with the skills needed by the private sector.

I take issue with suggestions made earlier tonight by the member for Ferny Grove that there was some sort of conflict of interest as one of the members of that task force represented a non-TAFE VET provider. It is a preposterous suggestion that they have a conflict of interest simply because they are involved in the non-TAFE sector. I ask this question of the government: will the task force that is being set up to examine the use of TAFE assets or state owned training assets over the next 10 years have TAFE representatives, union representatives or other people involved in the state-run training facility sector? I dare say it will. If the member for Ferny Grove wants to suggest that there was a conflict back in 2012, I would suggest there is a conflict with anyone from TAFE being involved in that task force, because they are a publicly funded, training provider in competition with non-TAFE providers. Obviously they have an interest in how the assets are utilised, but so does the private sector and the non-TAFE sector. We need to listen to all voices. Frankly, the earlier suggestion from the member for Ferny Grove is quite insulting to the 900 private RTOs operating in this state.

Among the goals of the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform was to improve training participation and to facilitate a more open and competitive training market. I have fears that this bill is the first step along the road to closing up that market and that it is actually taking a step away from an open and competitive market, but will give TAFE Queensland a privileged position in that system, perhaps even a monopoly position in that system, as time goes by. Obviously, TAFE Queensland has a vital role to play in training in this state. It operates alongside 900 RTOs, including privately owned colleges and the Australian Agricultural College Corporation. It has a vital role to play, but so does the non-TAFE sector.

QTAMA was set up to facilitate access to our state owned training facilities not only by TAFE but also by the other non-TAFE providers. That approach has been working. In our inquiry we have heard a lot of evidence about how trainee participation numbers are on the increase. In fact, in the year to the end of 30 June 2015 in Queensland it went up by 4.9 per cent, while nationwide it fell by 3.5 per cent. Therefore, the approach has been working. Students and trainees are voting with their feet. In our committee hearing we heard that TAFE participation numbers have decreased. That is a fact. However, training numbers are up overall. Students are voting with their feet and obtaining their training in non-TAFE facilities, because they have a choice to do so and because obviously non-TAFE providers are offering courses that students want to undertake at a price that they are willing to pay. People are voting with their feet and attending those non-TAFE providers. Ms Schmidt from TAFE Queensland told the inquiry that in the past two years TAFE has undergone a large degree of reform and restructuring. She said that they are in the best position they have been in for years not only financially but also in terms of being able to offer the courses that people want to take at prices that they are able to pay.

I think that is a great thing. We are now taking a step back from having an open and competitive training market where trainees are able to access the training that they seek. The figures show that more people are getting into training now than in previous years through the opening up of those state owned facilities to private providers. That is a very positive thing. We should not be stepping back from the open and competitive training market that was outlined in the national partnership agreement on skills reform.

I mention one other thing that came out of the inquiry. In evidence Mr Rod Camm from the Australian Council for Private Education and Training indicated that private sector providers were being provided with about 13.6 per cent of state funding for Queensland training places but are actually delivering 35 per cent when it comes to student numbers.

I think that indicates where the reform needs to occur. It should not be stepping back from the open and competitive market that has been established and has seen student numbers go up by 4.9 per cent in Queensland when the rest of the country has gone back by 3.5 per cent. We need to continue the reforms that TAFE Queensland has commenced in terms of their course offering, their structures and their cost structures so that they can deliver courses that students seek at a price that they are able to afford.

I also want to specifically refer to the publicly funded VET participation. The committee's report tabled in the House contains a table which indicates that across Queensland from 31 July 2014 to 31 March 2015—a nine-month period—state funded places went up by 5.3 per cent. In all regions across the state participation increased—most markedly in the south-east where it went up by 13.2 per cent. In all regions across the state the state government was funding more training places than it had in the previous year. If this is not a sign that the present training system is working then I do not know what is.

Although this bill only relates to the ownership of assets by QTAMA and the management of those assets, that policy and the policy related to the funding for training and how the market for places is determined are interwoven. We cannot separate the issues. Although this bill deals only with the assets, we have to talk about the funding policy for training.

The number of training places have increased over the last 12 months. Things are heading in the right direction. This repeal bill and the provision to move the assets owned by QTAMA back into the department is a step in the wrong direction. It is presupposing what might come out of the 10-year plan for the use of these state owned assets.

If there is to be a review as to how state owned facilities are to be operated, the better course of action would be to leave the present structure in place and direct QTAMA to do certain things to give TAFE priority access if that is the will of the government. We should leave the structure in place because it might be that the 10-year review determines that this is the best way to go in terms of the management of assets.

This bill indicates where the government is heading in terms of the management of state owned assets. It is about restricting access to the market by private providers. These are private training providers that trainees have been electing to attend in preference to TAFE.

This bill is all about restricting access by private VET providers to state owned facilities. There is a lot of investment in our state owned facilities. We owe it to the people of Queensland and in particular to everybody in this state who wants to undertake training to make the best use of those training facilities. Unfortunately, this bill is a step in the wrong direction.

I note the comments made by the member for Morayfield, who was very concerned about 100 per cent contestability in this space and the changes to fees for courses. The numbers speak for themselves. Trainees are voting with their feet. They are taking up places with non-TAFE providers and not taking up places, at least according to the statistics that we have been provided with for this year, with TAFE.

I think this is not a sign that the process should stop. The reforms that have been undertaken in TAFE should continue. We need to ensure that both the non-TAFE providers and the TAFE providers are providing courses at a price that students are able to afford. We need to stick with the industry-driven direction for state funding. As I stated at the start of my speech, if we train people in industries where there are jobs to go to then we are training people to be part of a productive economy and we are training them to contribute, to grow the pie and to grow the Queensland economy. That is what training should be all about. I will be urging everyone not to support this bill.

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.35 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. QTAMA was set up by the former LNP government to sell off Queensland's training assets. The appointment of the former CEO reeks of jobs for the boys, having been hand-picked by Campbell Newman and many of those who sit opposite. QTAMA placed an unnecessary burden on the back of TAFE education training facilities and, in essence, would make TAFE or the department pay rent to QTAMA on those facilities and drained resources.

I firmly believe that, once these TAFE facilities were made economically nonviable under QTAMA, they would have formed part of the LNP's asset sales as they were on prime real estate. That is another reason the people of Queensland saw it necessary to throw the LNP government out on its ear.

This unconscionable QTAMA Act would rob Queenslanders of the right to upskill at an affordable fee. It would seem that those opposite would work closely with their federal counterparts to increase the need for 457 and 400 visa holders, putting Queenslanders out of work and reducing the numbers of tradespeople available for the future. This is disgraceful.

I have a TAFE college at Caboolture, which is in the Pumicestone electorate. Some of the courses that started at an affordable \$140 per semester under Labor went to about \$800 a semester under the LNP. Those opposite would have Queenslanders believe that they had their best interests at heart. That is a joke.

Then there are the third-party training VET organisations that focus on those who have money rather than those who would be able to scrape together the modest course fees to improve their lifestyle and help the Queensland economy. But, again, those opposite would not understand having to rake together money.

We further hear nightmare stories of those third-party training organisations running scams with offers of free computers to persons who are incapable of or never intended to complete those courses. In many cases, they were those in our community who are already extremely disadvantaged. Those opposite did not care.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. There is a lot of background noise. Can members keep it down? I would like to hear what the member for Pumicestone is saying. The member for Pumicestone has the call.

Mr WILLIAMS: The organisations that support the dumping of the QTAMA Act are TAFE Queensland, the Queensland Teachers' Union, the Independent Education Union of Australia, TAFE Directors Australia, the Together union, the PARTEC institute in Queensland and, more importantly, many of the TAFE students. Nevertheless, those opposite say they were listening. The truth is they never listened at all.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is getting on with the job. We are getting rid of this hideous QTAMA Act. But, sadly, we are left with another legacy of the former LNP Newman government—the cost of \$250,000 to the people of Queensland to discharge the QTAMA board.

Labor recognises that small businesses rely on skilled and semiskilled TAFE college graduates to present for employment, reducing the inherent cost to their business. Those opposite would say they are the champion of small business but their actions leave a lot to be desired.

The Palaszczuk Labor government in the budget is spending \$34.5 million to rescue TAFE and to re-establish the fine reputation of those who have been involved in TAFE over many years. We are providing 100 teachers and support staff and restoring the run-down campus facilities that the LNP has left TAFE with. More importantly, we are restoring those subsidies to help students get the education that they need.

Education is not a right reserved for the wealthy under the Palaszczuk Labor government. It is the right of all, and that is why I am proud to be part of this government. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (9.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of passing the Queensland Training Assets Management Repeal Bill 2015. One of the purposes of this repeal bill is to again honour one of the Palaszczuk Labor government's election promises and commitments that were made to the people of Queensland during the election campaign. TAFE Queensland is the state's most experienced provider of vocational education and training, with over 130 years of experience in delivering this training to Queenslanders.

Mr Rickuss: How many?

Mr RUSSO: One hundred and thirty. From information provided to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's review of this repeal bill, TAFE Queensland delivered training to more than 150,000 students across more than 500 program areas in 2013-14, with 112,000 students in the year to date in 2014-15. In 2013-14, TAFE Queensland awarded 61,700 qualifications, ranging from statements of attainment to bachelor degrees. This is what the repeal bill rescues.

That promise was to restore TAFEs in Queensland to their proper place as a primary provider of vocational education and training in this great state. The reason this election promise was made by the Palaszczuk Labor government was that TAFE needed to be rescued and restored to its proper place as the peak training organisation and to keep our pledge to Queenslanders of jobs, jobs, jobs.

By rescuing TAFE we are also in the same process rescuing the youth of this great state and the problems that youth unemployment is causing in our regional areas. The rescuing of TAFE also helps those Queenslanders who have lost their jobs midlife due to redundancies and who need to access courses and effective retraining programs at a fair cost. TAFE is well positioned to provide these training programs both in the state's regions and in South-East Queensland, to enable these mature age people to rejoin the workforce and become contributors to the state's economy.

As I indicated earlier, an election promise made by the Palaszczuk Labor government was to return the control of Queensland's training assets to the relevant state government department—that is, the Department of Education and Training. The previous legislation was modelled on a flawed economic policy where there was little consultation with the institutes. Had this legislation not been repealed, the storm clouds were gathering and there were real prospects that plant and equipment and other real tangible assets would have been lost from these valuable institutions—lost to Queenslanders and very possibly never able to be replaced had the Palaszczuk Labor government not been elected in January 2015.

The Queenslanders who I have spoken to on this issue have expressed the same concern that I am expressing tonight in this House—that they had real fears for their jobs and for the students that they were training. What this would have meant in real terms is that plant and equipment and other assets in these institutions would have simply been handed over to a new entity, with no regard as to where this plant and equipment had come from and with no real regard to the services that TAFE historically had provided to the people of Queensland.

One of the impacts of the previous legislation was in relation to what fees students paid for their courses. It resulted in a very complex arrangement where courses were no longer going to be subsidised. As a result, students would have been expected to meet these new fees in circumstances where they would have been unable to pay for these courses because of the simple fact that they did not have the funds available to them. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.46 pm): I rise to support this bill and in doing so I am very conscious that this bill will deliver one of the Palaszczuk government's election commitments to restore TAFE as the premier public provider of vocational education and training in this great state. We pledged to repeal the QTAMA Act as part of the Rescuing TAFE plan during the last election campaign and in doing so we will return the control of Queensland's training assets to the relevant state government department—rightly the Department of Education and Training.

This bill ensures that assets of TAFE will not be sold to the highest bidder as intended by those opposite and that TAFE will not be restricted in any way to proper access of its own premises. It is quite unbelievable that TAFE as a premier public provider of TAFE in this state did not have priority access to its own premises but had to stand in line with private providers while QTAMA operated on a commercial basis and was not required to prioritise the interests of TAFE.

I note that the experiment of those opposite—that is, the QTAMA model—to achieve commercial returns on education or training assets has failed not only in Australia but worldwide. Not only did this ignore the essential role that TAFE Queensland plays in the delivery of VET in Queensland, particularly in the regions, but placed it at a disadvantage in meeting any community service obligations that benefit local communities where it was often the sole provider of VET.

This bill will ensure that TAFE Queensland can have confidence with priority access to training assets in the delivery of courses, whilst at the same time also ensuring that the private providers can access the state's training assets. In fact, this bill also provides for the development of a 10-year strategic asset management plan, which includes an audit of all training assets across this great state, to explore options for the best use of assets that will now remain in public ownership.

It is also important to highlight that no-one will be disadvantaged by this bill as the government will honour all existing QTAMA agreements and service arrangements for access to facilities. However, future private providers' access to TAFE facilities will be in accordance with the interim asset management principles approved by the minister and must demonstrate the benefits to the community.

When I was elected, one of the first phone calls was from a constituent who was complaining about the high costs of now undertaking a course in TAFE and how it had become beyond her reach to pay for a Certificate III in Aged Care, which she was keen to complete. Her husband had recently been diagnosed with cancer and had been placed in an aged-care home where she had been volunteering. She was very keen to put her new skills to work and was offered a position following the completion of the Certificate III in Aged Care, but unfortunately she was struggling to raise the thousands of dollars required to pay for the course. I am hoping that these changes, together with the government's commitment of \$34 million over the next three years, will ensure individual training needs to meet industry demands now and in the future will be met.

Affordable access to training delivers well-trained workers and assists them greatly in gaining employment. We must do all we can to ensure that the training needs of ordinary people are not placed beyond their reach, because this will, in turn, not address the needs of industry for well-trained staff.

I endorse an extensive community engagement and consultation plan in raising awareness and formulating the state's 10-year infrastructure asset management plan. I believe it is crucial that we address the challenges being faced in renewing our state's TAFE assets and turning back the systemic attacks by those opposite on the success of our TAFE system in the delivery of quality training, especially in the regions. We have listened to what the community wants, and it wants a robust, high-quality state training TAFE system to deliver VET courses without restrictions and impediments.

This bill will remove restrictions the QTAMA model placed on TAFE Queensland, and it will once again be able to enter industry training partnerships that are crucial for the VET sector to encourage industry investment and collaboration. TAFE will deliver regional, rural and remote training without facing an increase in additional costs for regional facilities, which were due to take place from 1 July 2016. It will address workplace health and safety issues to ensure the safe operation for training delivery, and invest in training infrastructure confident in long-term ownership and tenure.

This bill will ensure that TAFE Queensland assets are safe, TAFE can deliver training courses without restrictions, and TAFE can use its assets and facilities to best suit its needs without fear of possible unreasonable increasing costs. During the last election campaign we committed to Rescuing TAFE. This bill, together with an investment of over \$34 million, will deliver the TAFE that Queenslanders want, industry wants and workers need. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (9.52 pm): I rise to support the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill presented by the honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills. This bill will honour our election commitment to rescue our TAFE system by repealing the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act—or QTAMA—transferring all of QTAMA's assets to the Department of Education and Training, allowing savings by dissolving the QTAMA board and removing the CEO and officer positions.

Trade and vocational training is very dear to me, my previous work colleagues and every worker in Queensland who owes their livelihood to training provided in one of our vocational institutions. When I finished school in year 12—a long time ago—I, like so many of my schoolmates, had no clear idea what I wanted to do with my career. I had not studied the right subjects for a TE score so university was not an immediate option. I turned to TAFE and its prevocational training. During the course of that training where I and fellow students got a taste of all trades in both construction and engineering fields, I decided the electrical trade was the one for me and was easily able to secure an apprenticeship upon the completion of the course. The ease of finding an apprenticeship was, in my mind, completely due to the high quality of training provided by TAFE. Restoring the heart of our TAFE system is not just necessary but vital to our state.

My son followed in my footsteps with school based trade training at our local TAFE and was also easily able to secure an apprenticeship, although not in the high-voltage industry like I did. When I heard that the previous government had introduced QTAMA to lease TAFE premises and equipment, I was disgusted. I knew that, like its plans for the electricity supply industry, this was nothing more than an attempt to flog off our training assets to the highest bidder and once they were gone they would be gone forever. The LNP's legislation was introduced with little consideration of the long-term survival of the TAFE system and no foresight for what we will need in the way of vocational education and training in the future.

As I campaigned in my area, I spoke to TAFE teachers and students who were very concerned about how the LNP cut subsidies, brought about massive increases in fees and the campuses were not getting the support they needed. Some of the horror stories I heard in regard to the raising of fees were a film and TV course rose from \$3,000 a year to more than \$20,000. In Townsville, a certificate III in wall and floor tiling at Barrier Reef TAFE leapt from \$239 to \$2,400. In one of the cruellest blows to the

most vulnerable, a literacy and numeracy course for the disabled at Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE in Brisbane had the subsidy per student cut from \$9,000 to \$2,000. So a course that cost \$36 per unit will rise to \$500 per unit, and it does not end there. The units have to be taken in clusters of three so the bill would have been \$1,500 and \$3,000 if you studied full time.

The previous government had an obsession with privatisation, and I for one have always fought against the selling of our assets by any government. Our industries rely upon well-trained workers, and the ability to deliver them should never be reliant on who can do it the cheapest and make the most money out of it. We owe our industry the highest quality workers trained in trade skills and workplace health and safety, and training them can never be an exercise in fly-by-night training. I am proud to be part of a government that will restore TAFE Queensland, as we recognise we need a robust public training provider of vocational education so that in the future we can continue to affordably provide Queenslanders with the skills and knowledge they require to get jobs. Restoring TAFE will create new full-time positions, subsidise student support services, provide foundation skills courses for disadvantaged learners, give second chance training opportunities for older people who may be out of work, help with regional support programs and increase the courses available under vocational education and training in schools. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (9.56 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. I regard this as vitally important because, as the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills has said, we went to the election stating that we would save TAFE. I commend the minister for her relentless pursuit of creating a better TAFE system. What this bill will do is repeal the QTAMA Act.

Behind QTAMA is the idea that our training assets could be separated from the actual training. Perhaps the LNP was imagining that these assets could be a potential revenue source so it wanted to sell or palm them off to the highest bidder and remove TAFE's access to its own premises, its own equipment and lease it out directly to its competitors, placing TAFE at a competitive disadvantage. I agree with the minister that QTAMA was created by the LNP as a body to flog off our public training assets and give private registered training companies the inside running. Why is that? It comes down to what the LNP believes in. In a contest between the public and the private, it believes that the private must always prevail. What we believe in is jobs, education and the primacy of TAFE.

The public provider plays the crucial role in the delivery of vocational education and training. TAFE has over 130 years of experience in delivering training and managing the state's assets. As a solid demonstration of our beliefs and our values in this area, we will be investing \$34 million over three years through our Rescuing TAFE commitment in TAFE Queensland to restore its status as the state's premier provider of vocational education and training. We pledged to repeal the QTAMA Act and return control of Queensland's training assets to the Department of Education and Training along with conducting a utilisation audit and the development of a 10-year strategic asset plan.

Contrast that to the LNP's actions. The LNP wanted to implement a solution based on their own ideology, not a solution based on dealing with the actual problem, and these are the issues that need innovative solutions. According to TAFE's submission to the committee, they need a rejuvenated capital works program that includes disposal and refurbishment of TAFE assets, future land acquisitions and the ability to invest in new infrastructure. TAFE Queensland is innovative enough to deal with these problems and point the way forward to solutions. The LNP would not have listened to them. They would simply not take the advice or the leadership of public servants whom they have derided in this House.

Here are some of the solutions offered by TAFE, without QTAMA, as outlined in their submission to the committee. For example, they want to initiate educational precincts where industry and major employers and training providers can deliver integrated opportunities for students and employers. An example of innovative solutions is the proposed Loganlea joint health and training precinct involving Queensland Health, a higher education provider and TAFE. Southbank TAFE, the Acacia Ridge Training Centre and the Townsville Trade Training Centre were developed through campus amalgamations, the disposal of surplus sites and the establishment of new modern sites.

Other innovative solutions and projects as outlined in their submission are as follows. TAFE has established nearly 80 arrangements that facilitate third-party access to its properties as part of building mutually beneficial partnerships. Santos contributed \$1 million of specialised equipment for TAFE to establish a purpose-built training facility at the Acacia Ridge Training Centre. We have already heard from previous speakers, including the member for Ferny Grove, about the fact that TAFE has created two dedicated Komatsu classrooms and a workshop bay, and Komatsu donated equipment so that TAFE could deliver training to Komatsu diesel-fitting apprentices. These asset models are the way forward for better training and better jobs and a better TAFE.

The QTAMA model is not the solution, according to us and according to the TAFE submission. I will explain some of the reasons QTAMA is not the solution, and we heard the member for Morayfield talk about these as well. The first reason is that it restricts industry training partnerships. Any donations made by industry, including plant and equipment, are transferred over to QTAMA, even though they are for TAFE programs. This could deter possible industry partnerships with TAFE to deliver programs utilising this plant and equipment. TAFE are restricted from establishing joint tenancy and occupancy arrangements with other training providers, according to the TAFE Queensland submission, which also restricts the ability to deliver and create partnerships.

The second reason is that QTAMA is not good for rural and remote students. This was very clear from the submissions. From 1 July 2016, there would have been no financial support provided to QTAMA. They would have needed to charge full commercial rents to TAFE and other training providers. An analysis by TAFE Queensland indicates that a number of rural, regional and remote operations would not be financially viable under this model.

The third reason is that QTAMA does not provide incentive for training providers to invest in training infrastructure. TAFE Queensland maintain they have invested substantial amounts of retained earnings—\$30 million per annum—into maintenance and renewal of the asset base. Without longer term tenure or ownership, they would not invest in this asset base and there would clearly be reduced incentives for private training providers to provide this investment for the same reasons. Quite simply, QTAMA is a solution that is not needed. TAFE and this government have the capacity to build efficiency, build partnerships and build innovative solutions, but we need integrated assets to do all of these things. According to the TAFE submission, these types of partnerships cannot be pursued if you have a QTAMA-like structure that does not give you surety over your donated assets. These are the reasons QTAMA has to go. It is an ideological solution in search of a problem, and it causes more problems than it could conceivably or hopefully solve. If we want a strong TAFE, a TAFE that leads our state in providing vocational education and training, and a TAFE that plays a crucial role in creating skilled workers for jobs, I urge the House to repeal this act.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (10.03 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. I am very happy to support this bill because Rescuing TAFE is close to my heart, from both a personal and a professional perspective. I am an avid supporter of TAFE and vocational education and training, and I truly value these places of learning and education. As a school leaver, I attended the Kangaroo Point technical college where I acquired the foundation skills which have brought me to this place today, and I developed a love of the sector. I was also a proud adult educator, providing training in both the community and the TAFE sector. My sister was a TAFE teacher for over 20 years, and she was a victim of the recent culling of TAFE teachers. During her teaching, she touched the lives of many students, making a real difference to people's lives. Like so many other dedicated professional TAFE teachers, she shared her knowledge and skills with her students. TAFE and TAFE teachers provide opportunities for students to learn and develop their skills which enables them to enter the workforce.

In my electorate, we have a large number of proud TAFE graduates and TAFE teachers. I spoke during the campaign to many TAFE teachers and graduates, and the teachers spoke with passion of their years of teaching in this sector and with even more passion about their students—students they had shared their skills and experience with, students who benefited from the sharing of their knowledge.

In particular, I spoke to Alan, a local TAFE teacher. He spoke to me about his frustration at the degradation and apparent running down of TAFE. He spoke of his disappointment and sadness that his work and the work of his colleagues, and TAFE itself, were being devalued. Alan spoke of the tools and the resources that he and his colleagues had accumulated over the years to share their trade and skills with their students. Alan told me that the very tools and resources these dedicated professionals had accumulated for their students' use and training were no longer accessible to them as their classrooms had been allocated and they were therefore no longer able to access the resources where they had been stored.

The Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 will restore TAFE as the premier public training provider of vocational education and training in Queensland, ensuring that these dedicated TAFE teachers can continue to share their knowledge and skills and help to grow and skill our Queensland workforce, ensuring that TAFE has priority access to training assets. Training assets must be utilised in ways that benefit local communities. It is important that TAFE Queensland has priority access to these state owned assets to ensure that Queenslanders have access to a premier public training provider of vocational education and training. That is what this government is about—

creating jobs and providing access to education and training to develop a skilled and work-ready workforce. Ensuring TAFE Queensland has priority access to the facilities it needs provides certainty to TAFE to allow planning of training delivery across the state.

TAFE is an important member of many communities across the state, providing training to some of the most disadvantaged Queenslanders and also training in regional and remote parts of Queensland. Queenslanders need a strong public training provider. TAFE Queensland is vital. TAFE Queensland helps people to acquire the skills and training they need to get a job. TAFE Queensland provides opportunities for learners of all ages, all abilities and all backgrounds to learn new skills in an environment which is inclusive and supportive. That is why the Palaszczuk government has made a commitment of \$34.5 million to rescue TAFE. Further, the Palaszczuk government made an election commitment to rescue TAFE and to repeal the QTAMA Act and return control of Queensland training assets to its rightful place—the Department of Education and Training. This will ensure that TAFE Queensland has priority access to state owned training assets. This department manages all public education assets and previously managed all training assets and it is best placed to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to TAFE. I commend the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 to the House.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.08 pm): I am pleased to speak in favour of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill. Putting public training assets out to open tender for the private sector to outbid TAFE undermines the ability of the public provider to continue its delivery of quality vocational education and training. QTAMA's purpose was to manage the state's training assets on a commercial basis with no requirement to prioritise the interests of TAFE Queensland.

Only the LNP could claim that selling training assets to private providers would improve the state's ability to deliver quality training. The former government would rather make a quick buck than put the effort into consulting with communities and developing a plan to meet local needs. In contrast, what Labor thinks is: how can we use state assets to provide the best opportunities for as many Queenslanders as possible? It is because we care about jobs for the future and we care about providing Queenslanders with access to the training they need to get the jobs of the future. That is why our election commitment to rescue TAFE committed us to repealing the QTAMA Act, returning control of Queensland's training assets to the relevant government department and investing \$34 million over three years to restore TAFE Queensland as the state's premier provider of vocational education and training.

For many of my constituents, TAFE courses represent a future trade or profession and increased job prospects. Repealing the QTAMA Act is an important step in ensuring that the public provider remains viable because we know in training and skills there remains a crucial role for the public provider, especially for people coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Importantly for residents in the Logan region, undermining TAFE and putting pressure on it to meet unrealistic commercial targets ignores the community service obligations of TAFE to deliver foundation skills courses or courses that deliver a senior certificate for people unable to obtain them through mainstream schooling options. Worse than that, support services for vulnerable students and students with additional needs, such as disability or literacy support, were cut because they were seen as not fully utilising facilities for commercial benefit.

During the election campaign many people in my electorate and across Queensland proudly showed their support for TAFE in rallies and demonstrations across Queensland. I was proud to stand with local TAFE teachers from the Meadowbrook TAFE on 29 January this year. They knew that a re-elected LNP would see an end to TAFE in Queensland. They knew that they would see more TAFE teachers sacked, more courses cut and the quality of vocational education and training delivered in Queensland plummet. I am pleased that, instead, they chose a Labor government, which values the public provider and wants to invest in TAFE rather than actively try to cause its demise.

TAFE staff were treated appallingly by the previous government. Consultative committees were dismantled, requirements to consult were removed and pressure was put on staff to compete commercially and cut costs. Just imagine what they would have done if they had time to apply this same approach to our state school assets? Thankfully, they did not get the opportunity to succeed.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as we rebuild and reinvest in Queensland's public provider and restore TAFE Queensland as Queensland's premier provider of vocational education and training. Queenslanders voted to restore TAFE, and we will deliver.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (10.12 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015—QTAMA. I would like to congratulate the committee on its fine work. TAFE Queensland has a proud history as being Queensland's premier vocational trainer. Everyone knows someone who has done a TAFE course or maybe themselves have completed a course. TAFE is a community education provider.

In my previous employment as an organiser with the Queensland Teachers' Union, I spent many hours with TAFE teachers and I heard stories of the immense pride that they take in the delivery of their courses. I will outline a little of why TAFE is so important to Queenslanders. That will make it obvious why assets must be returned to TAFE under the management of the Department of Education and Training.

TAFE, as a state owned training authority, has a reputation for taking on students with difficult behaviours that are not always welcomed at some private providers. TAFE will run programs that are not big money earners but are important to the community. These courses include adult numeracy and literacy, giving adults who have slipped through the cracks while at school a second chance at education. Without TAFE, these adults would be left without a hope of gaining the necessary skills they need to get into the workforce.

When TAFE trains its students, quality programs and resources are used so that students have true, hands-on experiences. When being taught a skill, students have their own resources. For example, when they learn how to fillet a fish, they get to have their own fish to practise on, not just watch a trainer demonstrate like some other private providers do. A local mechanic told me that his sons went to TAFE to complete their trade. His other apprentices went to a private provider. The private provider was cheaper and quicker. He said he wanted his own sons to be trained properly because he wanted them to take over the business. That is why his own sons went to TAFE. When workers are well trained to a high standard, our workplaces are safer, especially for workplaces in heavy industry. Untrained workers are a danger not only to themselves but also to the workers around them.

The existing legislation to manage the state's training assets on a commercial basis has been damaging for our vocational training in Queensland. The QTAMA Act 2015 has seen TAFE campuses across the state significantly downsized with the offering of courses diminished. Some TAFE campuses have been sold or partially sold off. The TAFE campuses at Maryborough, Noosa and Tewantin were shut down altogether. The campus at Maryborough has been mooted to be sold to a private provider. The rent arrangements imposed on TAFE to rent back their own training rooms have made it nearly impossible for them to compete and survive financially.

The new management authority set up to manage TAFE assets oversaw a mismanagement of teaching resources. Classes in some campuses, previously taught in purpose-built classrooms, found themselves relegated to old, retrofitted classrooms and training rooms. Flexibility and timing to deliver courses to best meet the needs of students and businesses became restricted. Instead of fully utilising TAFE resources, there were empty classrooms. This hardly makes sense. It is not good management of TAFE resources. It is clear that the current act was set up to destroy TAFE as a public provider and to make way for private providers.

Businesses are crying out for skilled workers. To become a skilled worker you need quality training. The previous government set out to dismantle Queensland's quality vocational provider to make way for the private sector to move in without the same quality controls provided by TAFE. The forming of QTAMA set in train the sell-off of the state education assets without the former government taking any responsibility.

The repeal of the bill will go a long way to restoring Queensland's quality vocational service. The QTAMA 2015 bill sets out a clear plan to manage our state's TAFE assets. Labor is committed to consulting with all stakeholders, including community, public and private training providers, not-for-profit organisations, schools and local community groups. Labor is committed to gaining the best outcomes for TAFE and the needs of the broader community needing to access vocational education and training. With true consultation, we have a clear vision and a plan for our state's vocational education and training, something that has been missing for the past three years.

Returning the assets to the management of the Department of Education and Training puts the assets back in the hands of an experienced organisation that has previously managed assets with a high level of success. This is what our community wants. With the implementation of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 we will achieve this. I urge honourable members to vote for the bill.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.18 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. I support the objectives of this bill. Imagine a situation where a parent of a student at a local state school is told that their child's class will not proceed because their classrooms are being used by a private education provider. Perhaps we should consider the reaction from the community if swimming lessons at the local state school were cancelled because a private swimming instructor was now renting the pool. The reaction would be immediate and the outrage would be palpable. Sadly, this is exactly the situation that was being allowed to develop while TAFE's educational assets were being managed by QTAMA. In my own community the number of courses offered by TAFE at the Mount Gravatt campus has fallen dramatically. I have no doubt that if not for a change of government, that campus would have been closed.

During recent discussions with senior management at TAFE I was informed that many courses had been shifted away from the Mount Gravatt campus due to increased costs associated with QTAMA. I asked what had happened to the students and I was advised that some followed the courses to other campuses, some went to private sector providers, but sadly a significant proportion simply dropped out of the educational system. At a time of growing youth unemployment, those opposite presided over a system that drove students out of TAFE. Those are the people who I support this bill for: the most vulnerable; the people who need TAFE services delivered in their community.

This bill does not shut the door on the private provision of vocational education and training. It recognises that we need a mix of public and private provision in the VET industry, but it also recognises that TAFE is the major provider and is focused on providing services across the entire community, particularly in areas where the private sector will not operate. This bill recognises that many private providers have signed contracts with QTAMA and it puts in place arrangements to honour those contracts. The bill demonstrates that this government will work with all parts of the VET industry to deliver good training outcomes for Queenslanders.

Finally, I note that the minister has made it very clear that, when QTAMA is abolished, the government will conduct an audit of all training assets and develop a 10-year asset management plan. I have already met the minister and will take the opportunity to talk to students, constituents, local businesses, community groups, teachers and TAFE staff about the future of the campus and services at Mount Gravatt. We are serious about listening to the community and we are serious about working with all stakeholders to deliver high-quality vocational education and training. The Palaszczuk government is serious about creating jobs now and in the future. Minister D'Ath is to be commended for working so hard to rescue TAFE.

I will support this bill so that we can get rid of QTAMA and focus on developing a real plan for delivering vocational education and training. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.22 pm), in reply: It is certainly my pleasure to rise to sum up the debate on this bill and thank the members on this side for their contributions in relation to this debate, because I know that each and every one of them on behalf of their communities advocate every day to ensure that we have a strong public provider through TAFE in this state. They know what it means to the people in their communities; they understand the value of TAFE and the importance of having a very strong TAFE system well into the future. I thank them for their hard work and their campaigning during the election around our TAFE sites, and I have thanked them every day since for their ongoing advocacy on this very important issue.

We have heard a number of issues that were raised by those on the other side, and I want to address some of them. The member for Everton, the shadow minister for training, talked about the national partnership. He made quite an issue about there being a national partnership and stated that the national partnership talks about competition and contestability. It is absolutely true, and I confirm, that the national partnership was actually drawn up by the former federal Labor government. I was part of that government. I was on the Parliamentary Committee for Education and Training when it was drawn up and I am very proud of that document. I have that document, and I encourage the opposition to show me anywhere in that document where it talks about 100 per cent contestability, because it does not.

The document that I have was signed on 13 April 2012 by not only the federal Labor prime minister at the time but also the premier of Queensland at the time, the Hon. Campbell Newman. The principles in the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform say, amongst other things, that we should be strengthening the capacity of public and private providers and businesses to deliver training and support people in training. It talks about competition and contestability. It talks about requiring

jurisdictions to put in place strategies to support public providers to adapt to the particular circumstances of their local training market, including an environment of greater competition and contestability. But nowhere in this document does it say 100 per cent contestability. In fact, only three states went down that path: Victoria, South Australia and Queensland. Where are they now? South Australia has now reversed their 100 per cent contestability, and tomorrow we will see the Victorian government come down with its funding review. I am hopeful that they will also see the merit in supporting their public provider of TAFE. I know that their system has been devastated down there. In the last few years, when it comes to the market share of funding for TAFE across this country, Queensland now sits at the second lowest; Victoria is the lowest. The Victorian government under the conservatives absolutely devastated the TAFE system down there, and they are now working really hard to try to rebuild that because they know the importance of having a strong public provider.

Why is it important to have a strong public provider? Let me go back to this national partnership agreement that the member for Everton wanted to refer to. In point 4 on the first page it says, 'The Parties are committed to increasing the level of workforce participation.' We heard this a lot from the then LNP state minister for education and training. We heard that training is only about getting jobs. If it did not lead to employment then they were not going to fund it, and we heard a lot of that. But what the national partnership agreement says is—

The Parties are committed to increasing the level of workforce participation and providing the support an individual experiencing disadvantage or disengagement (including young people) may need in order to gain skills that lead to employment or—

In the previous government I never heard the LNP talking about the 'or'—

other meaningful engagement in society.

I would have thought that those foundational skills for people with disabilities about getting those life skills and making their lives easier, making their lives better and making them more independent, would fit into that 'meaningful engagement in society'. The paragraph goes on to say—

This includes consideration of strategies and performance indicators to ensure the needs of students with disability are addressed.

That is what the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform actually says. When you go through the QTAMA Act, what you will not find in there is any reference to those broader engagement strategies. You will not find anything in the QTAMA Act which talks about community service obligations. You will see many references to commercial objectives; there is no doubt about that. It is all about commercial objectives. You do not hear about the people; you do not hear about those most vulnerable in our communities. You do not read anything about community service obligations or quality training, for that matter, in the QTAMA Act.

There have been comments and I saw some of the Submissions to the committee which stated, 'Why didn't the government just look at amending the QTAMA Act and changing its objectives?' The fact is that the fundamentals of what QTAMA was all about would never, ever have lined up with this national partnership agreement, with the TAFE Queensland Act, our community service obligations, our obligations as members of parliament and our obligations as members of government. They were never, ever going to align no matter how much tinkering I did with the QTAMA Act, because this body was set up for one purpose and one purpose only: to treat our assets as income-generating organisations so that the LNP could line their pockets, as the act said, 'or dispose of assets'.

We have heard about the run-down TAFEs and the under-utilisation of TAFEs and that they needed to set up QTAMA because they have all these empty campuses. How many campuses did the LNP close? Quite a few. When we talk about the under-utilisation of TAFE assets, we have to ask why that is the case. Would it have anything to do with the reduction in training funding over three years under the LNP? Would it have anything to do with the reduction in subsidised training, the reduction in course offerings, the removal of foundation skills that saw a further reduction in TAFE? There was no investment in TAFE by the LNP.

Mrs Smith interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: They love talking about the former Labor government. It is like the last three years never happened! It is a bit like, 'Charter boat? What charter boat?' Instead it is, 'Campbell Newman? What Campbell Newman?' There was no investment in TAFE by the LNP.

I have heard from those opposite—and those on this side—about the great job TAFE is doing. TAFE is doing a great job. Their marketing campaign is fantastic. They continue to deliver quality training. Businesses, industry and schools recognise TAFE's great work and the quality students that come out of our TAFE system.

I say to the LNP that the success of TAFE has absolutely nothing to do with the actions of the LNP over the past three years. In fact, it is despite the actions of the LNP over the past three years that TAFE has actually been so successful. We know that they have under-utilised properties and assets, but our job is to work with them to find the best use of those assets—to help them grow their business, to strengthen training opportunities—and, where that space is not needed by TAFE anymore, to work with business, to work with other providers, to work with community and with industry to get the best outcome. It is not about just flogging things off for whatever purpose and getting an income from them, because once they are gone they are gone.

We heard a lot of misinformation, both in the evidence to the committee and also from those opposite, that TAFE was never forced out of their assets; it was about empty space. That is not true. All that shows me is that no-one talked to TAFE Queensland about what is going on. Clearly, no-one on the other side ever set foot on a TAFE campus, because every time I set foot on a TAFE campus I am told the stories of what QTAMA has been up to: QTAMA coming on site and saying, 'Clear out these floors'—floors they are utilising. 'Clear out the floors for use.' It happened at South Bank TAFE.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: Those opposite might want to talk to the manager of TAFE to hear the stories of what is really going on.

There is one thing the LNP does not talk about in relation to QTAMA. We have heard about the rent. It is true: TAFE has been getting their rent subsidised since QTAMA was established. We acknowledge that. We acknowledge that, in writing at least, for the first two years of QTAMA TAFE would get priority access to their own assets, but that was not happening in practice. What the LNP does not talk about is that come 1 July 2016 that subsidy was to cease. TAFE Queensland would be paying full commercial rent on all of its own buildings. It was going to have to pay full commercial rent.

Mr Mander: Gasp!

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection from the member for Everton. Shock, horror! TAFE should pay full commercial rent on public assets to—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! We have all had a pretty good go. How about we let the minister finish? We can have a vote then move on to the adjournment debate. Please, members, we have two more days.

Mrs D'ATH: I am not finished yet, Mr Speaker! This is very serious. What we do not talk about—the LNP certainly does not talk about it—and the reason it is important that this bill goes through and QTAMA is repealed is that after that two years was up our TAFEs were going to have to move out of their own properties in many areas because they could not afford to pay full commercial rent. It would have meant significantly increasing course costs—once again seeing people walking away from the VET sector. Where have people been turning when forced out of the VET sector because of increased fees? They have been going to VET FEE-HELP and signing up to diplomas with a cost of \$15,000 or \$20,000 with no up-front fees, only to find after the first term that they did not have the key foundation skills to continue.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: Recently I had a conversation with the Commonwealth minister about this because the states and territories know that with VET FEE-HELP for diplomas there are no up-front fees. The marketing mechanisms being used are causing real problems. What the LNP was doing to the VET sector and TAFE in Queensland was forcing people in that direction. I digress. What those opposite do not talk about is the two-year mark.

Mr Rickuss: Can we ask for relevance, Mr Speaker?

Mrs D'ATH: The relevance is that come 1 July 2016 there would be no priority whatsoever for TAFE to access their own assets.

Mrs Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mount Ommaney, you have had a pretty good go.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I want their electors to hear what they have to say about this.

Mr RICKUSS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister is actually quarrelling about this.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lockyer. I do not need your assistance.

Mrs D'ATH: Member for Lockyer, I will be the one who has a smile on my face at the end of the evening because we will see the delivery of another election commitment of this government.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, do not bait the opposition.

Mrs D'ATH: Then the member for Lockyer can go back to his electors and tell them that he does not support TAFE.

Mr RICKUSS: Mr Speaker, she is doing it again. She is quarrelling across the chamber again.

Mr SPEAKER: Please, everyone. Thank you, Minister, if you could come back to the bill.

Mrs D'ATH: From 1 July we would have seen that reference to priority access removed. TAFE no longer would have had any preference to use its own facilities. If QTAMA believed that it could get more dollars from some other provider out there—more than TAFE could pay—it would have taken it.

Mr Mander: It is called contestability.

Mrs D'ATH: That is exactly what QTAMA was set up to achieve. Thank you very much, member for Everton, for agreeing with me.

Mr Langbroek: It is a Labor federal minister idea—contestability.

Mrs D'ATH: The former minister has come back in. The national partnership agreement: you know this one, don't you?

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I think they want to go home, Mr Speaker. I remind the former minister that I have seen his signature on these documents that actually reaffirm the importance of TAFE. At the same time, he was coming back to this state and pushing through 100 per cent contestability so he could starve our TAFEs.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, can I finish—

Opposition members: Yeah!

Mrs D'ATH: Maybe not. Let us go to the national partnership agreement again! Can I finish with the words of the member for Morayfield—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: They are a rowdy bunch tonight!

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I have got all night.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. The minister is waiting. I call the minister.

Mrs D'ATH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In speaking to this bill, the member for Morayfield made a very relevant point, and that is that TAFE needed rescuing from the LNP. That is exactly what the Palaszczuk Labor government is intending to do. This is the first step in restoring a strong public TAFE system in this state to strengthen the VET sector in this state. I commend this bill to the House.

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

AYES, 46:

ALP, 43—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.46 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. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.47 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

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.47 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Suicide Prevention

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (10.47 pm): I want to congratulate the Mental Health Commissioner's publication of a discussion paper titled *Suicide prevention in Queensland: continuing the conversation*.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am not able to hear the member for Caloundra. I call the member for Caloundra.

Mr McARDLE: I table a copy of the discussion paper. The Mental Health Commissioner is preparing a Queensland Suicide Prevention Action Plan, with submissions on the discussion paper required by 31 July this year for publication of the action plan in September 2015. The paper highlights the need for us as a society to consider one of the remaining taboos in our society—that is, attempted suicide and suicide and the effect that it has upon the families and loved ones of those who do take their own life. It is sad to say that the Queensland suicide rate is the fourth highest in the nation, with 13.3 persons per 100,000, well above the national average of 10.9 persons per 100,000. Recently, State Coroner Terry Ryan in findings to an inquest into the deaths of two young men both aged 16 years of age who took their own lives stated some startling facts. He said that suicide had passed traffic accidents as the leading cause of death in young people aged between 15 and 24 years. He also said that, in 2015 based on the number of matters before coroners courts in this state alone, 700 Queenslanders will take their own lives.

Tabled paper: Discussion paper, Queensland Mental Health Commission, dated June 2015, titled 'Suicide Prevention in Queensland: Continuing the Conversation' [[797](#)].

Perhaps most startling of all he made the comment that, between 2004 and 2012, there were 149 suicides of children from the ages of 10 and 17. These are shocking statistics.

The discussion paper will look at putting together an action plan to deal with the issue of suicide that raises some very important questions, one being whether we talk about suicide or not and, if we do, under what circumstances. In a Radio National program on 29 June this year, Patrick McGorry made the comment that in the past we had not spoken about domestic violence or child sexual abuse and that now that we are doing so, those issues are opened up for debate and great work is now being undertaken in regard to those matters. In addition, that report on Radio National raises questions by Professor Helen Christensen of the Black Dog Institute, Professor Jo Robertson of Orygen and Professor Brian Ramavan of the Henry Ford Health System.

The discussion paper is an important document in this state to discuss where we go with one of the most delicate subjects that we face in our society today and that is suicide. I urge all people who are concerned about this matter to make a submission but also take the time to listen to and understand the Radio National report into suicide and when and how we talk of this very touching and very important topic.

CAN Awards; Queensland Music Festival

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (10.50 pm): It was a pleasure to attend the Community Action Network Awards—or the CAN Awards, as they are known—which was held at the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre last week. Now in its 18th year, the CAN Awards recognise and celebrate people, businesses and community groups making a positive difference in the inner city of Brisbane. The CAN Awards are one of the leading events that Community stage in New Farm each year and it is always great to see so many of the locals being recognised for their selfless acts.

I was proud to be asked by the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre to present three of these awards: the LGBTIQ award, the Closing the Gap award and the Accessibility for All award. Firstly, I want to congratulate all the nominees and winners. I am so glad that I was not put in the precarious position of choosing who takes home these awards because, as far as I am concerned, they were all winners. However, I would particularly like to congratulate Phil Browne, who took out the LGBTIQ award, which celebrates the leaders and helpers in our inner-city LGBTIQ community. I also congratulate the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health for its Work It Out program, which took out the Closing the Gap award. This award recognises the outstanding achievements in improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the areas of health, education and housing or community access. The final award that I presented was the Accessibility for All award, which was taken out by Terry Fitzpatrick, a truly deserving winner. This award highlights inclusive services, practices or design principles that create spaces and places that everyone can be part of.

The New Farm Neighbourhood Centre was established in 1986—almost 30 years ago—and since that time it has been working with the community towards social justice, diversity and inclusion. Some of the services on offer are free help with housing and legal issues and it also provides a wide range of sporting and social activities in the area. The centre also offers an open house with office facilities. It even has its own community garden. The New Farm Neighbourhood Centre truly offers a service that my community in the electorate of Brisbane Central simply cannot be without. I thank Fiona Hunt, the coordinator of the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre, and the volunteer staff for their tireless work and contribution not only to the CAN Awards but also to the centre itself. I say to them: well done on a good job.

I also remind members that the Queensland Music Festival will be held from 17 July to 2 August. There will be musical events held throughout Queensland. I was lucky enough to be at the launch of the Queensland Music Festival at the Triffid in Teneriffe in the great electorate of Brisbane Central. There will be 17 days of events. One of the events that I want to highlight is the Keys to the City event, which involves pods of pianos that will pop up across 40 locations in Brisbane. People can play the piano. Whether that be by playing *Chopsticks*, Chopin or *Crocodile Rock*, people can be a star for the day. I say to everyone to enjoy the Queensland Music Festival.

Maleny, Indoor Aquatic Centre; Palmwoods, High School

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.53 pm): Tonight I would like to address two pressing matters in the electorate of Glass House. Over the past two days I have tabled a written petition with 1,273 signatures and an e-petition with a further 282 signatures seeking the assistance of the state government in delivering a new indoor aquatic centre for Maleny. At the outset, I acknowledge the hard work of Maleny Swimming Club's Kim Easton in driving this petition.

Maleny, the regional hub for much of the Sunshine Coast hinterland, is in desperate need of a new pool. The current pool at the Maleny State School was built through community fundraising some 30 years ago. At that time it was considered quite an achievement. Unfortunately, by modern standards the pool is small. Competing butterfly swimmers clash arms. The area where the pool is located is landlocked with no room to expand. It creates a traffic nightmare, with no allocated parking area. The pool is also uncovered, meaning that it is closed for nearly half the year. Maleny deserves better.

After years of council studies it was determined that the schoolgrounds remain the best location for an upgraded facility. For the past two years I have been working tirelessly with the principal of Maleny State School, John Byrne; Trevor Schultz from Education Queensland; Belinda Walker from

TMR; Councillor Jenny McKay and her council officers; and with Kim Easton from the swimming club to find a solution. I want to take a moment to applaud and commend John and Trevor in particular. Their willingness to consider community partnerships and to make this happen is so refreshing and so appreciated, and we are nearly there. This petition confirms the community's desire for this happen. I trust that the education minister will be as supportive as her departmental staff of this process and assist in ensuring that the land can be transferred to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

The second matter that I want to raise also relates to education. Recently, the minister and shadow minister for education, as well as the member for Nicklin, would have received a submission from Mrs Alison Donaldson of Palmwoods. Alison has written on behalf of a significant number of parents and residents of Palmwoods, Woombye, Chevallum and Montville calling for a new high school to be planned and built in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, ideally at Palmwoods. The residential heart of the lower Sunshine Coast hinterland used to be Nambour. That is why there are two high schools in that town. But as farms have been subdivided, families have progressively moved into the communities around Palmwoods.

Alison received survey responses from over 500 families and in analysing the responses found that the resounding majority of them would use a local high school. Through careful analysis, Alison has revealed that, if a new high school were built, it would have minimal impacts on existing schools as students are currently attending some 13 different high schools. Alison's effort is exhaustive. I will not table all of the responses, but I will table the letter and key survey results.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 25 June 2015, from Alison Donaldson, Chair, Hinterland High School Steering Committee, to the Minister for Education, Hon. Kate Jones, regarding a proposal for Sunshine Coast Hinterland High School [798].

Mrs Donaldson concludes her letter with the following—

Our survey results indicate within two or three years we would have sufficient students to fill a 700 student high school and ... we would urge you to listen to our community and move forward towards the creation of a Hinterland High School.

I say to the minister that Alison and I genuinely look forward to receiving her response.

Forest Lakes Lions Club

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.57 pm): I rise to praise the more than 200 people who participated in the Forest Lake Lions Club's second annual Walk with the Lions charity walk around the beautiful Forest Lake, which is situated at the northern end of the Alger electorate. This year, the event was dedicated to raising money for the Heart Foundation and raising awareness of the foundation's key message of 'Move more, sit less'. I am so thrilled to announce that the community, supported by the Forest Lake Lions Club, raised over \$6,000 for this well-deserving cause. The hardworking and committed members of the Forest Lake Lions Club organised a fantastic event and walking around the lake with hundreds of community members was a great way to spend a Sunday morning whilst promoting good health and supporting the Heart Foundation.

This year, members of the Leos Club of Forest Lake, a youth version of the Lions club that is made up of high school students from St John's Anglican College, decided that costumes were a necessary part of the event and were dressed as various superheroes. It seems that they have now set the challenge for participants at next year's Walk with the Lions event. On that note, let me give a huge thankyou to Mr Mark Newman, the Manager of the Forest Lake Community Branch of the Heritage Bank for publically committing us both to wearing superhero costumes next year. I am already imagining the captions for those photos!

Community organisations such as the Forest Lake Lions Club are fundamental to our community's ability to join together to support, encourage and build cohesion through a sense of true community spirit. Tonight, I am proud to stand here and say thank you to everyone who came out and walked around the lake. I thank Carmen and Alex Eramudugolla, Jon Slack, Kim and Stuart Grierson, Graham Daunt, Sharon and Wayne Hartig, Steve Coyle, Peg Trim, April Lindel, Yvonne and Walter Wilkinson, Julie Barr, Barbara and Sebastian Rendic, Charles Strunk, Bob Hary, Linda Paton and Hayley Grady from the Forest Lake Lions Club who work so hard to serve our community. I thank Karen Sagala from the Salvation Army with her coffee van. I also thank the ambulance officers from the St John's Ambulance, who donated the wages they would have received for the day.

I am pleased to put on record that the people of the Alger electorate are working with fantastic local community groups to accomplish significant goals. Working every day for the people of Alger is an absolute pleasure. I am so honoured to be able to stand in this place and share the great work that is being done and will continue to be done by the incredible Forest Lake Lions.

HMAS *Toowoomba*; Cockle, Mr R

 **Dr McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.00 pm): I wish to share with the House tonight news around a very significant welcome and also a significant farewell recently in my community of Toowoomba. On 6 June this year the Toowoomba community welcomed the crew of HMAS *Toowoomba*, an Anzac class frigate commissioned about 10 years ago.

Mr Rickuss: What? Did they sail up there?

Dr McVEIGH: I take that interjection. They had to take a bus trip through the beautiful Lockyer Valley, member for Lockyer. Members of the company of HMAS *Toowoomba* joined together to represent this ship exercising her right and privilege of freedom of entry into our city. They marched through Margaret and Ruthven streets with swords drawn and faced a ceremonial challenge by the Queensland Police Commissioner, Ian Stewart. The parade went on to then be reviewed by the mayor of Toowoomba, Councillor Paul Antonio.

A few days later, on 9 June, we again welcomed the HMAS *Toowoomba* crew to Toowoomba, led by the very impressive and inspirational Commander Catherine Hayes RAN. She addressed a gathering arranged by the Zonta club and the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce. She talked about the ship's fortunes in fighting international drug syndicates on the other side of the world and she also provided significant inspiration to women in our community in terms of the way in which they can lead, in her case a leader in the Australian Defence Force.

Less than a week later our community joined together this time to farewell Ralph Cockle, the town crier of Toowoomba for some 16 years prior to his recent retirement due to ill health and his recent passing at the age of 79. Ralph was recognised in the media as a loud but gentle man, one certainly who presented the face of our city, amongst other things welcoming a number of premiers to our city over his period, and someone who at the same time was always ready with a kind comment or a listening ear, something that he provided me on a couple of occasions.

He was also Glen Innes and Broken Hill town crier in his time in those locations, and was originally from Victoria before he came to Toowoomba. I believe Queensland communities need to recognise and celebrate our identities, our characters, our heroes. Ralph Cockle was one such individual and I join with others from the Toowoomba community in extending my condolences to his wife Shirley and to his entire family.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

O'Leary, Mr K

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (11.02 pm): I rise to advise the House of the sad passing of a friend and Labor treasure, Kevin Joseph O'Leary. Kevin was the longest continuing serving member of the Australian Labor Party, with 85 years of outstanding dedication to the party. Born in Warwick during World War I, his life spanned the Labor prime ministerships of Hughes, Scullin, Curtin, Chifley, Whitlam, Hawke, Keating, Rudd and Gillard. Kevin joined the ALP on Labour Day, 3 May 1930 when he was 15, in the midst of the Depression. It left an indelible impression and he spent the subsequent 85 years standing up for what he believed in: fairness, equality and opportunity for everyone in our community.

In 1929 he began life as a boarder at Nudgee College in my electorate, and later moved to Zillmere permanently in 1951 where he remained until his death a week ago, on the 8 July 2015. He worked as a clerk in the Department of Transport until the outbreak of war in 1939 when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force. It was in the RAAF that Kevin met his future wife, Iris 'Fairy' Collins. Following his discharge from the RAAF after the war ended, Kevin returned to his former position at Main Roads where he worked until retirement in 1978.

Kev turned 100 earlier this year and was as cheeky and irreverent as ever. He had Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk at his birthday, former prime minister Julia Gillard at his bedside when sick some years ago and the Deputy Premier to honour his life at his funeral. At all of these was friend Wayne Swan. I also acknowledge my colleague, the member for Sandgate, who was there also. But while Kev amassed many accolades and friends in high office, it is his family that is his truest and most meaningful legacy. His children, Pat and Barry, grandchildren, Craig, Murray, Adam and Natasha, and great-grandchildren are a credit to him and wife, Iris, who passed some years ago. They were dedicated to him and made many sacrifices in recent years to fulfil his desire of remaining at home—the mark of deep love and affection.

Kev engendered loyalty in those around him. It was his character, dedication and loyalty that inspired the same in others. He held fundraisers in his shed, had signs in his yard and put up signs in others' yards. He letterboxed, handed out material at railway stations and on polling day. He was booth captain and scrutineer with good mate Les Thorpe at Zillmere State School for more local, state and federal elections than I can imagine. And he loved it all and we loved him.

It is an honour to have the opportunity to honour Kev's memory and I do so also on behalf of former members for Nudgee Jack Melloy, Ken Vaughan and Neil Roberts. He was a loyal foot soldier to each. Kev always had an encouraging word and story to share. He wanted to see more women in parliament and I will always be grateful for his encouragement to run over the past decade. Kev, thank you. You made a tremendous contribution and will be deeply missed. You have fought the good fight and you have finished the course. You have kept the faith. Rest easy, friend.

Medicinal Cannabis

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (11.05 pm): Tonight I would like to speak about and pay tribute to the Whitelaw family from my electorate. They visited me about a year ago. They are in the unfortunate situation where their son Jai suffers from severe epilepsy. That means that he has numerous seizures throughout the day that can go into the tens and tens and tens of seizures. Michelle Whitelaw is the mum of the family. She came to see me to talk to me about the benefits of medicinal cannabis in her particular family. She showed me quite clearly photos of Jai over the years when he had been on normal medication and then showed me in a very real fashion by bringing Jai into my office to see the effects that she believes medicinal cannabis has had on him.

What really impressed me about Michelle is that she is not a lobbyist or an activist; she is a mum. She is a mum who believes that medicinal cannabis is something that has brought about great improvements to Jai where now he has only occasional seizures and is incredibly more functional and able to go to school. As I said, she puts this down to medicinal cannabis.

I understand that this is a very contentious issue. While we were in government we agreed to support the trials that were taking place in New South Wales by the New South Wales government in relation to medicinal cannabis. With something like this it is necessary to go through the appropriate medical trials, as is the case with any new drug. I was very pleased that our government, when we were in power, agreed to do that. I am also pleased that the current government has said that it will support these trials which shows that there is bipartisan agreement on this particular way forward.

To date we have not heard any detail about how this government might be involved in those trials. We have not heard anything about any funding or any of the practicalities of that. I know there are many families like the Whitelaw family who are waiting to get some details about these trials so that they can have some sort of assurance that this issue is being progressed and investigated fully. I commend the government for supporting this process but I would ask it to be a bit more forthcoming with regard to details about what that support will actually look like and that the support would be practical and not simply in word.

O'Leary, Mr K

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (11.08 pm): I rise to join my colleague, the member for Nudgee, in paying tribute to a true Labor man and stalwart on the north side, Kev O'Leary. Kev passed away on 8 July surrounded by his loving and dedicated family. The last time I had a chance to share a beer with Kev he was similarly surrounded by his loving family and an extensive array of friends. That was on the occasion of Kev's 100th birthday party in March. Similar to his recent funeral service, that occasion was a celebration of Kev's life, a celebration of his love for his family, his commitment to his country and his loyalty to his party. The milestone of his 100th was closely followed by that of his 85 years of continuous membership of the Australian Labor Party, a mark unmatched, as far as anyone can tell, therefore making him not only a life member but also the celebrated No. 1 ticketholder of the ALP.

Kev joined the party on Labor Day 1930 and renewed his ticket every year, including by leaving money for his mother to take out his tickets while he served in the RAAF during the war. On his birthday and at the funeral, Kev was praised and eulogised by our local federal member of parliament and Kev's close friend, Wayne Swan. Wayne referenced his conversations with Kev in his shed at Tolmie Street Zillmere, which passed on Kev's experience across a life that saw the Great Depression, the Second World War and the highs and lows of postwar Australia. During his time as federal Treasurer at the

height of the global financial crisis, Wayne Swan said he drew upon his reflections of conversations that they had in Kev's shed over a coldie about how a Labor government should respond. The Premier attended Kev's birthday celebrations and he was very happy to accept her best wishes on the day.

Over my 26 years of membership of the Labor Party on Brisbane's north side, I came to know Kev and his great mate the late Les Thorpe—both legendary life members with legion experience of campaigning—and I learned some amazing tricks of the trade from them, some that really cannot be shared. I know that former colleagues in this chamber such as Bonny Barry and Neil Roberts would want to have their names associated with a tribute to Kev. It is a testament to his commitment to Labor that that includes current colleagues, including the member for Nudgee, who has already spoken, and the member for Logan, who on at least one occasion travelled with Kev to Barcaldine on May Day.

I express my condolences to Kev's children, Barry and Pat, and her sons and daughter. Considering his passions, it is fitting that Kev's last wishes be honoured: that half his ashes be buried with his beloved wife, Iris, and half be scattered under the Tree of Knowledge in Barcaldine on May Day.

Torres Strait, Climate Change

 **Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (11.11 pm): I note the budget papers provide \$9.6 million for the construction of seawalls and other mitigation measures to protect six Torres Strait Islands from seawater intrusion. That is a most welcome announcement, but one that fills me with sadness. It fills me with sadness because the reason for the necessity to build seawalls is manmade. The climate change science is in and it is no longer rocket science. It is very simple: emissions of certain gases cause a greenhouse effect, which causes the atmosphere to warm. It is very well understood in the scientific community and it is well understood in the general community. The principal greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide. Where does it come from? Mainly it comes from burning fossil fuels. That is not rocket science.

I have not said anything in this chamber that is not very well understood. Yet at the highest political level in our country, there are still those who deny the science of climate change. There are still those who make their decisions as if there is not an overwhelming body of information supporting climate change science. It is quite reasonable that the ordinary punter might ask: are they really climate change deniers or are they the captive property of the fossil fuel industry, via political donations? It is a reasonable question to ask and more and more Australians are asking it.

Torres Strait Islanders are already witnessing sea intrusion onto their limited land, as are many other islanders in the Pacific region. As the sea intrudes onto the very land that feeds those people, the very land upon which they build their homes and villages, the very land in which they bury their loved ones, the very land upon which they raise their children and their families and the very land upon which they practise their custom, senior Australian conservative politicians wash their hands of it. So what if a few atolls and islands go under? They are still getting their political donations. How does that make vulnerable island people feel? It makes them feel betrayed.

To those senior conservative politicians I say that some of those people on small islands are Australian citizens. They are Queenslanders. They are my constituents in the seat of Cook. I welcome the mitigation measures contained in the budget, but they are a stopgap. The challenge is to address the real issue, which is climate change.

(Time expired)

Whiskey's Watch

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (11.14 pm): A few weeks ago, on Take Your Dog to Work Day, for the second time I had the privilege of meeting Scott and Liz Jackman, along with several handlers and their service dogs, in the shopping complex near my electorate office. As the morning went on, it was good to hear from those people about their experiences and their backgrounds, and watch them go through their paces, walking the dogs up ramps and stairways and throughout the shopping complex.

Scott Jackman, or Jacko as his mates call him, the founder of Whiskey's Wish, served with 8/9 RAR. Scott was deployed to both East Timor and Afghanistan where, in 2012, he sustained an injury. In 2013 he was medically discharged, being diagnosed with major depression, PTSD and debilitating back and neck injuries. After the death of his assistance dog, Whiskey, Scott was deeply devastated. In an effort to support and assist in Scott's rehabilitation, close family and friends gave Scott the encouragement he needed, knowing that he was more than able to help and support others through his experiences, knowledge and empathy.

A service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. All Whiskey's Wish service dogs are trained as assistance dogs. They are trained specifically to do tasks for their individual recipient, that is, if a recipient has mobility issues Whiskey's Wish will train the dog to handle their mobility requirements. Only dogs can be service animals; no other species has rights as service animals. Service dogs must be trained, under control, on leash and housebroken. They must be trained to do work or perform tasks that mitigate a disability.

When the service dogs are in public, there are certain expectations. Whiskey's Wish requires service dog etiquette and service dog manners, which are laid out. When you meet a person with a service dog, please remember that the dog is working. Do not do anything to interrupt the service dog while it is performing its tasks. Do speak to the handler first. Do not aim distracting or rude noises at the dog, such as whistling. Do not touch the service dog without asking for and receiving permission. Do not ask personal questions about the handler's disability or otherwise intrude on his or her privacy. There is a whole list of what to do and what not to do.

As a past chair of the federal defence subcommittee, I fully understand the good work that Whiskey's Wish is doing in our community, particularly for returned defence personnel suffering from PTSD. I will do anything within my ability to ensure that their organisation is successful in the future.

Question put—that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.17 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams