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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 16 March 2016

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WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2016

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 petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Tick Line Movement, Taroom, Wandoan and Auburn

Mrs Frecklington, from 465 petitioners, requesting the House to direct that the cattle tick control area within Taroom, Wandoan and Auburn areas be included in the cattle tick free zone under the new Biosecurity Bill [340].

Nude Sunbathing

Mr Saunders, from 527 petitioners, requesting the House to amend legislation to legalise nude sunbathing, swimming and to set aside a beach for this purpose [341].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills (Mrs D'Ath)—

[342](#) Office of the Public Advocate: Upholding the right to life and health: A review of the deaths in care of people with a disability in Queensland

Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events (Ms Jones)—

[343](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events (Ms Jones) to a paper petition (2541-16) presented by Mrs Frecklington, from 512 petitioners, requesting the House to provide clarification about whether continuation of the Kilcoy Community Kindergarten could be facilitated through the Department with any service provider

MEMBER'S PAPER

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Cairns (Mr Pyne)—

[344](#) Correspondence and other documents, various dates, calling for an independent inquiry into Queensland local government

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Tourism Industry; Exports



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.02 pm): This morning I had the pleasure to join the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer and the tourism minister to announce a market-led proposal to establish a \$100 million aquarium at the South Bank precinct. This is an exciting proposal for Brisbane and an exciting opportunity for more jobs in our booming tourism sector. The announcement coincides with news that more Australians are choosing to come to Queensland than ever before. In 2015, 20.1 million domestic travellers came to Queensland and spent \$14.5 billion here. We are getting more tourists and they are spending more. Earlier this month we confirmed more than 2.3 million international travellers touched down in Queensland in 2015. This represents an increase of nine per cent on the previous 12 months.

My government, through the Minister for Tourism, has been actively attracting additional international flights into Queensland—Cairns, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. As we welcome more tourists coming to Queensland, we are also enjoying record exports. Queensland exports increased by \$5.6 billion to almost \$50 billion last year. The value of Queensland's overseas merchandise exports

rose by 12 per cent to a four-year high of almost \$49.7 billion in 2015. This result was driven by the new LNG industry and excellent results from Queensland's rural sector. This is the best result for Queensland since 2011. This is a job-winning equation for Queensland—more tourists are coming and more exports are going. My government is determined to create new jobs. We are determined to attract new investment, establish new industries, open new markets and welcome many more visitors to our great state of Queensland.

World Science Festival Brisbane

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.04 pm): I have championed the need for better engagement with science, technology and innovation. It is essential to the diversification of our economy. Our future need not rely solely on resources, tourism and construction—as important as they will always be; our economy can be a knowledge-based economy.

Last week at the inaugural World Science Festival Brisbane I saw firsthand the enthusiasm and passion that Queenslanders have for science. This event has put Queensland and especially Brisbane up in lights. Not only was the science world's focus on our state; Queenslanders overwhelmingly showed their support for the festival. In fact, I am pleased to advise that more than 118,000 people took part in the amazing World Science Festival program—an outstanding result for this event. Congratulations to the minister, who spent most of her time at the World Science Festival. This was the first time the event has been held outside New York, where it was founded in 2008. Queensland Museum's exclusive six-year partnership with the World Science Festival New York is a significant achievement and will continue to deliver opportunities and attract visitors to Queensland.

The festival allowed Queenslanders of all ages to explore and celebrate the many ways science contributes to our lives and to our future. More than 50 events and activities were held across the cultural precinct and South Bank. Many events sold out, including performances of *Light Falls* and the Robot Engineer's Apprentice where young Queenslanders had the opportunity to learn coding. Street Science showcased a bustling family-friendly free event featuring turtle hatching, giant drones and wall-to-wall science experiments.

We were fortunate enough to host physicist Professor Brian Greene, a cofounder of the festival who helps make science accessible to everyday people. Queenslanders also learnt more about the life of Albert Einstein in the play *Dear Albert*, which was written by award-winning actor and author Alan Alda. Brisbane also welcomed astronaut Andy Thomas and Brian Schmidt to name just a few of the more than 100 presenters from nine countries. The festival extended to Townsville and Chinchilla, including sessions on Mars One—a one-way ticket to outer space, the use of technology in dinosaur digs and the photography of science.

The World Science Festival aligns with my government's Advance Queensland initiative—putting Queensland at the forefront of innovation in an era of unprecedented global technological change. The festival set the scene for the upcoming Advance Queensland innovation summit in April and demonstrated that Queenslanders are keen to learn more in these fields. I especially want to thank Minister Leeanne Enoch, who lived at South Bank for three to four days, for all of her hard work and a big thankyou to all of the ministers and members of parliament who attended this groundbreaking event held here in Brisbane. Also a big thankyou to the Chair of the Queensland Museum, David Conry, and the CEO, Professor Suzanne Miller. Without those two driving this event behind the scenes it just would not have happened, so a big a thankyou to them.

Far North Queensland, Weather Event

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.07 pm): I advise the House that a cyclone warning has been declared for coastal and island communities from Karumba to Cape Keerweer. The low may develop into a tropical cyclone later today as it approaches the southern Cape York Peninsula. The Bureau of Meteorology will be updating its advice at 5 pm today. Local disaster management groups are now on alert status. District disaster management groups for the Far North and Mount Isa are also on alert. The tropical low in the Far North will most likely move further east over the Gulf of Carpentaria and may form into a tropical cyclone late this afternoon or tomorrow. There remains uncertainty in the movement and development of this system.

As Queenslanders know all too well, cyclones are consistently inconsistent, so we all must remain alert. There have been significant falls of rain across large tracts of Queensland over the last week. After such a crippling drought, we need prolonged soaking rain. A number of Queensland dams are now full and spilling over, including Queensland's largest dam—the Burdekin Falls Dam. There are

moderate flood warnings for the Western and Diamantina rivers, the Georgina River and Eyre Creek. There is a flood watch for the gulf rivers, Cape York Peninsula and north tropical coast catchments. Numerous roads throughout Central and Western Queensland remain closed or have restrictions imposed as a result of continuing heavy rainfall and flooding. The Diamantina Development Road is closed from Boulia south to Bedourie and Birdsville and roads east from Boulia, Bedourie and Birdsville also remain closed. I will report back to the House as conditions develop.

State Infrastructure Plan

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.09 pm): Queensland's new State Infrastructure Plan will help deliver jobs and prosperity beyond the mining boom by delivering the infrastructure that our economy needs to grow. As I informed the House yesterday, the State Infrastructure Plan will mean that we will deliver the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time. A pipeline of projects will also give industry the confidence to invest in their workforce and their business, because they know what projects will come to market when. Having a pipeline also shows potential investors what projects they can invest in as well, meaning that more projects can get built sooner.

But this was lost on the former government. It did not deliver a single infrastructure plan in three years. Even the member for Clayfield recognised the importance of a plan in his report to parliament from his overseas investor roadshow in 2013. In that report he said—

Global infrastructure funds were looking to invest directly in Queensland infrastructure, and were keen to hear about the pipeline of projects.

Unfortunately, those opposite did not release a pipeline of projects. This government has a pipeline and we are getting it investor ready. That is why the State Infrastructure Fund includes a \$20 million initiative to mature the infrastructure pipeline. This investment will be aimed at fast-tracking projects by funding the development of preliminary evaluations and business cases, including for projects identified during the SIP consultation process. By getting projects investment ready, we can leverage the opportunities presented by the rise of Asia, where there is significant capital looking for reliable and secure investment destinations. It will also help projects access funding programs like the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility.

The State Infrastructure Plan will make a real economic difference to our state. That is why Engineers Australia said—

There is a lot to like about this plan, including a fundamental change in the infrastructure planning process, \$500 million to kick-start a State Infrastructure Fund, and a defined accelerated works program to bring forward around \$440 million of works.

It is why the Australian Logistics Council said—

The Queensland Government State Infrastructure Plan is a milestone and in conjunction with Building Queensland, is a welcome recognition by the Queensland Government of the need to separate infrastructure decision making from the political cycle.

The State Infrastructure Plan paves the way for improved freight efficiency ...

It is why Consult Australia said—

The investments announced today are critical to boost business confidence, and breathe new life into industries that have suffered significant job-losses in recent years.

But I think it was the LGAQ that summed up our plan the best when it said that the SIP is—

... a strong blueprint for the future, backed up by solid consultation which should ensure it delivers a pipeline of projects that will create more jobs and better communities across Queensland.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Market-Led Proposals

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (2.12 pm): I take this opportunity to inform the House of major developments under the Palaszczuk government's job-creating market-led proposals initiative. I have previously outlined the two major proposals that have been advanced to the detailed assessment stage of the MLP process: the \$450 million Logan Motorway Enhancement Project, estimated to support more than 1,300 jobs during construction, and the proposed \$100 million Brisbane cruise ship terminal, estimated to create around 300 construction jobs. I am pleased to advise that the proponent of the Logan Motorway MLP, Transurban Queensland, has short-listed two firms, CPB Contractors Pty Ltd and John Holland Queensland Pty Ltd, to compete for the design and construction of the project.

As we heard from the Premier, this morning I was able to join the Premier, the tourism minister and the Deputy Premier, in her capacity particularly as the local member, to announce that a third major proposal has reached the second stage of assessment. The proposed \$100 million project would see the redevelopment of the Queensland Maritime Museum at South Bank and the establishment of a world-class aquarium. A project like this could be expected to generate up to 300 jobs during construction. It is the latest proposal to be advanced through the Palaszczuk government's market-led proposals framework. The proponents of this project indicate that it has the potential to attract up to 750,000 visitors each and every year into Brisbane and generate \$200 million a year for the Queensland economy. As I said, the proposal has now advanced to stage 2. It will undergo detailed proposal development and assessment.

Our call for market-led proposals has been embraced by business and more than 40 proposals have been lodged since we announced the initiative in last year's budget. In fact, more proposals for job-creating, private sector projects were received in three months than were received in the previous three years under the former government. More than 30 projects were deemed suitable to undergo initial assessment to determine their progress through further stages.

Our market-led proposals is just one way that our government is working with business to deliver job-creating projects. This project takes the potential private sector investment under the MLP framework to \$650 million. We have introduced our \$40 million Business Development Fund to partner with business and turn bright ideas into commercial reality. The positive response to these initiatives underlines the high level of business confidence in Queensland. For the past eight months the National Australia Bank's Monthly Business Survey has shown Queensland to have the highest business confidence in the nation. That is confidence that even Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has remarked on in federal parliament, even though his state counterparts continue their four-year campaign of negativity to talk down Queensland's economy. Their destructive approach has one aim: to support their one-point plan of asset sales.

Last month I spoke to more than 200 Queensland business operators and investors at forums on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast and in Townsville. In stark contrast to the LNP members, those delegates were positive about Queensland. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities this government is providing through market-led proposals and our economic plan. Business operators understand that they are now being treated seriously and that their ideas are being taken seriously, unlike they were under the former government. Business knows that they are dealing with a government that wants to promote the strength of the Queensland economy, promote opportunities and harness good ideas, not talk them down. Business is now dealing with a government that is always looking for ways to say yes, rather than find excuses to say no.

Regional Queensland, Jobs and Economic Development

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.15 pm): Jobs and economic development in regional Queensland are a priority for this government. This government inherited an IRD process from the previous LNP government that we are continuing. As the Premier said last year in Central Queensland, if one or both of the current regional IRD proposals do not go ahead, the government may go back to the market to seek expressions of interest for the available regional licences. However, should that happen, there will be strict criteria. The success of any proposed regional IRD is dependent on increased international tourism. Currently, tourism contributes \$17.5 billion to the Queensland economy and supports 200,000 jobs. The Queensland government's goal is to increase annual international visitor expenditure from \$3.8 billion to more than \$9 billion by 2020. Tourists, and particularly those from the growing Asian tourism markets, demand large resorts with an array of facilities within easy access of an international airport. They want the whole package in one location.

The Queensland government's position is that the location of any new IRD in regional Queensland will require the following. The project must include significant capital investment and must commence construction within 18 months of contractual close. They use it or lose it. The project must be in, or within close proximity to, a major population centre with a catchment of no fewer than 150,000 people within a 70-kilometre radius from the city centre. The project must contain two elements. Firstly, it must have an operational international airport or an airport that is capable of being readily upgraded to international standard with capacity to process high tourist volumes so that the target market is international rather than domestic. Secondly, it must have well-established transport networks and have significant existing tourism infrastructure with identified growth potential.

Cairns, Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast and other proud cities in Queensland could satisfy those threshold criteria and potentially attract the number of overseas tourists that is needed to sustain an IRD. Let me be clear: this policy position is not about casinos. Like all of our policies, this is about jobs and economic development.

State Infrastructure Plan, Road Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.18 pm): The Palaszczuk government's State Infrastructure Plan will deliver important projects right across Queensland. On the Sunshine Coast, \$22 million has been allocated for an intersection upgrade package on Kawana Way and Nicklin Way as part of the State Infrastructure Plan to improve access to the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital, which is due to open next year. These infrastructure projects will focus on enhancing capacity and improving road safety to cater for traffic growth. Construction will be staged, with highest priority upgrades, including Jamaica Way, Kawana Island Boulevard and Metier Linkway to be completed before the hospital opens. These upgrades will benefit those accessing the hospital by improving travel time reliability. These new infrastructure upgrade works will sustain 43 jobs during construction.

Last year my colleague Minister Dick and I established an interagency Queensland government task force to assist with transitional issues leading up to and after the hospital opens. As part of its ongoing review into access arrangements, the task force developed this infrastructure upgrade package which the Palaszczuk government has now funded as part of the State Infrastructure Plan.

I will continue to work with my colleague the Minister for Transport to consider infrastructure projects that will keep improving access to the new hospital and surrounding precinct. We are delivering projects not props. In addition to these works, Transport and Main Roads has already upgraded signalised intersections along Nicklin Way with emergency vehicle priority technology. This smart emergency vehicle priority technology will be switched on once the hospital is opened and will give priority to emergency service vehicles for urgent cases.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, you would think the opposition would be interested in saving lives. Apparently not. This smart technology has demonstrated a significant reduction in travel times for emergency service vehicles across the controlled road network operating in Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast and Brisbane. I am pleased to advise the House that earlier today the emergency vehicle priority project took home top honours at the Australian Road Safety Awards, winning both the state government category and the prestigious founders award for outstanding achievement. I commend all those who have been involved in developing this smart, innovative technology that will save lives and will use our infrastructure better.

The Palaszczuk government's State Infrastructure Plan will build the infrastructure needed to grow the economy and productivity, meet community needs and support jobs for Queenslanders. This infrastructure project package, as part of our State Infrastructure Plan, with \$22 million in new funding, is another good example of that and I commend it to the House.

Indigenous Paramedic Program

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.21 pm): As the House will be aware, this week is Close the Gap Week. Our government is committed to improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. I am pleased to inform the House that Queensland Health is working hard across the department and through hospital and health services, as well as within the Queensland Ambulance Service, to close the health gap in Queensland.

Today I met with 17 Indigenous paramedics who are stationed throughout regional and remote Queensland. They are stationed in towns including Cairns, Woorabinda, Doomadgee, Mount Isa, Palm Island, Bundaberg and Thursday Island. Each of the paramedics has completed their training under the specialised Indigenous Paramedic Program which is designed to increase the number of Indigenous people employed by the Queensland Ambulance Service. It was inspirational to meet these very impressive cadets. The vast majority are from small remote communities to which they will return after their training. This program will create jobs in communities where jobs are often at a premium. Having met many of these cadets, I am confident that they will provide excellent role models in these smaller and remote communities.

This program is bridging the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, both within the Queensland Ambulance Service and in the broader community, by building a closer relationship and understanding between the service and the Queensland communities it serves. Two of the newest recruits will be stationed at Ravenshoe on the Atherton Tablelands. I know that the Ravenshoe community has been calling for extra paramedics, especially in the wake of the terrible explosion in the town last year when two people died. I am proud to be able to deliver this for them. These recruits will strengthen community engagement and improve service delivery by contributing local knowledge and cultural understanding. I congratulate the Indigenous paramedics on their appointments to the program and wish them all the best for their future careers.

Far North Queensland, Air Travel Subsidy

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (2.23 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to connecting communities across Queensland. Under those opposite, I must say though, the Local Fare Scheme for subsidised air travel for communities in Far North Queensland was scrapped. As promised, this government has delivered on its commitment to reinstate this much needed service. Without the Local Fare Scheme commercial airfares in Far North Queensland had almost reached a level where lower income families would have struggled to access vital health, education and employment services. Since this government reinstated the scheme as a 12-month trial in July 2015, it has proved to be a huge success with air travel now more affordable, particularly for those residents in remote communities.

This government saw the effect on Far North Queensland communities when the scheme was cut in 2012 and we were committed to helping local residents move around more frequently to be able to enjoy greater social and recreational benefits and boost the local economy. I am pleased that the scheme, which is only eight months into its trial, has already helped so many people fly throughout Far North Queensland.

The reinstatement of the scheme has received widespread support from the people of the region. I have received letters of support, including one from Joseph Elu, chairperson of the Torres Strait Regional Authority. In his letter Mr Elu states that the Local Fare Scheme has added significant value to eligible residents of the Torres Strait.

Not only have we reinstated this vital service, we have hit a significant milestone with the 2,500th passenger flight taken under the Local Fare Scheme. This milestone is a celebration of its success and a lucky passenger from Murray Island in Far North Queensland in the Torres Strait has won a free return flight within the Cape York and Torres Strait region. This passenger has used the scheme and will now be able to enjoy a free flight to access any of the Torres Strait's 12 airports or seven Cape York airports.

I am delighted to be sharing with you the huge success of this scheme which has reopened easy access to essential services and, importantly, closed the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health care.

Small Business

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (2.26 pm): It gives me great pleasure to update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is providing small businesses across the state with assistance to help them grow and create jobs for Queenslanders. In January the Palaszczuk government launched a small business e-learning campaign called 'The 7 steps to business success'. The free online campaign included webisodes, resources and links to further teaching materials, as well as the opportunity to ask questions and engage with other participants online. The campaign included a series of five short videos designed to help participants navigate the early research phase of starting a business in Queensland, including the necessary costs, skills and legal requirements. 'The 7 steps to business success' online campaign was a great success, reaching a Facebook audience of nearly 50,000 people with more than 17,000 interactions. The huge response to the campaign shows there is a real energy for small business in the community. Providing these resources online ensured anyone anywhere in the state could access the content.

There are approximately 406,000 small businesses in Queensland. They provide nearly half of all private sector jobs in this state so it is important we give them the tools to get off to the best possible start and every opportunity to thrive and create jobs. That is why we are following up with a second

e-learning campaign, 'Business planning'. The 'Business planning' e-learning series is due to be launched at the end of this month and will include 10 webisodes. This campaign is once again a free, interactive and informative learning series that will assist Queensland businesses to create a plan to support their future development and success. It can be accessed on the Business Queensland Facebook and Twitter pages as well as on the government's business and industry portal at www.business.qld.gov.au.

The Palaszczuk government is always looking for innovative ways to help small businesses grow and create jobs. These campaigns are another way we are helping to establish Queensland as the place to start and grow a business as we create jobs now and jobs for the future.

North Queensland, Jobs

 **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 update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing for North Queensland. As members would know, it has been a tough week in Townsville after the remaining 550 Yabulu workers were told they no longer have jobs. That is why our focus is on making sure that there are jobs for these people to go to. We have established the Accelerated Works Program that will fast track \$210 million worth of projects to support more than 480 local jobs. We have also invested more than \$540 million in infrastructure in the Townsville region this financial year, supporting around 1,500 jobs.

Since the beginning of 2015, the Palaszczuk government has approved almost \$2 billion in infrastructure spending, including projects such as the Cairns Special School, the Cairns Hospital redevelopment, new schools in Townsville, the Mackay ring-road stage 1 and the western roads upgrade. The State Infrastructure Plan that my colleague the Deputy Premier announced on Sunday includes 86 North Queensland projects costing \$5.4 billion over the next four years.

In 2015, I had the opportunity to meet with 130 North Queensland business leaders to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the region. From those meetings, business leaders identified a number of road, rail and water infrastructure options that were fed into the development of the State Infrastructure Plan. Last year the Premier and I co-hosted the North Queensland Economic Summit in Cairns to promote the region to around 250 domestic and international investors. The Premier and I also hosted a forum for North Queensland mayors in Townsville—

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Minister. Member for Hinchinbrook, I can hear your conversation from here. I urge you to take it outside, please.

Mrs O'ROURKE: In Townsville, the Premier and I hosted a forum for North Queensland mayors that identified regional priorities that could be pursued through the Australian government's white paper. As a result of that forum, in February this year I led a delegation of North Queensland mayors to Canberra to discuss economic opportunities for the north. We held a range of positive meetings with federal ministers, opposition members and departmental heads, covering issues such as water, transport and roads. The mayors welcomed the opportunity to put their cases forward for the first time in Canberra and were grateful for a state government that was engaging with them on North Queensland.

Another key issue we discussed in Canberra was the need for a commitment from the federal government to the Townsville stadium. I am proud that our government has committed \$100 million towards the stadium as I understand how important it is to revitalising the CBD, stimulating growth and creating up to 700 jobs. Bill Shorten and federal Labor have committed to the stadium, but now we need Malcolm Turnbull to come to the table.

It is also disappointing that, despite the federal government's committing to introducing legislation on the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility to parliament in the first quarter of this year, we are yet to see it on their agenda. Our government is dedicated to jobs and growing the north and my focus remains on achieving positive outcomes for the region.

Queensland Multicultural Awards

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.31 pm): As the proud daughter of an Italian migrant family, I have always championed the cause of Queensland's multiculturalism. That is why today I am delighted to announce the opening of nominations for the 2016 Queensland Multicultural

Awards. The Queensland Multicultural Awards recognise outstanding contributions to a unified, harmonious and inclusive Queensland. They acknowledge community volunteers, groups, businesses, government agencies and media whose work with the multicultural community has helped all Queenslanders to participate in our economy and community.

This year there will be six categories and a special minister's multicultural award that will recognise an outstanding nominee. The awards have a long history and are well respected by our multicultural community. Last year we received 123 nominations, which is the highest number received in the past five years—congratulations to the previous minister—proving the ongoing popularity of the awards. One in five of the nominations has been received from outside South-East Queensland and just under half of all nominations received are from organisations, many of which deliver statewide regional services.

This year there will be two services and communities awards that will be awarded to both an individual and an organisation. This follows a large response in the category last year. The other 2016 award categories include the business excellence award, the education and training innovation award, the outstanding volunteer award and the communications and media achievement award. I look forward to presenting the minister's multicultural award to an outstanding achiever. With two categories designed to acknowledge the significant contribution of individuals, services and communities and an outstanding volunteer, there will not be a multicultural ambassador awarded this year. Instead, we will be promoting all of our award winners as multicultural ambassadors.

I encourage all members to nominate individuals and organisations in their electorates who do exceptional work in the multicultural sector. I also encourage members to promote this great awards program to their constituents at large. Nominations close on Tuesday, 3 May 2016, with winners to be announced at the Queensland Multicultural Awards luncheon in August. I urge all to get behind these great awards and celebrate all that Queensland multiculturalism has to offer.

I also congratulate the students of Northpine Christian College who today sang Bev Pershouse's song *Australian with One Heart* with soloist Carly Buchanan and musicians to kick off Harmony Day, promoting multiculturalism and inclusivity. Many thanks to the member for Morayfield for organising the event at Parliament House.

Cairns Convention Centre



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (2.34 pm): During the last sitting week I informed the House of my intention to travel to North Queensland to ensure our job-generating capital works priorities were being actioned. I attended projects in Cairns, Townsville and Charters Towers. After attending the Cairns Convention Centre, I am pleased to inform the House that next week work will commence on our investment that is poised to employ 100 local tradies for the duration of the project. As part of our government's accelerated works program and indicative of our continuing commitment to advancing this state and, in particular, regional communities through timely job-generating projects, this particular project is generating jobs and will help cement the Cairns Convention Centre's status as a world-class conference and event venue.

The Cairns Convention Centre upgrade is part of \$60 million worth of accelerated works across the Far North region. Cairns roofers, scaffolders, concreters, painters, electricians, plumbers, safety experts, carpenters and cleaners will be among a small army that will tackle the job to refurbish and recover the building, which has a 31,000 square metre floor space. A substantial part of the work will be on the Convention Centre's roof, which doubles as a rainwater catcher and storage system. It is a centrepiece of the building's substantial environmental sustainability credentials; credentials that this government thinks are important in all buildings.

Thirty-three per cent of the roof will be replaced and substantial work will be done on the guttering, which has leaked during severe storms. At the same time, the building facade will be repaired, the front entrance will be upgraded to improve disability access and the basement car park will be repaired. I know the minister responsible for the Commonwealth Games will be watching closely as we install new signs and scoreboards in preparation for the basketball matches that the centre will host during the games.

Built by the Goss Labor government, the Cairns Convention Centre has played an integral role in positioning Queensland as a state committed to innovation and jobs. As an attraction, it supports jobs in tourism, sport and business. This is another great Labor legacy for this state.

Last week I hosted a meeting of construction industry subcontractors at the Cairns Convention Centre to discuss security of payment in construction. I assured the House, as I assure those workers and small business people, that I will be pressing ahead, in partnership with industry, to find a solution to the security of payments challenge, starting with important government projects such as repairing the Cairns Convention Centre roof. The work we do this year will advance the capability of the Cairns Convention Centre to continue to be ready for business and ready to serve the needs of the region well into the future.

Queensland Rural Woman of the Year Award

 **Hon. LE DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (2.37 pm): Recently it was a great honour to be able to present Emma Robinson with the 2016 Queensland Rural Woman of the Year Award. On the day, Emma was one of five finalists vying for the top prize. I was very pleased that I was not on the judging committee, as all finalists were of a very high standard. Cilla Slack, Krista Watkins, Amanda Hinds and Fiona Lake are all outstanding women and each and every one of them would have been a worthy winner. Those women, as well as the other nominees, demonstrate how women can be leaders and inspirations in our regional communities.

Emma has ideas for bringing together cattle farming families to look at cooperative ways of increasing efficiencies and competitiveness. Cilla wants to expose children to rural life through a kid's television program called *Blue Gum Farm*. Krista is striving for a natural evolution in diversifying the uses of bananas. Fiona wants to tell the story and highlight the value of farmers to the wider community. Amanda, who comes from Bundaberg, wants to see local hospitality businesses and chefs directly linked with local producers. Those and other women are looking at innovative ways of improving the lives of Queensland's rural communities. It is their passion and vision that will help shape how we can evolve to meet the ever-changing agricultural landscape. Their ideas and innovations are helping to create jobs in our rural communities now and, with our encouragement, will provide jobs in the future.

I also have to thank the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation for its continuing support of this award as well as all of the associated sponsors. Queensland agriculture is vital to our state's economy now and into the future. These women, and so many like them, are showing how bright the future is for our primary industries.

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Reporting Date

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (2.39 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding any previous order, under standing order 136(1) the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee report by 8 April 2016 on the following bills:

- Planning Bill 2015;
- Planning Environment Court Bill 2015;
- Planning (Consequential) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015;
- Planning and Development (Planning for Prosperity) Bill 2015;
- Planning and Development (Planning Court) Bill 2015; and
- Planning and Development (Planning for Prosperity—Consequential Amendments) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Office of the Information Commissioner, Report

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (2.40 pm): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 2 of 2015-16 to the Queensland Legislative Assembly by the Office of the Information Commissioner titled *Follow-up of review recommendations—Rockhampton Regional Council: Review of agency adoption of recommendations made under the Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld) and the Information Privacy*

Act 2009 (Qld). As chair of Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, I am required to table the report on the Information Commissioner's behalf under the Right to Information Act 2009 and the Information Privacy Act 2009. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Office of the Information Commissioner: Report No. 2 of 2015-16—Follow-up of review recommendations—Rockhampton Regional Council: Review of agency adoption of recommendations made under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) [[345](#)].

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Alleged Intimidation of Witnesses, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (2.41 pm): In accordance with standing order 268(1) and on behalf of the Finance and Administration Committee, I advise that a matter has arisen with respect to the proceedings of the Finance and Administration Committee. The committee recently received information about the potential intimidation of witnesses with respect to its recent public hearings for its inquiry into the North Stradbroke Protection and Sustainability and Other Acts Amendment Bill and the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability (Renewal of Mining Leases) Amendment Bill. The committee recommends that this matter be referred to the Ethics Committee. I will write on behalf of the committee to the Ethics Committee to provide further details.

Tabled paper: Finance and Administration Committee: Report to House in relation to alleged intimidation of witnesses, in accordance with standing order 268(1) [[346](#)].

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (2.42 pm): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 21 of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee on the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 21—Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015 [[347](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Casino Gaming Licences

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.42 pm): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House calls on the Labor government to adopt the LNP's policy and develop an offshore boutique casino gaming licence policy to encourage investment in job-creating developments such as that proposed for Great Keppel Island.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Jobs

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.42 pm): It has been interesting to sit in the House this afternoon and listen to junior ministers opposite spruik about the odd job here and the odd job there that this government is supposedly trying to create—whether it is bringing forward projects in Townsville by about a month or whether it is other issues like fixing a roof in Cairns that takes the Minister for Public Works minutes to tell us all about. It is obvious when we look at the actions of the Premier and the Deputy Premier over the last week that for those opposite their interest is more in their own jobs than in jobs for the people of Queensland.

Last week at Point Danger the Premier was so adamant that her focus was going to be on job creation that everyone had to get behind her, but within four questions she would not rule out going to an early election. She let the cat out of the bag that that was really her focus as opposed to saying that she was really focussing on job creation. The Deputy Premier has supposedly been talking about the Infrastructure Plan. We pointed out that the total amount that we spent on capital works and capital grants in the three years we were in government was \$41 billion and under the Labor government four year capital purchases have been slashed by \$3.6 billion. That is thousands of jobs. That is going to cost thousands of Queenslanders jobs.

The Treasurer is now presiding over a situation in Queensland where the unemployment rate went to 6.4 per cent last month. We know that the Treasurer's focus on jobs extends to switching factions to save his own position and to appointing factional mates like Queensland Council of Unions president, John Battams, to plum, taxpayer funded board positions. Remember that John Battams is the financial genius who once said that Queensland's low property taxes only benefited millionaires and billionaires and argued for a hike in payroll tax. That was during our term in government.

That is the man the Treasurer appointed to sit on the board of QIC, the Queensland Investment Corporation—a body with more than \$70 billion in assets under management, according to its latest annual report. We now know that Mr Battams, a mate of the Treasurer, is touted to become the next president of the Queensland Labor Party. I quote from and table an article from the *Australian* titled 'Second pay-off for new ALP chief'—

The Palaszczuk government's hand-picked director of Queensland Investment Corporation is about to become state president of the Labor Party through a secret factional deal.

Mr Battams, who retired as Queensland Council of Unions president this year, has been elevated to the ALP top job after a deal was struck with the Left and 'Old Guard' faction.

Treasurer Curtis Pitt and Mr Battams are the two most senior powerbrokers in the Old Guard, the state's smallest faction.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Australian*, dated 4 March 2016, titled 'Second pay-off' for new ALP Chief [348].

It says there that the deal was hatched even before he was appointed to the \$60,000 a year role. People have a right to know whether the Treasurer was aware of his imminent appointment as president of the ALP before he was offered a plum board position.

Tourism Industry

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (2.46 pm): Mr Speaker—

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms JONES: I will line them up, yes. I am very pleased to be talking about jobs for Queenslanders and the fact that we are growing jobs for Queenslanders through tourism. I just listened to the private member's statement from the member for Surfers Paradise. It sounded eerily similar to the private member's statement we heard from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday where he started by saying that he was going to talk about jobs and that question time was going to focus on jobs.

What did we see happen? There were no questions about jobs, no questions about growth—not one; just silly antics from the member for Kawana. Once again we had about 30 seconds of talk about jobs and the future of Queensland. Then it was back into the gutter. There are no proposals for the future and no ideas about how we grow Queensland's economy and create jobs. I make the prediction that we will see the same grubbiness that we saw yesterday today in question time.

While they waste their time doing that, do members know what I am doing? I am growing jobs for Queenslanders. Today I have great news for Queensland. For the very first time—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: I am excited. For the very first time a record 20 million Australians chose to visit Queensland last year. Why would they not when the future looks so bright up here? More importantly, not only are we seeing significant growth here in Brisbane with around an additional 11 per cent of people coming to Brisbane but also we are seeing this right across Queensland. Whether it is Far North Queensland or elsewhere, there has been 27 per cent growth in the number of people—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the Treasurer. The Gold Coast has seen really strong growth in the international market. There has been six per cent growth in terms of additional visitors going there.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the member yelling out. In the southern Great Barrier Reef there has been five per cent growth. While we see the opposition whinge and carry on we will get on with the job of building Queensland and creating jobs for Queenslanders. They might want to sit there and mock us, but we know that they gutted tourism funding, walked away from the partnership and walked away from supporting tourism organisations and promoting Queensland.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the member for Nanango. Just look at the budget papers. It is there in black and white. What we have done is restore funding. We are creating and supporting more than 230,000 jobs here in Queensland. Once again, what we have seen today—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I do not need your assistance. You will have a chance during the afternoon.

Ms JONES: What we see again today, as outlined by the member for Surfers Paradise, is an opposition who do not want to talk about jobs, who do not want to talk about growth, who do not want to talk about the things that Queenslanders talk to us about every single day and are instead focused on staring at their own navels.

(Time expired)

State Infrastructure Plan

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.49 pm): Every day that passes since the release of the failed State Infrastructure Plan by the Palaszczuk Labor government delivers more cracks and more holes in a plan that barely deserves a title. Yesterday I highlighted the Burleigh Fire and Emergency Services Station—another plan delivered by the LNP. I have had some assistance. The detectives on our side have been having a look through the State Infrastructure Plan and not surprisingly have found a few more fails. We would expect nothing less from a plan that has, I think, the imprimatur of not just the Deputy Premier but also the member for Mulgrave.

One of those fails, Mr Speaker, is on page 52 of the document where you will see reference to the 'Central Toowoomba Zone Substation upgrade'—a one to four-year plan. The only problem with this plan is that the Treasurer opened it back in December. It was already there. I table his media release.

Tabled paper: Media release, undated, by the Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport, Hon. Curtis Pitt, titled 'Toowoomba power-proofed for decades to come with hidden substation' [349].

He also donned a uniform to prove he was there. I table the photograph.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 16 December 2015, of the Facebook page of the Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport, Hon. Curtis Pitt, showing a photograph of Hon. Curtis Pitt [350].

What he was really doing was delivering on another LNP project, because it was announced by the then energy minister, the member for Caloundra, back in 2014—but that is not all. There is another project. On page 78 of the document—

Mr McArdle: This is embarrassing now.

Mr NICHOLLS: This is even more embarrassing for the Treasurer. In Gordonvale, in his very own electorate, we see reference to the 'Gordonvale early years centre'—a program that on its Facebook page is already up and running. I table that.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 21 January, of the Cairns Early Years Centre and Kindergarten's Facebook page, regarding Gordonvale Early Years Centre Update [351].

I have here the timetable and some of the subjects that the member for Mulgrave can go to. Perhaps he might like to join in with 'our weekly craft ideas or bring your own'. That might be a suggestion—bring his own. Not only do we have projects that have already been delivered; we have projects that were announced by this side that have been picked up by those opposite including the Beaudesert Town Centre Bypass, incorrectly referred to as the 'Beaudesert Road Bypass'. We are building a bypass to bypass a road now! Who was the author of this bit of genius? The Deputy Premier herself. There is the official statement. I table both of those documents.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway—Beaudesert Town Centre Bypass' [352].

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 23 April 2015, by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade, Hon. Jackie Trad, titled 'Government green lights Beaudesert bypass' [353].

This is not a plan; this is an LNP report card.

(Time expired)

Jobs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.52 pm): In spite of what those opposite think, since the election of the Palaszczuk government last January, job creation has returned to the top of Queensland's economic agenda. The mass sackings and rising unemployment we saw under the LNP have been replaced by new jobs, and that is good news for Queenslanders. Around 70,000 new jobs have been created in Queensland since the state election, and our trend unemployment rate is at a two-year low.

If those opposite for one minute think that they have any credibility when it comes to unemployment, they are sadly mistaken. For once they have unemployment on their agenda. In fact, I struggled even to remember who the employment minister was under the previous government. I actually struggled to remember who it was. I realised that it was the member for Surfers Paradise, who has never done anything in relation to unemployment.

The member for Clayfield rose in this House just before, talking about the State Infrastructure Plan. However, when they went to the last election, you did not get anything unless you voted for them. Queenslanders sent you a very strong message. They did not want what those opposite had in store. They wanted a change and they voted for a change, and a change is exactly what we are delivering. We are getting on with the job. We are working with businesses. We are working with employers. We are going around the regions. Let me tell you what they say to me, Mr Speaker. They say, 'Thank God you're here, Minister, because we never saw anyone from those opposite come to talk to us about employment issues.' Do you know why? Because they never had any employment projects.

Ms Trad: They were busy sacking people.

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection—they were busy sacking people. That was the message they were sending. It is great that now, spurred on by nation-building confidence in this state, Queensland employers are returning to hiring, not firing. That is the way we want it to happen. Long may it continue in that vein. I have been to Maryborough and Mackay—and I will visit Mount Isa with the Premier soon—to hold employment forums, and the employers together with us are saying, 'What a great idea.' They are enthusiastic. They want to put their ideas forward. They want to employ people. They want to build the regions, and it is Labor that is helping them do it, not those opposite.

We will continue with our job creating. They love the Accelerated Works Program projects—the projects that are talked about over there as if they are not working. They are creating hundreds of jobs around this state. They are working in a fantastic way. They are employing local people. That is what Labor stands for. That is what we will deliver. Those opposite have no credibility.

Mr SPEAKER: I inform the member for Gaven that if you persist with your interjections, which to date I believe are designed to be disruptive, you will be warned under standing order 253A. I urge you to exercise some caution.

Member for Cairns

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.55 pm): Delusion and illusion reign supreme on the other side of the parliament today, and no more so than what we just heard from the Minister for Employment. This is a Minister for Employment in her first public statement after becoming minister since said she could not do anything about youth unemployment. Youth unemployment could not be fixed. It was all too hard.

Is it any wonder when you look at places like Central Queensland the number of jobs that have been lost under this government since they came to power are about 7,000 or 8,000. There are 7,000 or 8,000 fewer jobs in Mackay than what there were when this government came to power. When you look at outback Queensland, it is around 6,700 and for southern Queensland it is around 11,000. That is the contribution of this employment minister to the public policy of Queensland since she has become employment minister in this state.

Last night we saw an unusual situation where the opposition led with the regard to job creation. We moved a motion around one of the largest mining projects in this country and the government backed it—Adani's Carmichael coalmine. We are producing jobs on this side of the House.

Let us look at what is happening with regard to the other side of parliament. Let us have a look at a Labor Party luminary—a Mr Michael Haire, an ETU organiser. This is what he said with regard to the honourable member for Cairns—

Comrades—

'comrades', a term that Labor uses often—

apparently Rob Pyne thinks he's a bit hard done by when it comes to the ETU. Let's remind him who put him there and see if he can handle the sort of [expletive] we put on King. We are turning this up, Rob. We don't like rats. We don't like [expletive]. We don't like busting our backsides only to be [expletive] on by [expletive] with short memories. We put you there, we will kick you out. Back off he reckons. Like [expletive], Rob. Good luck with your sneaky slimy plans to run again. If you think it was entertaining watching us rip that Gavin King [expletive] apart, you're in for a hell of a ride. Enjoy your short time in State politics.

Tabled paper: Photograph, dated 16 March 2016, of a Facebook post by Michael Haire via ETU Queensland & NT, regarding the member for Cairns, Mr Rob Pyne MP [\[354\]](#).

Who was this luminary? This is a government of union thugs by union thugs for union thugs. Look at this picture. It is like a family reunion—the honourable member for Barron River standing over there with this union thug, Michael Haire. This is the sort of intimidation—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the Leader of the Opposition has had his go at showing off his prop. It is better than a rat but—

Mr SPEAKER: No. Thank you. That is enough.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: No. You have had your go with your prop. You do not need that.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I table this for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Photograph, undated, of the member for Barron River, Mr Craig Crawford MP, and others [\[355\]](#).

It just goes to show the sort of bullying and intimidation that not only the member for Cairns but also other members of the Labor Party have to put up with from union thugs that the Premier refuses to pull into line.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Cairns

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (2.59 pm): My first question is to the Treasurer and relates to a document which he received about the intimidation of the member for Cairns on 15 December 2015 outlining verbal and physical intimidation of the member for Cairns. As a minister of the Crown, what action did the Treasurer undertake to advise the Premier of these serious allegations of bullying and intimidation of the member for Cairns?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for his question. I would like to say a few things here. I was on leave at the time this information came in, and my office got back to the person who made the complaint, Mr Jason Ward. My chief of staff provided him with the appropriate advice, and that was this was a matter that occurred, according to the gentleman, on the parliamentary precinct and therefore the appropriate thing to do would be to refer it to the Clerk.

Mr Springborg: Did you advise the Premier?

Mr PITT: I was not aware of this, Leader of the Opposition, until I came back from leave.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr PITT: The member asked the question. If he would like me to provide an answer, I am happy to do so. My chief of staff provided the appropriate response to Mr Ward, and that was to ensure that any suggested allegations were referred to the Clerk of the Parliament. That is the appropriate advice. He then did that by a phone call and at the appropriate time was able to advise me and provided that advice in writing to Mr Ward. I think this has been a very well canvassed story. From my perspective, my chief of staff notified anyone who he thought appropriate within the government to ensure that they were aware of such a complaint.

Member for Cairns

Mr SPRINGBORG: My second question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the Code of Ethics Standards attached to the Ministerial Code of Conduct which states—

Members are to strive at all times to conduct themselves in a manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of Parliament ...

Premier, does the Deputy Premier's and her now cabinet colleague the Minister for Housing and Public Works' actions towards the member for Cairns meet the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am more than happy to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question. Today the opposition do not want to ask any questions about jobs. I am being serious here, because everywhere I travel people's No. 1 concern is jobs.

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier has jumped into a debate straightaway which has nothing to do with the question that has been asked. Please ask her to be relevant to the question that has been asked.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I urge you to make your answer relevant to the question that has been asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This morning I was asked similar questions in relation to these matters at a press conference. What I said to them—and I expect this from every single member of this chamber—is that members must behave in a respectful, responsible manner at all times.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, it is not an opportunity for debate.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That means everybody in this parliament—everyone. If those opposite want to go back over past history, we can do that. We can relay the stories that we went through when we sat over there in opposition when there were seven of us. Do those opposite want me to go through those stories right here and right now? Does the former deputy premier want me to go through them right here and right now? The sacking of up to 20,000 workers in this state is the legacy of the former government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I think you have answered the question.

Infrastructure Projects, Federal Funding

Mr FURNER: Will the Premier update the House on the importance of federal investment in Queensland infrastructure?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am more than happy to answer the question from the member for Ferny Grove, who wants to know about the importance of federal investment in Queensland to generate jobs for Queenslanders. This week the Deputy Premier, the transport minister and I released the State Infrastructure Plan, a very clear blueprint for driving the economy in this state. I made it clear that we need to have a very firm partnership with the federal government because this is about putting Queensland first. I know the opposition does not like doing that, but I am prepared to stand up for Queensland. Every one of my cabinet colleagues is prepared to stand up to Canberra. We will stand up for Queensland because we need the jobs here.

There is nothing more important than the dignity of a job, because if you do not have a job you cannot pay the bills. Whether you are in Mount Isa, Cairns, out west or in Ashgrove, if you do not have a job you cannot pay the bills and support your family. What we saw over three years of the former government—it is almost wiped from history—was that up to 20,000 people lost their jobs.

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier has been referred to the Ethics Committee on that matter before and has apologised to the House over it. She should refrain from using those particular figures as per the Ethics Committee.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Premier.

Mr Dick: As if he'd talk about it!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection: as if they want to talk about the cuts they made—those cruel and callous job cuts made right across the state. Even today people come up to me in the street and tell me they still feel the effects of what the former government did to them. Campbell Newman may no longer be in this House but his legacy is here. The Leader of the Opposition axed over 4½ thousand jobs in the health system alone. The deputy leader ripped apart Skilling Queenslanders for Work. My government has brought back Skilling Queenslanders for Work so we can get people back into training and give young people an opportunity to get a job.

They can dismiss this, but my government and the people of Queensland expect us to deliver on creating jobs. We heard the figures this morning from the tourism minister. It was great news for Queensland. In the far north there has been a 27 per cent increase in tourism and visitors. On the Gold Coast there has been a seven per cent increase and in Brisbane an 11 per cent increase. We are also working with the private sector to deliver market-led proposals—a brand-new aquarium that will attract tourism and visitors to this state. We are standing up for Queenslanders. It is about time those opposite did as well.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I am informed that we have students from the Beenleigh State High School and the Police-Citizens Youth Club from the electorate of Waterford in our gallery observing proceedings. I urge the member for Nanango to ensure that her interjections are not disruptive but are relevant.

Member for Cairns

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Premier. As the Premier gave an undertaking to you, as the member for Nicklin, to improve the standard of behaviour of members, can the Premier explain how the actions with regard to the member for Cairns of both the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing and Public Works meet that undertaking?

Ms PALASZCZUK: If any member of this House has any issue that they want to raise about another member, they can make a complaint. They are the standing orders under which each and every one of us operate, and they are the standing orders that will be obeyed in this House. We have canvassed this issue. This is the third question this afternoon from the opposition that is not about jobs, not about the economy, not about diversifying the economy, not about tourism, not about the new aquarium, not about the hospital infrastructure plan, not about the school maintenance program, not about the employment forums which the Minister for Employment is running across the state, not about agricultural exports driving the economy, not anything to the Minister for Trade about growing investment or attracting overseas investment—nothing about that. There are no questions about the Townsville stadium and matching the federal government with our \$100 million to get jobs going in Townsville. There are no questions about the Queensland Nickel workers.

This is an opposition that has run out of ideas. The shadow ministers should hang their heads in shame. How do they come to work each day and think they cannot ask a question about their portfolios? It is an absolute embarrassment that they cannot ask one single question that is portfolio related in this House.

Ms Trad: And then they bring in stuffed toys.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take that interjection—they bring in a stuffed toy. This is a parliament—**Honourable members** interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We do not want an argument across the chamber.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is a parliament, not a playgroup—and this is the former attorney-general of this state. If they want to talk about standards, look no further than the member for Kawana.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I think we can do better. I think the Premier has answered the question.

State Infrastructure Plan

Mr BUTCHER: My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier inform the House how the State Infrastructure Plan will benefit Gladstone and how projects in previous plans were delivered?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Gladstone for his question.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, I find that interjection by the member for Kawana personally offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Mr Langbroek: Let's have the tape.

Mr SPEAKER: What is the issue, Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

Mr Langbroek: I said, 'Let's have the tape.'

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, we are not going to have a debate across the chamber. You know the proceedings, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I call the Deputy Premier. A question has been asked.

Mr Dick: 'I'll swear on a Bible.'

Ms TRAD: I will take that interjection—'I'll swear on a stack of Bibles.' I thank the member for Gladstone for his question because, unlike those opposite, every single member of the Australian Labor Party in this chamber is concerned about their communities, they are concerned about jobs and they are concerned about growing the economy that our state needs into the future. That is what we are concerned about. I am very, very pleased that the State Infrastructure Plan has included an allocation in the member for Gladstone's electorate to upgrade timber bridges to ensure that freight gets to the port as fast as possible and circumvents Rockhampton, because we know the faster freight—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under standing order 253A in relation to your persistent disruptive interjections. If you persist, you will be asked to leave the chamber. If you persist, I may even consider issues under standing order 253 or 252. It is your call.

Ms TRAD: This \$40 million allocation to the Dawson Highway is much needed and AgForce has given it the tick of approval. I look forward to joining the member for Gladstone when the timber bridge replacement program is finalised so we can open this important piece of infrastructure.

Those opposite have been bleating somewhat about projects that are contained in the State Infrastructure Plan which may have started or commenced under the previous LNP government, but let me say this. Those opposite have very, very short memories when it comes to who plans and who delivers infrastructure, because the evidence and history has shown us that Labor are the planners, Labor are the builders and Labor are the deliverers when it comes to infrastructure and jobs in this state. Those opposite lined up to open \$20 billion worth of infrastructure planned and delivered by Labor. Let me go through them—the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 1, the Springfield rail line in December 2013, the Inner Northern and Northern busways in September, the Translational Research Institute, the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, the Gold Coast University Hospital, Airportlink. I note—

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Deputy Premier. Member for Indooroopilly, you are warned under standing order 253A in relation to your disruptive interjections. If you persist, I will take further action.

Ms TRAD: I note that the member for Clayfield has not been Treasurer for a while and he might be a bit rusty about this, but projects that are funded in this financial year turn up in the SIP because they are being funded this financial year. I think the member for Clayfield—

(Time expired)

Member for Cairns

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier advise when she first made the Premier's office aware that she was at the centre of allegations of verbal abuse and bullying of the member for Cairns?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to standing order—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We will have some silence while I listen to the point of order.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I just seek your direction as to whether this question falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Deputy Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question, if you understand the question, Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: I acknowledge the question from the member for Nanango and I note, for the benefit of the House, it is yet another question that does not go to the heart of jobs or infrastructure delivery in this state. I speak to the Premier on multiple occasions every single day. That is the way a state is run—unlike those opposite, when we had the former premier fighting with the former deputy premier, and the former deputy premier trying to keep the former premier in line, and the former treasurer trying his best in the last term to keep everyone in line but failing abysmally. While we are talking about failures—

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. Quite clearly, the Deputy Premier has degenerated into debate to avoid the question again. The question is clearly about when she first made the Premier's office aware that she was at the centre of allegations of verbal abuse and bullying of the member for Cairns. Please answer the question with relevance.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. Deputy Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, as I said, I speak to the Premier on a number of occasions every single day. Whether or not I actually advised the Premier that a letter had come into my hands—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, if they do not want to listen to the answer, I am very happy to sit down. They have asked me the question. I first became aware of a letter that had been submitted to the Treasurer as the member for Mulgrave in Far North Queensland. When I became aware of it, I am pretty sure on that day in late January—and I do not have that day to hand because, as I said, I speak to the Premier every single day—I would have had a conversation with the Premier about it then.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Premier. The interjection is not necessary, Leader of the Opposition.

Sport and Recreation, Participation

Mr MADDEN: My question is directed to the Treasurer and Minister for Sport. Will the Treasurer outline what initiatives—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, member for Ipswich West. I would urge the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to desist with your argument across the chamber. You are invited to go outside and continue if you choose.

Mr MADDEN: My question is directed to the Treasurer and Minister for Sport. Will the Treasurer outline what initiatives the government is undertaking to support sport and recreational clubs and encourage active participation?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for Ipswich West for his question. Can I say it is wonderful to get a question in this place which is actually about real sport as opposed to the political sport that those opposite are continuing to undertake.

Sport and recreation are so important to ensuring we have people with a healthy and active lifestyle in our community. Our Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing certainly go out of their way to ensure they are working with local councils, local stakeholders and sporting clubs to ensure they get all of the things they need in terms of advice and application forms to get into the various programs we are running as a government.

I am pleased to report to the House that we were able to enhance our Get Playing Plus program by \$17 million. This is a program which is going to enable organisations to actually deliver sporting infrastructure. I have also extended the deadline for submissions to 29 April 2016. This goes back to the partnership that our government has with local governments around this state. We have allowed this extension so that after the 19 March elections those new councils may still be able to submit some of their priority projects, which I think is very important. It is a matter of timing and I think it is appropriate that they get that opportunity because they may have a different community sentiment driving some of their priorities.

Through this round of Get Playing Plus, the Palaszczuk government will inject \$40 million into investment in new sports infrastructure or into expansions across Queensland. All of these projects come along with a very important thing; they come along with jobs. They help support local tradespeople—even people volunteering their time working with local tradespeople—and skilling opportunities. All of these things are important. It is also a fact that this \$40 million program through this round may help provide up to an additional 50 projects across the state. It is happening right across Queensland. It is a very good program that has been well run. I will say that sports infrastructure is something that I would hope both sides of politics would agree is an important part of our communities.

On the participation side, I would not be the only dad to have seen that advances in technology mean that our kids are spending more time in front of screens than they would be actually getting out and being active. That is a very important thing. That is where we look at our Nature Play Queensland initiative that the government operates. We are pleased to see that parents and children are going to be able to enjoy nature through unstructured play.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: It is a good program. I acknowledge the program. It is why we have given it \$1.5 million in grant funding over three years to support the rollout. It is a good initiative. It is something that we should be doing in our communities. Everyone in this House would agree that when it comes to participation we need to make sure the next generation of kids are not people who are simply having screen time; they need to be getting game time; they need to be getting out there, being active and being healthy. It is one thing that I can do as both Treasurer and Minister for Sport to support the work that the Minister for Health is doing, who is picking up the problem at the other end.

Member for Bundamba

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the member for Bundamba complained that she had been silenced and was unable to raise an issue in the House, and I ask: can you advise who it was within the cabinet who gagged the member for Bundamba?

Mr SPEAKER: Could you repeat the last part of the question please?

Mr MANDER: Premier, can you advise who it was within the cabinet who gagged the member for Bundamba?

Ms PALASZCZUK: From the cabinet? No-one.

Carmichael Mine

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Will the minister update the House on the status of Abbot Point and the Carmichael project?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for his question, noting his long and spirited advocacy for jobs in regional Queensland. He is an outstanding member for his region. I am pleased to inform the House of two milestones in the sustainable development of the Galilee Basin mining projects. They are timely indeed after the House expressed its support last night for the progress of this project. I am advised that Adani has reached agreement on compensation with the remaining landholder and a copy of the agreement has been supplied to my Department of Natural Resources and Mines. The agreement is confidential. My department has advised that it is awaiting confirmation from Adani that the agreement can now be filed in accordance with the Mineral Resources Act. Once that occurs, the minister will be able to consider the application for the mining leases in the same way as for any other project.

As I said in this chamber last night, statutory assessments and the decision-making process must be robust and comprehensive. That is to minimise any risk of legal challenge. I have instructed my Department of Natural Resources and Mines that I expect any recommendation to me to have been examined and scrutinised carefully. I note that Adani itself recognised in their own media statement that this represents 'another step in Adani's plans to build a long-term future with Queensland'. The other milestone that the mine, rail and port project has achieved is the last key state based approval for dredging in the Abbot Point expansion. The next step for Abbot Point is for Adani to finalise approvals for rail inloading facilities, onshore stockpile yards and offshore wharves, and this is now underway.

These latest approvals demonstrate how the Palaszczuk government continues to work behind the scenes to properly progress these Galilee Basin mine projects. Adani holds 16 permits and approvals at local, state and federal level including six primary approvals. This has been achieved while meeting our commitment to protect the Barrier Reef, and I reiterate our election commitment here again today: there will be no dredging at Abbot Point until Adani demonstrates financial closure. We are holding to our commitment that this infrastructure will not be funded by Queensland taxpayers. We are working hard to progress these projects. We are doing that because of the jobs like the one our State Infrastructure Plan and our accelerated Capital Works Program will deliver to North Queensland—jobs for now and jobs for the future.

Racing Industry, Jockeys

Mrs STUCKEY: My question is to the Minister for Racing. I ask: given that an impending cut of almost 10 per cent to jockey riding fees is set to commence from 1 April 2016 and a further reduction of over six per cent from 1 July 2016, can the minister advise what she is doing to stop a revolt of Queensland jockeys, who recently voted unanimously to not ride should there be any reduction, putting the upcoming Winter Racing Carnival in doubt?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for her question. If there is one thing that we can be sure about when it comes to the racing industry it is that if we have to get things bamboozled, backwards or misinformed it will come from the member for Currumbin because there is absolutely nothing that she has said—

Mrs STUCKEY: I rise to a point of order. I find the minister's words offensive. I ask her to withdraw.

Ms GRACE: I withdraw. There are discussions happening at the moment, which are well known to the industry, regarding the *Tracking Towards Sustainability* document that was tabled in this House on 3 December due to the financial situation that this government inherited in relation to Racing Queensland. There is no secret in that document. It has put it all out there.

The last time I met with the Jockeys Association representative Mr Glen Prentice, which was just last week, they were in discussions with Racing Queensland. I can say to the member opposite that we had a very good discussion. They are looking at ways to save costs, for example, on workers compensation, which is a very large cost for Racing Queensland, and many other areas when it comes to the jockeys. Racing fees have been discussed, but we are landing very clearly and very solidly on that. I have made it clear that I do not want to see people lose racing fees. At the moment they are still in discussions regarding that because they are an important part of a jockey's take-home pay. If the member opposite, knowing my background, believes for one second that we are talking about the issues that she raised in her question, she is sadly mistaken and sadly misinformed. I believe that we will come to a very good arrangement with the jockeys, just like we did with the trainers when it came to QRIS. Trainers out there have been saying that that is one of the best schemes in Australia—

Mrs Stuckey interjected.

Ms GRACE: Let me repeat that, particularly for the attention of the member for Currumbin. They have said that it is one of the best schemes in Australia.

Mrs Stuckey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, your interjections are simply disruptive and not relevant to the question you have asked.

Ms GRACE: I also say that there are a number of other issues in that document that are currently being discussed. The racing industry is a fantastic industry in this state. Unfortunately, it has gone through some difficult times due to increases in prize money, which I cannot control as minister, because they spent money they did not have.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms GRACE: I reckon the member for Buderim knows that as well. We will put racing in Queensland back on track. Labor is back in control. We are working with the industry, and I will guarantee you that when Eagle Farm comes back on track—it should have been nine months but it blew out to 21 months—it will generate income for the racing industry, and we will see that industry prosper beyond recognition.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, you are warned under standing order 253A. Your interjections are disruptive. If you persist you will then be warned under standing order 253A. I now call the member for Keppel.

Tourism Industry

Mrs LAUGA: My question is of the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events. Queensland tourism has enjoyed a record year in 2015. Minister, what threats and opportunities exist for further growth of our \$23 billion tourism industry?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable for her question and her shared passion with me—and I think all members on this side of the House—for growing jobs, growing opportunities and identifying tourism as one of those key sectors. I was at the opening of a brand new hotel today in Brisbane, and we were talking about the fact that Queensland is being recognised by all states and major companies like Accor as a growth market. They want to continue to invest in Queensland and have more hotels—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the Treasurer. Thank you for supporting me on my mission to grow tourism jobs for Queensland. To ensure I am doing that is exactly what gets me up every morning, and I know that the honourable member shares that view as well.

The data released today in your local region, the southern Great Barrier Reef—and we all know that Mary Carroll in this House is a very hard worker in that regard—shows that we have seen six per cent growth in that region. I think that is a result of the collaboration that we are seeing between the major cities that make up the southern Great Barrier Reef including Gladstone, Rockhampton, Keppel and Yeppoon.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday, because what I am interested in is getting rid of any barriers to tourism growth. If the member was worth his salt, he would write to the federal minister and say that he should remove the backpacker tax that his government has introduced nationally. It taxes all of the 180,000 visitors who come to work in Queensland. It is quiet now! What he can do with that energy is target it into penning a letter to his mates in Canberra to say that we want to see the backpacker tax removed. Just like the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, we also want to see action to remove the complicated visa system which is particularly targeting our key growth markets with regard to discouraging visitors from China, India and Indonesia. We want them to get with the times, recognise where the growth markets are and put in a system that works.

While I am on my feet talking about federal government members, I call on the Leader of the Opposition in Queensland to distance himself from today's comments by George Christensen linking paedophilia to the Safe Schools program. It is outrageous and shameful, and I call on every single member in the LNP in Queensland to say that these comments are a disgrace. While you are talking about bullying, this is the perfect example of bullying: trying to link Safe Schools—which is about including people in our schools and ensuring they have a safe environment—to paedophiles. It is a disgrace! I note that the Leader of the Opposition was laughing when I was talking about that, and that is shameful. This is shameful bullying between—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: I now warn the member for Albert that you have joined your colleague, the member for Gaven, with a first warning under standing order 253A in relation to your disruptive interjections. I call the member for Burnett.

Carmichael Mine

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the minister for the environment and I ask: given that the minister has given environmental approval for the Adani Carmichael coalmine to proceed, can the minister outline the benefits of this important project.

Dr MILES: Let me thank the member for Burnett for his question. I congratulate him on getting one up. It has been a very long time, so I appreciate it. It is a question on jobs too! Perhaps those opposite should let my shadow ask more questions, because it is good to have a question about jobs. The member for Burnett was not perfectly correct in his statement, but it is true to say—

Mr Furner interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, you are now warned under 253A. You join the members for Gaven and Albert on the list. I call the minister.

Dr MILES: It is true to say that the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has issued an environmental approval for the Carmichael project. What is important about that is it underwent an appropriate process, because it is this side of the House that can be trusted to ensure that projects like this go through the appropriate process. It is continuing through that process and my colleague, the Minister for State Development, outlined earlier the fact that that project has now proceeded through the next stage of that process.

This project commenced under a Labor government. This project has continued to progress through the appropriate process. Labor went to the election and said that we would not subsidise this project with taxpayers' funds, as those opposite wanted to do. We said that we would not allow dumping of capital dredge spoil on the Great Barrier Reef because we will protect the reef where those opposite do not. We said that we would not allow dredging to commence at Abbot Point until the project stacked up financially, and we are implementing that commitment. That is what we were elected to do. It is this side of the House that can be trusted to deliver on projects like this in an environmentally sustainable way, to let the science inform the decision, as it has here, and to ensure that the public gets a chance to have their say. This side of the House will protect taxpayers' funds, protect the Great Barrier Reef and ensure that these projects stack up financially and environmentally.

Public Transport

Ms BOYD: My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plans and initiatives to help promote the use of public transport in the state?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I want to thank the member for Pine Rivers for her question. I know that public transport is of great importance in the member's electorate and she is a passionate advocate. I saw that firsthand when I visited the new Pine Rivers rail bridge with the member in her electorate.

The recent announcement by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that Australia has reached 24 million people shows that we need to start planning and delivering for our future, and planning and delivering we are. We are planning and delivering the future by (1) delivering on an election commitment to get rid of the member for Indooroopilly's tertiary transport concession card system which wasted money and time, particularly for students; (2) we are undertaking an independent fare review that will deliver fairer fares for commuters; and (3) we are delivering on infrastructure and an infrastructure plan for Queensland that delivers jobs, new funding and an investment pipeline worth billions. Most significantly in that regard it is delivering on great support for public transport.

By way of example, we have locked in funding for stage 2 of Gold Coast Light Rail in time for the Commonwealth Games; we are on track to open Moreton Bay Rail this year; we are upgrading the north coast line for our freight sector—it also has some broader benefits for public transport; and we are duplicating the Coomera-Helensvale rail line to give the Gold Coast the public transport services it deserves. We are also progressing the business case for Cross River Rail, a vitally important piece of infrastructure so that in 10 or 20 years residents and commuters from all across South-East Queensland are not standing in crowded carriages and slowly edging towards a congested city. Labor plans, Labor builds and Labor delivers.

At the end of 2012 the then LNP government released the cabinet to-do list. It was good to go back and look at that to benchmark how the Palaszczuk government is achieving compared to former governments. In that piece of work for the cabinet in 2012 the Department of Transport and Main Roads had listed three public transport priorities. The first was to make public transport more frequent and affordable. Patronage went down by two million trips per year and fares went up by 10 per cent. That is a fail. The second was to reduce red tape for transportation construction and development. The third was to cut waste from major projects. They certainly did cut waste. They cut waste by cutting major projects.

(Time expired)

Livestock Transport Industry

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games. Queensland's livestock transport industry has benefited strongly from the policy of volumetric loading and there is concern with the current review covering this issue. Will the minister confirm that volumetric loading will be protected under any changes to the livestock loading system in Queensland?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Mount Isa for his question. As he knows, the livestock transport industry in Queensland is afforded concessions to vehicle mass through the livestock loading scheme. It is an important scheme. The concessions allow for volumetric loading of stock considering animal welfare guidelines but not considering vehicle masses. The scheme has operated without review for over 10 years and, frankly, a review is timely.

Consultation between government and industry through reference group meetings on this review will be held until May. It commenced earlier this month and will be held through to May 2016. Two reference groups—one with government members and the other with livestock transport industry members and government observers—are to be established. Key stakeholders that are to be included in this process are the Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Queensland, the Queensland Trucking Association, AgForce, Heavy Vehicle Industry Australia, Truck Industry Council and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Draft terms of reference for these groups have been circulated to a number of stakeholders.

Heavy vehicles and trailers must have their eligibility to operate under the livestock loading scheme approved by an approved person. That is the way the provisions operate. Queensland's scheme differs from those in bordering states, making cross-border operations difficult and confusing for many operators. That is recognised, and that is one of the things we need to look at and review.

As I say, the scheme has operated without a review for over 10 years. Key industry stakeholders have been consulted, and feedback has generally been positive in terms of what we are looking at in the review. Some of the issues that have been identified—I know that a number of members in the House will be interested in this—during the consultation process so far are lack of understanding of some of the technical elements of eligibility requirements; confusion around compliance with the scheme; and unknowingly operating at masses higher than those nominated as safe by vehicle and trailer manufacturers. Safety on these heavy vehicle routes is very significant and must not be discounted in any circumstances. That is why it is very important that we look at these matters and understand the concerns about operators unknowingly operating at masses higher than those nominated as safe by vehicle and trailer manufacturers.

Data collection is underway to develop a true picture of industry operations. Through this consultation and cooperation between the government and industry I am absolutely confident that we will see the livestock loading scheme continue in a way that not only supports the industry—the beef industry in particular—but also supports safety on our roads.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Barron River, the member for Nanango, as I indicated, is going to join those other members who have been warned under standing order 253A in relation to her disruptive interjections.

Small Business Week

Mr CRAWFORD: My question is for the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business. Will the minister please update the House on planning for the 2016 Small Business Week and whether we can expect to see regional Queensland involved in the event?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Barron River for his question. I acknowledge his support of small business in his electorate and his advocacy to ensure that Small Business Week will be happening in his region. I thank him very much for that.

The very popular Queensland Small Business Week will be held this year from 16 to 21 May. Activities will be held right across the state. A key theme for this year's Small Business Week is innovation. Small Business Week will follow on from the Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit next month, where start-ups and small to medium sized businesses will have the opportunity to pitch their innovative, market-ready ideas to local and international investors.

The Palaszczuk government wants to inspire and empower small businesses to grow and realise the benefits of collaboration, which is central to our Advance Queensland plan for jobs now and jobs for the future. A vital element of Queensland Small Business Week is working together with Queensland organisations. Our Small Business Week calendar of events and activities will be happening right across Queensland. In addition to events in Brisbane and Logan there will be government hosted events in the Cairns region, Central Queensland and Toowoomba. The aim of these events will be to bring businesses together and provide them with valuable information and advice. This is an opportunity to help them grow their business and to become more innovative and more able to navigate the changes that are emerging from Queensland's transforming economy and society.

Queensland Small Business Week is a must-do event if you are a small business in this state. It is an event for business owners and operators, from start-ups to well-established firms, to network, gain valuable knowledge and connect to new ideas. As our economy continues to change, collaboration will be an increasingly important part of our small business ecosystem, and networking will provide key opportunities to innovate. Information about Queensland Small Business Week can be found on the Business and Industry Portal at business.qld.gov.au as well as on social media through our Business Queensland Facebook and Twitter channels. I also encourage small businesses and chambers of commerce to register their own events in our online business week calendar.

I am working closely with the small business sector to grow jobs for Queenslanders, and Queensland Small Business Week will be a key opportunity to reach more small businesses right across the state. This is a government that understands the importance of small business to our economy. Small Business Week is yet another way we are helping to establish Queensland as a place to start and grow a business and a great place to innovate and invest for jobs now and jobs for the future. This is unlike what we saw from the opposition in government over three years where we saw cuts to the budget and cuts to the people who were working to help small businesses. We are working for small business. We understand the importance of small business to our economy. We will be ensuring they are supported during Small Business Week.

Carmichael Mine

Mr CRIPPS: My question without notice is to the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines. Given the minister's support for the motion last night to immediately provide all necessary remaining state government approvals for the Adani Carmichael coalmine, will the minister inform the House if he has signed the mining lease? If not, can he advise when he will do so?

Dr LYNHAM: I refer again to my speech of last night in which I stated quite categorically that when one signs a mining lease there are specific considerations one must take account of. I also refer to the Facebook post of the member for Hinchinbrook where he stated—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you have asked a question. I ask you to allow the minister to answer your question.

Dr LYNHAM: The member for Hinchinbrook was quite categorical in his Facebook post, where he stated that once the EA has been signed then the mining lease should be signed straightaway. If that was the case and if he had been in charge, then God help Queensland, because Adani would have been in court and he would have been in court. The land compensation agreements were not finalised. Every ounce of legal advice states that I cannot sign a mining lease until the land compensation agreements have been finalised. The ignorance of those on the other side of the House is outstanding.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, one moment. Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under standing order 253A. It is not appropriate to debate the matter after you have asked the question.

Dr LYNHAM: His ignorance is overwhelming—absolutely overwhelming. If he was in charge, then God help the state of Queensland, God help Adani, God help Central Queensland and those important jobs in Central Queensland! This is the best evidence we have had that a change of government has been good for Queensland, good for Central Queensland and good for jobs.

M1 Motorway, Congestion

Mr POWER: My question is directed to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports. Minister, what action is the Palaszczuk government undertaking to address congestion on the M1 Motorway?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Logan for his question—a very strong advocate for infrastructure funding along the M1 and, I might add, on the Logan Motorway, as are other elected members in that area such as the member for Algester. We know about the congestion on the M1 southbound lane due to about 75,000 movements a day. Anyone who travels that road knows that the inaction of the previous government on the M1 merge is a disgrace. It had three years and a record majority and what did it do? It did absolutely nothing about it. Today we have the State Infrastructure Plan delivered and putting \$42 million on the table—real money, real funding for a real project so that

we can get the M1 merge going. We are seeing real money for infrastructure projects in this state as part of the State Infrastructure Plan with \$500 million of funding attached to it, and we want the federal government to come to the party.

When it comes to highway infrastructure funding, we find that we achieve things when the federal government and the state government come together and work together for good outcomes. That is where we will get progress. That is why we have gone the extra yard on the Ipswich Motorway. That is why we have put real money down on the table for the merge on the M1 to get an 80-20 funding arrangement with the federal government—just like we have on the Bruce, just like we have on the Gateway Arterial, just like we have on the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, just like we have on the M1. It is the same system just across the border from Hexham to the Queensland border—80-20 funding.

We say to the federal government: come and join us to fund infrastructure in Queensland. There are 147,000 movements a day in both directions on the M1 and there was total inaction by the Newman government for three years. It had a record majority. It dithered and did not do anything. In fact, the only major infrastructure thing that it funded was the 'tower of power' right next door. That is its infrastructure plan. We have firm money on the table to get the M1 merge going.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Minister. Member for Glass House, you are going to join your colleague the member for Nanango under a first warning. Member for Mermaid Beach, if you persist you will as well.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: And I do not need whoever's assistance that is. Who was it? Member for Logan, you now also join those other members under standing order 253A with a first warning. If you persist, you will also be thrown out.

Mr BAILEY: We hold our hand out to the federal government and say, 'Partner with us to get infrastructure projects going in Queensland.' The M1 is part of the national land transport network—a critical piece of infrastructure. It is the federal government's responsibility to work with us to get a good outcome.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear the member for Mudgeeraba interjecting. She should be ashamed of her poor record in the last three years—no funding for the M1 and no action. You had 78 seats and what did you achieve for the M1? Absolutely nothing!

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I do not know what is in the water, but you are running close to the line as well.

Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Road Infrastructure

Mr DICKSON: My question is directed to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports. As the Labor government has confirmed a five-month delay for the opening of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, can the minister advise if the government will ensure the upgrade of the Mooloolah River interchange will provide the necessary road network for the new hospital when it commences without delay?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for his question. He must be my straight man here today. I would love to talk about the Sunshine Coast, because what we saw under the opposition for three years was absolutely nothing—zip. It has half a dozen members on the Sunshine Coast—the dithering half dozen I call them. They had a record majority to fund and deliver to their electorates and in three years what did we see? Absolutely nothing!

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr BAILEY: They did not do anything.

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr BAILEY: You know you are right when you get a response like that, Mr Speaker. Come in spinner! I just had an exchange about it with the member for Kawana, who is equally virulent in trying to cover his tracks—three years of dithering, three years of doing nothing. They had wall to wall seats on the Sunshine Coast but did not get a dollar on the ground. What we are seeing as part—

Mr DICKSON: I rise to a point of order on relevance. I asked the minister a question and I would like an answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, please ensure your answer is relevant to the question.

Mr BAILEY: In terms of the Mooloolah River interchange, let us look at the history of this. Going into the last election those opposite had not even finished the planning—not even finished the planning. They included it in their Strong Choices package and promised it at the election after they did not even complete the planning over three years. After three years in government, what were they doing? It is really hard to work out what they did for three years. The planning was 12 months off being anywhere near completed. We are getting on with that work. We are also delivering in the interim the emergency vehicle priorities so that when the hospital opens the ambulances and emergency vehicles get direct access using smart technology on our infrastructure and getting the outcomes to help save lives. That is what we are doing. But we will continue the planning about the long-term needs of the Sunshine Coast and the—

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. I think you may have answered the question.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Employment

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is directed to the Minister for Employment. Will the minister inform the House of the government's efforts to support jobs and employment opportunities in regional Queensland?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Maryborough for his question, because I love talking about the jobs plan that this government has put in place. Last week I was pleased to visit the electorate of the member for Maryborough for the latest of the Palaszczuk government's regional employment forums, and it was fantastic. The Maryborough employment forum brought together about 50 local businesses, employers and industry groups to explore job creation opportunities in the Wide Bay region. For an area that was really relatively slow, I have to congratulate the member because it was a full house. We had some great ideas and some great discussion and I put that down to the hard work of the local member in ensuring that we got those groups together in one room. The Fraser Coast has world-class tourism attractions and we will continue to encourage more visitation to the region through the Minister for Tourism because we know that that supports local jobs.

There was great optimism by those who attended about local job opportunities, international tourism opportunities, education, export opportunities as well as new and exciting innovation opportunities. Some of Queensland's universities have also established learning hubs and study centres in the region, providing opportunities to generate more knowledge based jobs in the Wide Bay area. Since the election, 6,800 jobs have been created in the Wide Bay region and the local unemployment rate has fallen by 0.2 percentage points. However, unemployment remains too high in the Wide Bay area and I will work with the local member with those local businesses and with those employers to get those ideas generated and to get those jobs on the ground.

That is why our Accelerated Works Program is so important in the Wide Bay area, and there are a number of those projects in the area such as the \$2 million for the replacement of the Childers Fire Station. Last month in Mackay—thank you to the member for Mackay for getting me up to Mackay, as did the member for Maryborough—I held an employment forum with the member for Mackay. We brought together a number of those interested groups, employers, community providers and service providers to talk about great ideas. That is \$75 million in capital works supporting 177 jobs. I also look forward to working with the member for Mount Isa. We will be in his area next week and I hope that we get a great outcome and a great support base in Mount Isa. I really look forward to getting those ideas. The department collates them and then we bring them forward and talk further about how we can put them into place.

It is really important to note that, in contrast to those opposite, people are very happy to see us. They know the issues that they face. For example, in Mackay, the people there are not silly. They know of the downturn in commodity prices and they know that new ideas have to come forward and they are doing exactly that.

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 1 December 2015 (see p. 2978).

Second Reading



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (4.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

As the next step in our parliamentary process, it is with great pleasure that I table the government's response to the Transportation and Utilities Committee report on this bill.

Tabled paper: Transportation and Utilities Committee: Report No. 13—Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response [\[356\]](#).

I take this opportunity to thank the committee for its careful consideration and report on the bill. I also want to thank industry and community members who recognised the importance of this bill and invested their time by providing their feedback. It is critical that the laws of Queensland are developed for Queenslanders by the hands of our Queensland community. As I will demonstrate throughout this speech, this bill is evidence of how this can be done well with a broad range of stakeholders.

The committee has recommended that the bill be passed and, of course, none of us are surprised. As was noted when the former minister for housing and public works, Minister Enoch, introduced this bill into parliament, it was recognised that it was important legislation about certainty and fairness for Queenslanders. This bill makes amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, the Housing Act 2003 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. However, at the core of all of these changes is empowering various parts of our community to be treated fairly and ensure that their clients are treated fairly too.

The bill will deliver on the election commitment made by this government to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body. It will give a voice back to Queensland's plumbing industry by establishing the Service Trades Council—or, as I will refer to it today, the STC. This amendment is important, because it reinstates a plumbing regulatory body after the Plumbing Industry Council was disbanded in 2014. This amendment is important not only for the plumbing industry but also for the protection of public health and safety, as well as the environment.

Our plumbing industry ensures that all Queenslanders have a clean water supply, as well as a safe environment. This is something that the committee also recognised and it is something that should never be compromised. In addition, the Service Trades Council will deliver a range of direct benefits for the plumbing industry and its customers, including properly cementing the STC within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission as the plumbing industry's dedicated regulatory body; empowering the Service Trades Council to conduct internal reviews of decisions made by the QBCC Commissioner in relation to disciplinary matters involving plumbers and drainers; and establishing a panel of experts to consider complex licence applications

We have consulted widely with industry and the community on these measures. It is no surprise that stakeholders were loud and clear in their support for establishing the STC. Evidence of that support came from the parliamentary committee hearing. At the hearing Mr Glen Chatterton, who was speaking on behalf of the Plumbers Union, the Master Plumbers' Association, the fire association and the Mechanical Services Association made the following statement—

We would like to thank the government, the current minister, Minister de Brenni, and the previous minister, Minister Enoch, the Premier as well as the government as a whole on the extensive consultation they did. It was a really fantastic experience and we definitely found that our input from all associations is reflected in the current bill. As such, we are all extremely supportive of it ...

I appreciate the commitment and engagement of all of these industry groups and thank them all for it. In particular, I would like to highlight the work done by Ms Penny Cornah of the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland. The MPAQ has been a particularly strong advocate for these reforms. Ms Cornah, in her submission on behalf of the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland, states—

MPAQ congratulates and supports the Government's election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body under the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, called the Service Trades Council.

She goes on to state—

We would like to thank the Government for the consultation they have undertaken on this matter to date. We also thank the Government for responding to our input on the composition of the Council, the scope of the Council's responsibilities and the functions of the Council.

The MPAQ are strong supporters of a dedicated regulatory body for the plumbing industry. This model has been proven to be a resounding success for some and we are confident once reintroduced it will be again.

Likewise Mr Graham MacKrill, the Executive Director of the Air Conditioning & Mechanical Contractors' Association of Queensland, submitted on behalf of his members—

The seven functions of the Council contained within the Bill are supported. The Council's expertise within the services fields will enable it to undertake a strong and informed role on national policy development. This expertise will also enable it to provide informed and relevant reports to the Minister as well as recommendations to the QBCC Commissioner.

Regarding the panels to be established AMCA is motivated to undertake an active role within the panel process wherever it is considered that our knowledge will add value.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders for the genuine manner in which they engaged with my department on this bill. This cooperation stands as a clear example of the government and the industry working together for the good of the community as a whole.

I will highlight some specifics regarding the operation of the Service Trades Council as outlined in the bill. Under Clause 7, new section 6(d), the Service Trades Council will be required to establish a panel to assist the Queensland Building and Construction Commission commissioner with the licensing function, particularly in complex cases. This may include applications from overseas qualified applicants. When it comes to ensuring that our water and drainage systems are safe for the community and the environment, Queensland has high standards. Our plumbers and drainers are trained to these high standards. It is important to ensure that plumbers and drainers relocating to Queensland are able to perform work in a safe manner and to a high quality.

The panel will assist in reviewing applications received from migrant plumbers, or any other application with high complexity, by assessing the qualifications and training received against this state's requirements. The panel would then make a recommendation to the commissioner as to whether a licence should be issued or to identify what, if any, further training is required prior to a licence being issued.

Under clause 7 new sections 6(b) and 6(c), the Service Trades Council can report to the minister on any issue relating to the trade or can make recommendations to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission commissioner on the performance of their functions. These reporting and guidance functions will ensure that the plumbing and drainage industry is appropriately represented through the Service Trades Council. The Service Trades Council will have access to reports on licensing, disciplinary and compliance actions from the Queensland Building and Construction Commission which will prove invaluable in identifying emerging trends and issues in the industry.

Issues that could be identified by the Service Trades Council include an increase in the failure rate of certain plumbing installations or an increase in noncompliant work in certain areas of the state. The diversity and wealth of experience on the Service Trades Council will enable members to analyse emerging trends and issues and, if necessary, either report to the minister or make a recommendation to the commissioner, depending on the nature of the matter.

Clause 7 new section 8 of the bill deals with membership of the Service Trades Council. The membership of the Service Trades Council is similar to that of the former regulatory body in this state, the Plumbing Industry Council, with additional members included to reflect the wider plumbing industry. The membership consists of the assistant commissioner as a representative of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission; a representative of consumers nominated by the Department of Justice and Attorney General as the department responsible for administering the Fair Trading Act 1989; and a representative from the following organisations: the Air Conditioning & Mechanical Contractors' Association; the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union, Plumbing Division, Queensland Branch; the Department of Housing and Public Works, as the department in which the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 is administered; the Department of Education and Training, as the department in which the Further Education and Training Act 2014 is administered; Queensland Health, as the department in which the Public Health Act 2005 is administered; the Institute of Plumbing Inspectors Incorporated; the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland; and the National Fire Industry Association Queensland.

The variety of membership provides for a balance of representation from the disciplines of plumbing, public health and training. The inclusion of representatives from the National Fire Industry Association Queensland and the Air Conditioning & Mechanical Contractors' Association will provide valuable additional experience relevant to the plumbing industry.

A government member: Very important.

Mr de BRENNI: It is very important. The Service Trades Council brings together knowledge and experience from a wide section of our community. Members will have experience in consumer protection, public health and education, in addition to plumbing and drainage. As a result, it was determined that it would be impractical to impose set qualifications and experience on members. Instead, the bill ensures that the Service Trades Council has representation from a broad section of industry and community to ensure community health and safety standards are maintained.

Members and deputy members of the Service Trades Council will be nominated by the respective organisations and appointed by the Governor in Council. It is appropriate to have the appointments made by the Governor in Council to ensure that the appropriate levels of transparency expected by the Queensland community are followed. There are provisions in place that will prohibit a person from becoming or continuing to be a member if they have a recorded conviction, they have been convicted of an offence under the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 or are declared insolvent or disqualified from managing corporations. Additionally, a person cannot become a member if they refuse to have a criminal history check undertaken. The chief executive has the ability to request a criminal history check on potential members. These checks will ensure a person of suitable character is appointed to the Service Trades Council.

During our extensive consultation process, a number of stakeholders have expressed a desire for the responsibilities of the Service Trades Council to be expanded to incorporate other allied trades such as fire protection, gas fitting, roofing, stormwater and mechanical services. Our government's election commitment was specifically linked to the plumbing industry. However, there may be benefits for including other trades under the responsibility of the Service Trades Council in time. Further consultation would need to be undertaken to consider any potential impacts on the affected industries and, of course, the community. The government is proposing to review the licences administered by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. Expansion of the Service Trades Council to other trades will be considered as part of this review. The bill sets out the minimum membership requirements. Should the scope of the Service Trades Council be expanded in the future, additional appropriately experienced members can be added without further legislative amendments. Once again I would like to thank all of the stakeholders for their engagement in this process.

I will turn now to amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. These are an important part of this bill. One of the amendments is to allow approved housing providers to provide tenancy guarantees. As the House will know, the Logan Renewal Initiative will see the transition of approximately 4,900 households and properties to Logan City Community Housing. Allowing housing providers to provide these guarantees is an important change for the people of Logan involved in the initiative. Tenancy guarantees help people access or stay in private rentals by indemnifying lessors against loss or expense if the tenant breaches their rental agreement. This relates to situations where someone's bond may not cover the costs incurred. By making this important change to the RTRA Act, approved housing providers will be able to provide these tenancy guarantees. Again, the community and industry seem supportive of this change with no stakeholder concerns raised in any submissions received by the committee.

Another proposed amendment relates to tenancy database listings under the RTRA Act. These changes will place some additional obligations on lessors, agents and tenancy database operators about how they manage tenants' personal information. These include new obligations to amend or remove information which is inaccurate or out of date. These changes will bring Queensland into line with the national standards by strengthening the existing safeguards under the RTRA Act. Not only will these changes bring Queensland into line with the national standards, they will provide a fairer system that helps to minimise the hardship of families and people trying to access safe and stable housing. It will mean that lessors or their agents checking prospective tenants will need to notify them of any existing listings within seven days. This is important, as the Residential Tenancies Authority has received feedback from the community that tenants are not always informed of listings and listing processes. They may not be able to address incorrect, inaccurate or out-of-date listings which might affect their ability to access housing. It is not only the RTA that has received such feedback; other

organisations and entities, such as Enhance Care and the Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, have firsthand experience with members of the community who have not been informed of their listing or of the listing process itself.

In the submission prepared by the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House, an organisation that provides free legal assistance and representation to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, they note that in their experience the current provisions in the act that regulate database operators are insufficient and inadequate to protect vulnerable and marginalised Queenslanders.

I note the committee's recommendation to investigate legislative mechanisms to ensure a person cannot be listed on a tenancy database. This is where they owe an unreasonably small amount, where no rental bond has been required. The impact of a tenancy database listing on tenants needs to be considered, as well as the risk to the lessor or agent. Therefore, the existing provision in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009, that a person can only be listed for an amount over the bond amount, will be expanded to provide that, where no bond has been taken, the person can only be listed where the amount is more than one week's rent.

I take on board the committee's recommendation that the bill provides for a transition period of six months from commencement. This relates to the proposed transitional provision that would have allowed database operators 12 months from commencement to remove listings that are then two or more years old. I am proposing that the change to give database operators six months from commencement to remove old listings will be included in the proposed amendments. This will hasten the removal of dated listings. However, it does not prevent lessors or agents from removing listings of more than three years from the database ahead of this deadline or prevent tenants from challenging outdated listings through the current tribunal process. Again, this change will provide a fairer system for people seeking a safe and secure place to call home in Queensland.

Another committee recommendation that I have explored further is that Queensland, like South Australia, should prohibit personal information of domestic violence and family violence victims from being listed on a tenancy database. This relates to cases where a tribunal is satisfied that they were not responsible for the breach. While such a provision extends beyond the national minimum standards, I agree that we need to do everything we can to support those who have suffered violence at the hands of their family. In its submission, the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House notes their extensive experience in assisting those seeking to remove their details from tenancy databases shows that the hardship caused by tenancy database listings has a disproportionate impact on women and children. For those experiencing domestic violence and family violence, finding a safe and secure place to call home is extremely critical. I will be moving amendments to the bill to this effect. However, this will not prevent the perpetrators of domestic violence and family violence from being listed on tenancy databases for reasons allowed under the RTRA Act.

I turn to amendments to the Housing Act 2003. A deeming provision is proposed to clarify that all work, including building work, is lawfully carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation. This provision relates to the laws applying at the time for properties approved or used as public housing. While the committee has confirmed that it supports the proposed amendments, I understand that the committee raised concerns that the not-for-profit housing sector may not benefit from the same development application exemptions under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 that apply to the Department of Housing and Public Works. I thank the committee and its members for their interest in the community housing sector, given the importance of this sector to the delivery of social and affordable housing in Queensland. I note that the proposed amendments do not change the operation of the existing public housing exemption provisions under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. The amendments clarify that public housing developments delivered by the state are carried out in accordance with applicable laws.

I advise the House of my intention to move amendments during the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. The first of those amendments will address suggestions made by members of this House during the committee hearing. In line with these suggestions, I will be moving amendments to the RTRA Act to assist victims of domestic violence. The second of the amendments involves a technical issue with the operation of the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme administered by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. The amendment is needed to ensure a seamless transition to the new scheme that will commence in the second half of 2016.

Before I commend this bill to the House, again I thank those who worked alongside the Department of Housing and Public Works, the staff of the department, officials within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, the committee, industry stakeholders and other parts of government for the crafting of this bill. As mentioned previously, their support and participation in shaping this bill tells me that we are on the right track to achieving fairness and certainty for Queenslanders. This bill is an example of how legislation should be crafted for Queenslanders and by Queenslanders, given the level of engagement between agencies, the community and industry.

Consultation has been broad ranging given the nature of the bill, involving a varied range of vested interests. While consultation has been extensive, the committee only received 11 submissions from stakeholders. This tells me that the amendments proposed are extraordinarily sound. The feedback from industry and the community has been clear: our state needs legislation that is fair and in touch with the real world. Knowing that, I proudly commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I start by acknowledging the work of the Transportation and Utilities Committee for its considered review of the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I take this opportunity to thank all of those people and organisations that assisted the committee members in their consideration of this bill by appearing at the public hearing or through their written submissions. I particularly acknowledge the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland, which took time to meet not only with us as a committee but also with myself and members from this side of the House separately on a number of occasions to review the bill and some of the proposals contained within it.

From the outset, I say that, while the opposition will not be opposing this bill, we do have some very serious reservations about certain aspects of the legislation. The bill contains amendments to a number of bills. In the first instance I will speak about the changes proposed to the Housing Act. Currently the construction of public housing is exempt from development approvals as building work is self-assessable by the Department of Housing and Public Works against all applicable codes. Those properties do not have local authority development or building approvals normally expected of the private sector. I would like to note that the not-for-profit sector does not benefit from the same exemptions as the department when undertaking the construction of public housing.

This bill inserts a deeming provision to amend the Housing Act to facilitate the transition and approval process of public housing stock to community housing providers and, in particular, has been brought up to facilitate the LNP's Logan Renewal Initiative. As members of the House know, this initiative is an important 20-year plan to bring about the renewal and revitalisation of public housing for tenants and to build a much brighter future for the residents of the Logan community. The Logan Renewal Initiative should be a high priority project with the potential to become one of the largest housing renewal projects in Australia. Almost 12 months ago in New South Wales, I attended a forum on public housing renewal. The New South Wales minister and other representatives from around the country were heralding the progressive nature and ambitious venture that our LNP government initiated through seeking large-scale renewal in Logan and, of course, through the work that was set to be approved with Horizon Housing for the renewal of areas on the Gold Coast at Varsity Lakes, Keebra Park and other parts of Southport.

The Logan renewal project includes the management of 4,731 public housing dwellings and a development program which will deliver an extra 2,000 additional social and affordable housing dwellings over a 10-year period. Just last week I had the pleasure of meeting with one of the proponents who has been involved in the renewal program. They, like us on this side of the House, have been incredibly frustrated by the delays that we have seen under this Labor government. The government undertook, what I would consider to be, a fairly unnecessary review and further consultation, simply delaying what should have been a significant and important project creating new jobs and opportunities.

Today in the House we have heard much ado about all the jobs that are going to be created and yet here was a program that was shovel ready—ready to roll. Queenslanders most in need of urgent accommodation would have benefited from this particular project. Despite it being ready to go, we have seen delays month after month. We have seen reviews. We have a government frozen at the wheel. They have no new plans or ideas of their own. They are simply holding up a great initiative.

I am pleased to be able to stand in the House today and support these deeming provisions because I understand how important they are to facilitating that project. I am pleased that we are finally going to see some action. These deeming provisions are also important in respect of other projects. It would be remiss of me not to mention some of the other projects around the state.

The proposal for the Gold Coast, which I mentioned earlier, was ready to go. Earlier last year I had the pleasure of meeting with community housing providers right across the state—on the Fraser Coast and in Bundaberg, Townsville and Cairns. I met with others in the great seat of Whitsunday. I can tell members that many community housing providers across the state have been incredibly frustrated by the delays that we have seen under this do-nothing government. It has simply held up great initiatives.

Hopefully these deeming provisions are a sign that the minister and the government are going to get on with actually building urgently needed housing and supporting our social housing providers across the state to deliver more jobs. Had the Horizon Housing project gone ahead on the Gold Coast as proposed there were some \$1.6 billion of new construction jobs in the wings and some 1,800 new dwellings to be constructed within some of the older social housing areas of the Gold Coast. We would have seen some 1,500 people moved off the waiting list on the Gold Coast.

It is incredibly frustrating to see the delays that have occurred. We are certainly supporting the deeming provisions. They make sense. It is important that we provide certainty for community housing providers. It is important for councils that as some of the old social housing stock is moved across into the hands of community housing providers, in partnership with government, there is certainty about the status of that stock. More importantly, there needs to be clarity for councils and local authorities that any new development will be compliant with the current building codes and planning codes.

I now turn to the other area that is covered under this legislation and that is the re-establishment of a specialist council for the plumbing industry. As I said earlier, we will not be opposing this legislation, but we do have some reservations about the amendment seeking to establish the Service Trades Council within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

We believe that plumbing industry stakeholders should have good representation to advocate for their needs in the industry, but we have concerns about the proposed costs. We heard in the public hearings from the current acting commissioner of the QBCC about the lack of clarity in respect of how the new assistant commissioner and this Service Trades Council would function and what the costs of it would be. It is also our view that the Masters Plumbers' Association of Queensland and other industry groups of this kind already have a significant voice on policy matters. It makes me wonder why we need to re-establish another level of bureaucracy and another formal structure within the QBCC.

I suspect that it may have a little to do with the fact that since the change of government we have seen significant change in the QBCC. There seems to have been a slowdown in the progress that the QBCC was making. We had a great response from the industry nearly two years ago when we set up the QBCC. There was great praise with regard to the appointment of the commissioner at the time, Stephen Griffin. He publicly said that one of the things he wanted to do was crack down on corruption and organised crime within the industry. It is such a shame that he is no longer there to see that through.

We have seen federally through the royal commission into trade union corruption all sorts of allegations come out. Some 40 people have been recommended to be investigated further. One can only wonder what is ahead for Queensland as we procrastinate and fiddle-faddle around with the work of the QBCC and start to water down its role.

I think it is incredible that some eight months on the QBCC still only has an acting commissioner. I note that the minister has had time to travel all over the state consulting with subcontractors, as he should and as is appropriate, but he does not seem to have had time to work out who the permanent commissioner of the QBCC should be. That is a great shame.

I think what the building industry is looking for and what the 220,000 people who are employed in the construction industry across Queensland are looking for is some real certainty around the role of the QBCC as the front line of defence, as an advocacy organisation, as a voice and as a representative for them to make sure that they are fairly looked after, they are paid and they are getting the best possible support they could hope for from an industry perspective. Hopefully, when the government has finished the 80-odd reviews that they are doing—the reviews of reviews—maybe they will actually get around to appointing a permanent commissioner for the QBCC. Perhaps the Master Plumbers' Association and other organisations might have more confidence about their voice within the QBCC.

I turn briefly to the matter of the legislative changes proposed in respect of residential tenancies and rooming accommodation. We heard a number of submissions through the course of our committee work about the proposed changes to the relevant act. We had submissions from the Property Owners Association of Queensland. We also heard from Harcourts, Enhanced Care, the Residential Tenancies

Authority and a number of other organisations. We will not be opposing the proposed changes to the legislation to facilitate what is effectively a federalised scheme in terms of residential tenancy databases.

I do want to highlight a few of the concerns that we had. I am pleased to hear that the minister has agreed to address a number of them. One was, in particular, a reference to victims of domestic violence and abuse. I am sure that we all agree there is a need to protect victims, and the last thing we want is perpetrators being able to freely access that information through a national database by paying a small fee to find out where their former spouse may or may not have been living. I commend the minister on those proposed changes.

Another concern that was raised and discussed at length in the committee was about frivolous amounts being reported and recorded on the residential tenancy database, amounts as small as \$20. I understand that the amendments that the minister will move today will facilitate some regulation that sets out what would be a reasonable minimum amount, notwithstanding that the national provisions provide for a minimum amount of one month's bond. However, in some cases where there are no bonds applicable it is important to identify an amount that is reasonable. I am sure that members of the House would agree that \$20 is probably a bit frivolous. However, something in the order of a week's rent is probably a fair and reasonable starting point.

One of the other concerns that was raised through the process of review was in respect of the amount of time that people remain on the database and the fact that it is very difficult for people to be removed from the database through an appeals process. The national standard which is set at three years was discussed at great length. There was also discussion around the point at which the three years expire if there are multiple offences or recurrences of unpaid rent or damages. There should be provisions to cover that. I am pleased to see that the proposal before us deals with that. We would have preferred that the minimum period be five years, but I understand that the goal of the legislation and the proposal before the House is to bring our state legislation requirements in line with national standards.

In the presentations that we had to the committee, one of the groups suggested that if you are bankrupt you should not even be on the database. I am pleased that both sides of the House or both sides of politics through the committee process agreed that that was really not an appropriate position to take, and there has been no change in respect of that. I am particularly pleased that we were able to land in that space.

At the hearings we heard submissions from the Residential Tenancies Authority, which certainly wanted us to take a very strong stance in the provisions that were made in these amendments in respect of databases. I was pleased to hear from them a very balanced view. I raise that as a matter of public record, but I also think it is important to make this point: in so much as tenants have a responsibility to pay their rent and meet their obligations, there are many occasions—and I raise this as a warning to landlords—where landlords have failed to take appropriate action and they have unknowingly and inadvertently voided their own opportunities to make claims on insurance or evict troublesome tenants. There was some great advice from the Residential Tenancies Authority through the course of the hearings. For any in the House who are perhaps landlords or for others who are landlords, it is probably well worth reading the transcript to see some of the advice that they put forward for landlords around this. They did speak at length about a shared responsibility in respect of tenants and landlords. I look forward to hearing from the minister later in respect of those other amendments. I trust that he is going to take us down the path as per the committee recommendations.

I did want to speak very briefly to a couple of the clauses within the legislation. I note that one of the definitions that has been stated and is important is that of 'public housing premises'. The definition of 'public housing premises' will be deemed to mean 'premises that are owned, or were owned, by the State or a statutory body representing the State and to which any of the following applies—', and one of the important applications is where that property has been transferred from the state to a community housing provider. I am pleased to see that that provision has been made because it is of particular importance in relation to the work that will happen in respect of the Logan initiative and it is of particular importance in the future as we start to work more and more with community housing providers across the state to improve and increase the amount of available housing, both social and public housing.

I would also like to speak on the clause regarding councils. We are dealing here with section 94H, where the proposed amendments talk about the transfer of public housing premises. The provisions make the point that subsection (1) 'does not affect the transferee's obligation to comply with all applicable laws for any development of the premises started on or after the transfer of the premises'.

Initially we did receive a submission from the Brisbane City Council because they had some concerns about this and also the sale of public housing stock in Brisbane and what that may mean in a planning sense. It is my understanding that they subsequently withdrew from the opportunity to come and present to the committee because they realised that they had not identified some of those provisions that had already been made. I am pleased to see that we have gone out of our way to clarify some of those concerns.

In respect of the clauses that amend division 2 in relation to membership of the council, I am pleased to see that the wishes of the Queensland Master Plumbers' Association have been honoured in this. They particularly raised concerns with the committee, and with those LNP members on the committee privately, about the need for broader representation not just for plumbers but also for those contractors who work particularly with air conditioning and air-conditioning plant, and large-scale plant and installations. They raised concerns about the changing nature of the solar industry and the work there. They spoke at length about the need for greater representation in respect of firefighting systems. I am pleased to see that within the proposed legislation and the amendments that are mooted the representation that they were seeking has been well and truly covered.

Of course the Queensland Master Plumbers' Association, as we all know, is the peak industry body for Queensland. There are some 16,000 plumbers across Queensland. It is important that their views and their voice be heard. We have some reservations that we are simply creating another Plumbing Industry Council of old and we are certainly concerned that we do not return to the bad old days of unnecessary red tape and more and more layers of unnecessary management, but we are very keen to ensure that the plumbing industry is heard. We are seeking to be respectful of their views and their desire to work within the QBCC.

I note that they themselves have expressed some concerns around the current role of the QBCC and the fact, as I mentioned earlier, that eight months on we still have an acting commissioner. I would implore the government to get on with it and to find and identify the right person. During the hearings it was particularly disappointing when the acting commissioner came and we started to ask questions about the role of the Service Trades Council, the structure of it and, more importantly, the proposed costs. We started at \$50,000 and then it went to \$100,000. I think we loosely landed at \$405,000 a year as an ongoing operating cost. Somehow that was going to be miraculously paid for from within the existing budget.

In our statement of reservation we have flagged real concerns about the potential blowout of costs. I believe this is something the government will need to keep a very close eye on. I am sure that the industry will be keeping a close eye on this because the budget for the QBCC is funded through fees and charges collected from members of the construction industry across Queensland. When we introduced the QBCC some two years ago, we identified potential savings of around \$120 per member per year across the state. My sincere hope and concern is that we do not see a return to the days where fees start to escalate, because we all know those fees have to be paid by someone. One of the big issues facing the Queensland economy is housing affordability. If those fees are passed on through various building organisations, plumbers, services and trades, they end up being passed on to the consumer and that is of significant concern.

It was a great pleasure to attend World Plumbing Day celebrations last week. A video was shown which presented a very interesting insight into the important role that plumbers play around the world in terms of sanitation and the provision of safe water. As a councillor on the Gold Coast, I used to always say that no-one likes to talk about water and sewage. Sewage is not a particularly sexy item when it comes to public debate. It is the least appreciated infrastructure charge that people pay—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. In closing, I would like to acknowledge Bec Senyard, who is the first official female ambassador of the plumbing industry. We are told that she is one of only 46 female plumbers amongst 16,000 plumbers in Queensland. Bec grew up in a plumbing family. She played a very active role working with her father and running the family business. She is a mother of I think three children. She is very passionate about sanitation and the provision of clean water. She spoke at length about that at the breakfast last week. If anyone would like to follow her on Twitter, she has her own Twitter feed called the 'Plumbette' and writes regularly about issues in the industry

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the minister. I think it was Instagram. With that, I take my seat and commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (4.53 pm): I rise today to speak in favour of the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I start by thanking the members of the Transportation and Utilities Committee and the members of the former Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee—and there have been a few, as the membership has been fairly flexible over recent months. My thanks go to Don Brown, Chris Whiting, Linus Power, Joan Pease, Rob Pyne, Rob Molhoek, Dale Last, Jason Costigan and Matt McEachan. I also thank our hardworking secretariat staff—Kate, Rachelle, Lisa and Julie.

I will start by addressing the Service Trades Council. The establishment of this body will not only implement the government's commitment to restore high standards in Queensland's plumbing and drainage industry but also restore a strong voice for plumbers and drainers on important national policy matters, disciplinary proceedings and licensing decisions. The Service Trades Council will replace the former Plumbing Industry Council, which was disappointingly abolished by the previous government on 10 November 2014.

With the abolition of the Plumbing Industry Council, a wealth of skills and knowledge was lost—a fact that was not lost on the industry. It is worth noting that a range of plumbing industry stakeholders voiced their concerns about the former government's decision including the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland and the Plumbers Union Queensland. Unfortunately, these concerns were not heeded by the government of the day.

The former Plumbing Industry Council oversaw the licensing and conduct of plumbers and drainers in Queensland. After the PIC was disbanded, its functions were transferred to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. As such, I note this bill provides that the Service Trades Council will be positioned within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, which, as I have mentioned, absorbed the operational functions of the former regulatory body.

When consulting with industry, it was noted that certain efficiencies had resulted from the merger with the QBCC but that this had come at the cost of an industry voice for plumbers and drainers. This government is not about petty pointscoreing but about achieving good outcomes for stakeholders. As such, I was pleased to hear that the structure of the Service Trades Council is a hybrid of the old and new model. Instead of just overturning the decision of the previous government, the Palaszczuk government worked with key stakeholders to honour its commitment and restore a strong voice to the plumbing industry while also retaining the benefits of the move to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

I noted at the public hearing for the bill undertaken by the Transportation and Utilities Committee that the Department of Housing and Public Works was commended for the extensive and collaborative consultation it undertook with the industry. I have no doubt this consultation has led to the best model of reinstating a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body.

The Service Trades Council will not be introduced at the expense of the plumbing industry consultative group or the building industry consultative group but will provide a dedicated avenue for plumbers and drainers to raise matters of importance to their industry, particularly in relation to licensing and disciplinary matters.

During the public hearing it was also stated that the Service Trades Council will be funded by the QBCC out of existing funding arrangements. The establishment of this body is an example of Labor keeping its election commitments and replacing another cut from the former government.

This bill also tidies up some provisions regarding tenancy databases. Tenancy database legislation was introduced into the Queensland parliament in 2003. The residential rental sector welcomed the legislation because it clearly set out rules to follow when using tenancy databases. Now amendments are being made to bring Queensland tenancy database legislation in line with national standards, ensuring a fair go for everyone involved in the residential rental sector.

Residential tenancy databases play a legitimate role in the rental process. When used appropriately, they are a useful tool for property managers and owners to mitigate rental investment risk. Tenancy databases allow property managers and owners to make informed decisions about prospective tenants by providing them with information about the rental histories of tenants. The existing legislation makes clear information can only be listed after tenancies have ended and where there remains a considerable outstanding breach such as property damage or rent arrears greater than the amount of the bond. Only tenants whose names appear on the tenancy agreement can be listed.

The new provisions introduced in this amendment bill will improve the quality of information held in tenancy databases. Most notably, a time limit of three years will be imposed on tenancy database listings. This time frame ensures the database information remains relevant and useful. The time frame was established as part of national minimum standards and was considered a fair period that balances the wishes of different sector groups. A three-year time limit will be phased in with a transition period of six months during which old listings can be removed. Being electronic, tenancy databases are easily amended.

I understand it is proposed to introduce a minimum threshold amount that must be owed before a person can be listed on a database. During the public hearing we heard some renters were being listed for amounts as little as \$20. This amendment will require that, where there is no bond paid or no tenancy guarantee given, information cannot be listed on a database unless the amount owed is more than one week's rent.

Property owners and managers must let prospective tenants know which databases they use during the rental application process. During this process when property managers or owners find an applicant listed in a tenancy database they must let them know, tell them how they can get a copy of the listing by directing them to either the owner or agent who listed them or to the tenancy database operator. Managers or owners must also provide information to listed prospective tenants about how they can challenge a listing, which they can do by directing tenants to information on the RTA website.

This bill also brings about the introduction of protection for victims of domestic violence. Personal information of victims of domestic and family violence is not to be listed on a tenancy database where a breach of the tenancy agreement is a result of domestic or family violence. Domestic and family violence perpetrators, however, can be listed on the tenancy databases. These legislative amendments bring a new transparency to the rental property application process and will ultimately benefit the entire residential rental sector.

I will now touch on the deeming provisions in the bill. Currently, building work undertaken by or for the state is self-assessable development which does not require developmental approval but must comply with all applicable codes. Therefore, public housing developments do not require normal development permits from local authorities, even though the Department of Housing and Public Works achieves self-assessment through a rigorous internal process. The deeming provision provides that development for public housing has been carried out lawfully and is anticipated to give comfort to financiers who might lend against mortgages over the properties and to buyers of properties regardless of when construction took place. This may apply where the department sells a house to a public housing tenant who has resided in the dwelling for some time and is ready to transition to home ownership.

The amendment will also give certainty to a third party purchaser that, where public housing premises are transferred and therefore no longer used for public housing, the continued use of the premises as a residence is a lawful one—that is, the amendment will clarify that the transfer of a public housing property does not result in a material change of use of these premises under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 where the same residential use continues without any further development being carried out. The deeming provision does not affect the transferee's obligation to comply with all applicable laws for development started on or after the transfer of the premises. I understand the department from time to time disposes of older properties that no longer meet the housing need. I welcome the proposed amendment as it provides certainty and clarity to the private market that will ensure that the leveraging capacity of the transferred properties is maximised so that more social and affordable housing can be provided. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.01 pm): A constituent rang my office when I was in this place, and when I returned to my office my staff member insisted I go out and see him. He—and I will not use his real name for privacy purposes—was a young father of three who called my office to say that he was about to be turfed out of his home. He explained that his landlord—and this was fair enough—wanted to proceed with selling the house and wanted to sell it vacant, thus requiring him to leave. Normally, this would be a bit of a hassle for a young, single parent but they could presumably move on. However, for this young father, the burden was much higher. He was on the tenancy database as a result of three-year-old debts incurred at the time of a difficult break-up of a relationship with a previous partner.

I visited his very humble house. He sat in a bare house with no furniture, his youngest son on his lap. He was so worried about being evicted that he had moved all of his furniture out of the house and had just the very bare minimum. He used the internet on his phone to try to get a house from Gumtree, but his presence on the database meant that he was effectively shut out of the private rental market. I know that for his young children the memory of bailiffs and police evicting their little family out onto the

street would be traumatic, and I promised myself that in this case I simply would not let that happen. Those three little boys would not have that memory; they would not stand out on the busy street with their limited possessions stacked around them.

This story ended happily, but for many a mistake in their past or a debt incurred by others but on their lease leaves a lasting legacy that makes obtaining the necessity of a roof over their heads very difficult. If I could see this one family, who was paying their way in the private rental market but trapped from moving, and say that they would not be ejected onto the street—not on my watch—then we in this place can do the same for so many other struggling families in Logan, Ipswich, Manly, Rockhampton, west Cairns, Southport, anywhere in this state where striving families might have made a mistake but battle to once again right themselves.

We heard from submissions given to the committee that 71 per cent of homeless people are similarly trapped on the rental tenancy databases. We need to have a fair path out of homelessness. For this and other reasons I will outline, I urge members to support the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill seeks to: implement uniform national law provisions regarding the tenancy database; allow approved housing providers to give tenancy guarantees to private lessors; and introduce a provision which deems that any development work carried out for public housing to be lawfully carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation applying at the time. Further, the bill also seeks to establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body, to be called the Service Trades Council, within the QBCC to ensure that the specialist needs, standards and accreditation for the plumbing trade and industry are maintained and enhanced.

Many who have not examined the issue carefully might ask why we need these standards for specialist trades. Of course for the most part, plumbing is hidden from the consumer and the standards of work will not be clear. However, the consequences of lesser standards can be catastrophic for the home owner. Water leakages can cause enormous damage and home owners expect that this government will maintain high standards for all trades, including the plumbing trade.

Members can imagine the expense of retrofitting plumbing in a suburban house, but even more costly is the attempt to retrofit plumbing or air conditioning in a high-rise building. The cost of faulty and not-to-standard air conditioning is not just the price of fixing it; the danger of legionnaire's disease is something we need strong standards to guard against. We have seen that legislation has been introduced about legionnaire's disease and our public hospitals, but I will not anticipate that debate.

Instead, we can look to a tragic relatively recent case in Melbourne in the newly built aquarium where 35 people were infected and two died after contracting the disease from water droplets coming from faulty air conditioners. LNP members here may be aware of the case because a Liberal Party function was held at the aquarium at the time and some members of the Liberal Party contracted the disease from this unfortunate incident. At the time, there were concerns for John Howard, who had attended the function, and the then Liberal leader in Victoria. Participants at the function were concerned by the outbreak because they know that with good plumbing standards and maintenance the disease is entirely preventable. I know that this incident was a sharp wake-up call for any who thought that high standards were not required in the plumbing industry. This bill does not directly address the issues regarding standards to prevent legionnaire's disease, but it does ensure that the Service Trades Council can maintain high standards of work by plumbers and it can advise the minister on any issues connected with legionnaire's disease.

The Service Trades Council will have responsibilities to report to the minister on issues that occur and are related to the plumbing and drainage trade so that as this industry develops the minister is apprised of any of the challenges that might undermine the high standards that we seek to maintain. Further, the minister can refer issues to the council where the minister seeks its expert industry advice. This ensures that the government is well connected to the industry and it is reflective of the Palaszczuk government's desire to keep actively listening to Queenslanders on the issues that matter to them.

I have heard concerns from the other side about the costs associated with these changes. For the benefit of other members who have perhaps not been following the submissions, I can tell them that this is made clear on page 6 of the explanatory notes, where it says that the costs will be met from within the existing QBCC budget as the council replaces, in a new, industry focused format, the regulation the QBCC was attempting to provide. I also note—and I am disappointed that this was not listened to—that the Master Plumbers' Association in their submission noted this issue and stated that the approach in the bill for licensing 'will provide efficiency savings for government'. It seems unfortunate that the LNP cannot listen to the advice the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland made on this issue. However, it is not a surprise—they did not listen in the last term of government either.

I also note that, as usual, the LNP members maintain their obsession with the role of trade unions in our state. Let us be clear—licensed plumbers value this change, whether they are a member of a union or they choose not to be. Union members and the elected members of their union value and respect the standards of the trade and the high level of skills required. I know that the other side of the House will continue pathological attacks against union members who seek to maintain standards of work and the right to have a safe and fairly paid workplace; however, this does nothing to improve this state. Instead, the LNP should listen to trade unions and the union members and work with them collaboratively to improve outcomes. They should have done this when they abolished the specialist plumbing board in the previous government. I am pleased that the support for the current bill is a recognition that the previous government, by not listening to industry—the union, contractors and employers—got it wrong.

I note that before I was made a member of the committee it held hearings and took submissions from stakeholders. I wish to make the House aware of some of these submissions. The Air Conditioning & Mechanical Contractors' Association supported the Service Trades Council and stated—

... we look forward to undertaking an active role in working with other members to achieve optimal outcomes.

It continues—

We consider that a dedicated body within the QBCC is the right model to achieve specific outcomes ...

Further, they went on to stress that they supported the current membership structure within the bill. The peak employers association, the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland, wrote to say—

The MPAQ congratulates and supports the Government's election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body under the ... (QBCC), called the Services Trades Council.

It seems that the union of employers in the plumbing industry care just as much as, if not more than, the union of employees. The Master Plumbers' Association goes on to say—

We would like to thank the Government for the consultation they have undertaken on this matter to date.

In their submission, the Plumbers Union of Queensland supported the creation of the Service Trades Council. In the union's submission they emphasised the specific knowledge that the Service Trades Council would have to provide advice and to recognise overseas skills, to inform national policy, to inform the minister and the policy process and to make recommendations to the QBCC when it does investigations, audits and compliance to maintain the standards of the industry.

It seems that this bill is one of unity with so many submitters supporting the Service Trades Council. In fact, there is only one point that unites them more and that is the condemnation of the process of the last LNP government and their support for the listening and positive negotiation process that the Palaszczuk government has undertaken throughout this process.

I would like to speak more about the role of helping tenants who have made a mistake at some point in their lives in the past and also the role we are taking in providing national uniformity in the tenants database. However, I will leave this for other speakers. I simply say that I endorse the minister's comments on these issues. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McEACHAN** (Redlands—LNP) (5.11 pm): I rise to speak to the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I want to begin by thanking the committee secretariat for their hard work on this report along with that of the chair, Shane King, the member for Kallangur, the shadow minister, Rob Molhoek, and my fellow committee members. I would also like to acknowledge those members who contributed to this report under the previous committee prior to 18 February 2016.

The report handed down by this committee recommends that the bill be passed. It recommends that the Minister for Housing and Public Works investigate legislative mechanisms to ensure that a person cannot be listed on a tenancy database if the amount owing is an unreasonably small amount. In considering amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, the committee has recommended amendments to the proposed section 564(2) to provide for a transition period of six months from commencement and that the bill be amended to prohibit personal information of victims of domestic violence and family violence being listed on a tenancy database. I note that some of these committee recommendations have been addressed in the amendments proposed today by the minister.

In making the recommendations, the committee consulted extensively with the Department of Housing and Public Works as well as industry stakeholders. I will turn now to the amendments proposed to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. These amendments will allow approved housing providers to give tenancy guarantees to private lessors. The opposition members of

the committee do not oppose these amendments. However, reservations were raised that the bill did not contain provisions to prevent the personal information of victims of domestic and family violence being listed on the tenancy database. The amendments to this bill bring Queensland into line with the national minimum standards for residential tenancy databases.

Tenancy databases are privately owned databases that contain information about an individual's tenancy history. Lessors or agents can record the personal information about tenants who have defaulted in their tenancy for matters such as rent arrears, property abandonment or termination of a tenancy. Tenants are listed on these databases for a period of three years before they can apply to be removed. This amendment will allow housing providers to provide tenancy guarantees to private lessors. Approved housing providers such as the Logan City Community Housing service will also be able to provide tenancy guarantees.

The new section 458B is proposed to apply where a lessor or their agent uses a tenancy database for checking the tenancy history of the applicant and finds the person is listed on the database. An agency or lessor would now be required to give written notice to the applicant within seven days advising that personal information about them is in the database, stating the name of the database, details about who has listed the information and how, in what circumstances the applicant can have the personal information removed or amended and how they can obtain a copy of the personal information.

The committee received submissions in support of prospective tenants being advised of their listing on tenancy databases. In addition, the Property Owners Association of Queensland raised concerns with regard to the requirement that the person checking the tenant's rental history must inform the prospective tenant of the listing and the way in which the listing could be removed. I would urge the minister to monitor these concerns and take action if that should be required.

The Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House Incorporated submitted its support for the proposed new section in the committee's public hearing and stated—

Our experience is that at the time the tenancy ends our clients are often going through a number of circumstances of disadvantage. There may be a connection with domestic violence, mental health issues or other instances that do mean that they are transitioning directly from the tenancy that is the basis of the listing into some form of emergency accommodation, transitional housing or that more traditional understanding of homelessness. I would accept Mr McBryde's comments about his practical experience that the existing provisions to notify a person of the proposed listing that the current act has in place in practice still mean that it is unlikely that a client of ours might be notified at the time they leave the tenancy that the listing has been put in place. That is one of the reasons we strongly support the proposed legislation around section 458A and B, that there is that notice at the time they are applying for a further tenancy that they have been listed.

However, the committee also noted other submissions which indicated that tenants are not always informed about listings or may be unable to understand the process. The Residential Tenancies Authority advised the committee that the proposed amendment is a national minimum standard. The committee took on board the concerns of some stakeholders regarding this requirement but concluded that it was satisfied with the amendment based on the departmental advice and the need to bring the legislative requirements into line with national minimum standards.

The opposition members of the committee expressed some reservations about these amendments where there is a possibility that legislation will allow tenants to be listed on tenancy databases for unreasonably small amounts such as those owing less than \$20. The committee received a submission from Enhance Care requesting stronger legislative protection to prevent the listing of a person for owing as little as \$20. Enhance Care submitted that section 459 be amended to include a provision that a tenant not be listed on a tenancy database if the listing is for an amount under the value of \$300. I note the current provision under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 that the amount owing be more than the rental bond and any tenancy guarantee before listing on the database. I understand that is part of the amendments submitted today as well.

I remain concerned though that in situations where a tenant does not pay a rental bond it would be possible for them to be listed for an unreasonably low amount. The committee has recommended the Minister for Housing and Public Works investigate legislative mechanisms to ensure a person cannot be listed on a database if the amount owing is unreasonably small. I understand the amendments attend to that. I thank the minister.

Further amendments in subsection 459C(1) and 459C(2) require a lessor, their agent or a database operator who lists personal information on a tenancy database to give the listed person a copy of that information within 14 days. That requirement would follow a request and the fee having been paid. Proposed subsection 459C(3) also requires that any fee charged must not be excessive. Enhance Care submitted that there should be clarification around the interpretation of whether a fee

charged is excessive and proposed an amount of \$20 be set as the maximum fee charged. The committee, however, was satisfied with the advice of the Department of Housing and Public Works that the proposed subsection is modelled on a provision within the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 on the cost of access to information.

The proposed section 459D seeks to impose limits on the length of time an individual's information can be kept on a database. The amendment proposes to impose a three-year limitation on information held on tenancy databases and provides that where a database operator is advised that information held is out of date where it relates to an amount owed, the incorrect information must be removed within 14 days.

I note the submissions to the committee which did not support limiting listings to three years on the basis that this will increase the risk to lessors. The Property Owners Association of Queensland did recommend five-year listings where a tenant has not repaid the amount owing. Advice from the department was received noting that the three-year limitation was established as part of the minimum national standard. The committee therefore resolved that the proposed subsection and three-year limit was appropriate and consistent with national standards.

Submissions were taken by the committee on a number of other matters in relation to listings on tenancy databases. These included submissions on removing bankrupt persons from the database; allowing registrars to make orders on database matters; the introduction of a transition period for database listings to be removed from a database; and a proposal to allow the listing of tenants prior to the end of a tenancy.

The committee did recommend that the Minister for Housing and Public Works amend the bill to prohibit personal information of victims of domestic and family violence from being listed on the tenancy database. The Residential Tenancies Authority advised the committee that South Australia has recently introduced amendments to prohibit disclosure of personal information pertaining to victims of domestic and family violence from being listed on a tenancy database, and again I understand that the Minister for Housing and Public Works has considered this proposal and is implementing appropriate amendments.

The committee also considered amendments to the Housing Act 2003. Clause 4 of the bill proposes to insert a new part 9, division 2B, development of public housing premises, which includes new sections to amend the Housing Act 2003 to provide that all development and building work for properties approved or used as public housing has been done lawfully in accordance with relevant laws at the time.

Currently, the construction of public housing is exempt from development approvals, as building work is self-assessable by the Department of Housing and Public Works against all applicable codes. These properties do not have local authority development or building approvals normally expected in the private sector. The not-for-profit sector does not benefit from the same expectations when undertaking the construction of public housing. The committee noted the department's advice that the public sector housing stock complies with all applicable laws and regulations, and while the committee supported the deeming provision proposed in the bill, it was concerned that the not-for-profit sector, including community housing, would not benefit from the same exemptions.

Concern was raised that the not-for-profit sector would be impacted by additional requirements imposed under the development application process as a result. The amendment to this bill inserts a deeming provision to amend the Housing Act 2003. It seeks to facilitate the transition and approval process of public housing stock to community housing providers. I note that this will assist in particular with the LNP's Logan Housing Renewal Initiative. This is a 20-year initiative to revitalise public housing for tenants and build a brighter future for the Logan community. This is about providing the best housing services possible. The initiative will build a stronger sense of community and improve the wellbeing of residents in Logan. This important project has suffered many delays under this government. Those opposite are more concerned with planning to plan and consulting about consulting than creating jobs and building the new homes which are desperately needed in Queensland.

I move now to speak to the committee's findings on the amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. The LNP is not opposing the amendments, but we have noted our reservations. The bill seeks to establish the Plumbing Industry Council by another name—the Service Trades Council—within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. The opposition members on the committee certainly

acknowledge the industry's desire to have high-level representation within government. We also acknowledge that the plumbers of Queensland ensure that we get healthy water to our homes, hospitals and businesses and, indeed, that waste is taken safely away and I want to thank them for that. We are concerned, however, that the creation of the new position of assistant commissioner within the QBCC will risk a significant cost to the industry. It is particularly concerning that the acting commissioner of the QBCC was unable to specify the cost of the Service Trades Council when questioned on this matter by members of the committee. It should be acknowledged that there is a risk that this could lead to an increase in licensing costs for plumbers.

I note that the industry has had representation within the Queensland government since 1950. Opposition members on the committee have concerns, though, about creating the new position of assistant commissioner. The role comes with associated administrative costs, and it is suggested that the fees be met by and funded by industry members.

The Service Trades Council is clearly just the Plumbing Industry Council by another name, whereas the previous LNP government sought to reduce red tape by bringing the industry under a single regulatory and licensing system. Whilst we acknowledge and respect the desire of the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland and industry representatives to have a defined industry voice in government, opposition members remain concerned about the cost of the association and union members. The Labor government is simply establishing another bureaucracy that will require more government funding. There is not a bureaucracy in the world that Labor could not inflate or blow out of proportion. At risk of getting bogged down in gutter politics—excuse the pun—I can assure members that is not my intention in referring to the red-tape bureaucracy created by those opposite. It is simply a mere statement of fact that the ALP is incapable of running a government without running up the bill. Given that the QBCC has had an interim or acting commissioner for eight months, is it any wonder that industry wants direct representation.

In addition, the department responded to suggestions in relation to licensing that were raised by the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland that they could be dealt with by one of the more than 80 reviews instigated by the Labor government. That begs the question: why not wait for the review? However, I do acknowledge that there is scope within the bill to deal with other licensing functions as they arise. Ultimately, this bill with its three components covers a wide range of legislative areas. Not without some concerns, it has industry and stakeholder support. The LNP has recorded reservations with it but does not oppose the bill.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (5.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to thank the committee for their work on this bill. I congratulate the Minister for Housing and Public Works on his hard work and the hard work of the Department of Housing and Public Works in preparing this bill. As I said when I introduced the bill to the House in December last year, I am honoured, as is the current Minister for Housing and Public Works, to be part of a government which is returning certainty and fairness to Queenslanders. Delivering on another Palaszczuk government election commitment, this bill will re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

Those opposite were part of an LNP government which systematically dismantled key bodies whose purpose it was to ensure that the best interests of Queenslanders were maintained. An example of this deliberate erosion was the abolition of the Plumbing Industry Council. Against the wishes of the plumbing industry, the former LNP government dismantled the Plumbing Industry Council. This not only weakened the voice of the plumbing industry but also threatened the industry's ability to maintain high standards of service. These high standards are not there simply to tick a box; they are needed to ensure that the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and their environment is not compromised.

During my time as the housing and public works minister, it was a great privilege to speak to a range of hardworking stakeholders across the plumbing industry. I cannot mention all of them, but in particular I would like to acknowledge a handful of people for their input and advice: executive director of the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland, Penny Cornah; executive director of the National Fire Industry Association Queensland, Wayne Smith; executive director, Queensland, of the Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors' Association, Graham Mackrill; QBCC acting commissioner Kellie Lowe; Plumbers Union Queensland state secretary Gary O'Halloran; and Service Trades Queensland's Glen Chatterton.

The message I received very clearly from them and from everyone I spoke to was that Queensland needs a regulatory body to keep the plumbing industry strong. The submissions received during the five-week consultation period before the introduction of this bill backed this message, with all of them supporting the re-establishment of a plumbing industry regulatory body.

I am proud to say that we have acted on this community consultation—an approach far removed from that of the former LNP government—and with this bill will establish the Service Trades Council within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. The establishment of the Service Trades Council will strengthen the plumbing industry through improved licensing and regulation whilst also providing the industry in Queensland with a national voice on regulatory issues.

By establishing the Service Trades Council we will be delivering these benefits whilst also maintaining the improved service outcomes that are being delivered by the commission. The council will establish a panel of industry and training experts to ensure the highest possible standards are maintained for the licensing of plumbers and drainers. The council will also ensure that complaints received are reviewed and appropriate advice provided to the commissioner for potential disciplinary action where necessary.

The Palaszczuk government understands the benefits of a strong plumbing industry with the best possible standards. What this government also understands is the need to protect the rights of tenants right across the state. This bill delivers on our government's commitment to fairness for Queenslanders, no matter where they are. Currently, many people who are engaged in the rental market are at risk of being unable to secure accommodation as a result of outdated or inaccurate information. These issues can have significant impacts on our community's most vulnerable members, putting them at an increased risk of homelessness. That is why this bill seeks to introduce the national uniform law on residential tenancy databases, to provide extra protection for tenants. By ensuring information in tenancy databases is accurate, we can minimise the potential for unfair disadvantage to Queenslanders whilst also ensuring personal information can be safeguarded. Further, the bill will also allow landlords and agents to use the database to appropriately screen potential tenants but ensures this is done in a fair and accurate way. This is just another way the Palaszczuk government is helping to restore fairness to all Queenslanders involved in the rental market.

Last year the Palaszczuk government delivered on yet another election commitment by reinstating the Statewide Tenants' Advice and Referral Service. Again, unlike those opposite, we recognise that all Queenslanders deserve protection and peace of mind when it comes to a roof over their heads. The former LNP government axed the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service, leaving up to 70,000 Queenslanders without an advocate in disputes with landlords or agents. Without access to independent advice, many tenants, particularly the state's most vulnerable, were left stranded without access to information about their rights—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! The member for Lockyer will return to his seat if he wants to interject.

Ms ENOCH:—and understand their responsibilities under Queensland law. That is why we took restoring these services to the election. That is also why we acted immediately to re-establish an interim telephone service.

It is Labor that is committed to ensuring Queenslanders get a fair go and have the opportunity to get ahead. This bill is about restoring a plumbing regulatory body as well as protecting tenants' rights. The tenancy changes in particular are designed to ensure our state's most vulnerable do not fall into homelessness, because we understand that in order to achieve good employment, health and education outcomes we must first ensure good housing outcomes. Within this, it is also about providing certainty for investors through providing them with accurate information to make informed decisions on letting their properties.

This bill is also about respecting the voice of the plumbing industry and ensuring plumbers in this state are operating at the highest possible standards. This is important to protect both the health of Queenslanders and our environment.

I take this opportunity to respond to some of the comments by the member for Southport and other members opposite who have spoken about the deeming provision to the Housing Act 2003, especially with regard to the Logan Renewal Initiative. The Logan Renewal Initiative is a long-term project and is the largest of its type nationally. When I was appointed housing and public works minister in 2015, the Logan Renewal Initiative was one of the first projects brought to my attention and it is one that the current Minister for Housing and Public Works has a strong interest in. What we discovered

when we looked into the project was that the former LNP government had failed to properly engage with the local community with regard to the impact the initiative would have on existing residents. Despite the enormity of this project, residents received just one letter outlining the impact of the project. This letter was only provided in English—into a community where English is a second language for a large number of residents. As we know, the previous government had a great aversion to community consultation, but even this level of engagement was nothing short of disgraceful. Given the circumstances, it was only right and fair for the Department of Housing and Public Works to conduct an extensive consultation program to fully inform tenants and other stakeholders about the initiative and how clients may be impacted.

Those opposite should explain why the former LNP government believed it was okay to ride roughshod over the interests of people living in social housing rather than complain about the work the Palaszczuk government has had to do to clean up the mess left by the former minister for housing and public works. The benefits of this bill are clearly demonstrated. It has taken a Labor government to once again restore fairness and certainty to the Queensland public. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The objectives of the bill are to amend the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 to establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body, to be called the Service Trades Council. I would like to thank some of the local plumbers of the Bulimba electorate who have been talking to me about this issue and in fact have been looking forward to this legislation for quite some time.

Other objectives of the bill are to amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act to implement uniform national law provisions on tenancy databases; to allow approved housing providers to give tenancy guarantees to private lessors; and to amend the Housing Act 2003 to introduce a provision which deems that any development work for properties approved or used as public housing has been or will be lawfully carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation applying at the time.

It is particularly the amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to which I will address my comments. In doing so, I particularly congratulate the committee for the work it has done in this area. In fact, there is quite an eclectic mix of issues in this area. I note that my friend the member for Kallangur referred to the number of different members of the committee in its various iterations. I certainly acknowledge that the current committee has tabled this report but that the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee started off the inquiry into this bill.

I note the provisions ensuring that prospective tenants know where they stand. This bill builds on existing Queensland legislation by introducing several new measures that will improve the use of tenancy databases in Queensland's residential rental sector. One such measure will ensure that prospective tenants are better informed about the use of tenancy databases by property managers and owners. While existing tenancy database legislation does set out clearly who can be listed on those tenancy databases, when they can be listed and for what reasons, tenants' awareness of listings to date has been quite ad hoc, it appears, and in some cases arguably inadequate.

Although prospective tenants might now be aware that property managers and owners do check rental applicants' tenancy histories during the tenancy application process, they have little information about how assessments are carried out and where tenancy history information is held. This bill introduces a requirement for property managers and owners to inform prospective tenants if they use tenancy databases as part of the tenant selection process. This straightforward requirement can be fulfilled by making minor changes to the wording on rental application forms.

Also, property managers and owners must now inform prospective tenants if their names are found listed on a tenancy database during the rental application assessment process and they must also tell tenants how they can obtain details of the listing, which they can do by directing the person to either the agent who listed them or the tenancy database operator who can charge a fee for providing a copy of the information, which must not be too excessive. I note that the committee made some recommendations about that particular issue, which I will speak to later.

Property managers and owners must provide standard information to tenants about the database company used and how tenants can apply to have listings amended or removed if they are inaccurate or unjustified. In the past, despite a requirement for tenants to be informed before a listing was published, prospective tenants named on a tenancy database were often oblivious to the fact,

continually frustrated in their attempts to secure a rental property without knowing why their applications were unsuccessful. The new provisions set out in this bill will ensure prospective tenants are better informed than ever about the use of tenancy databases.

I also want to draw the attention of the House to the introduction of protections in this amendment bill for victims of domestic violence. Personal information of victims of domestic and family violence is not to be listed on a tenancy database where a breach of the tenancy agreement is the result of domestic or family violence. Domestic and family violence perpetrators, however, can be listed on tenancy databases. These legislative amendments bring a new transparency to the rental property application process and will ultimately benefit the entire residential rental sector. I note some of the other recommendations to the bill made by the committee and the minister has obviously flagged his response to those, and I commend him on his consideration of some of those very important issues that were raised by the committee and obviously by the stakeholders who submitted to the committee.

There are issues around the fees and I note that the committee particularly talked about the need to make sure that fees were not excessive. The committee's report referred to the stakeholders who raised some very important issues that tenants have been listed for owing as little as \$20 in the instance where people do not pay a bond or they pay very little in relation to that. Enhance Care advised that in its experience it is difficult to remove a person who is listed for an amount and it makes the point—and this is something that the committee makes throughout its report—that the people we are talking about here with a lot of the issues it raises are often some of the most vulnerable people in our community and we need to be quite cognisant of that. The committee obviously made the recommendation that there be a minimal fee, and I note that the minister has already flagged the fact that it will be a formula based on a week's rent, obviously in response to those very important issues that were raised by the committee.

To me, a number of the amendments proposed in this bill are about fairness. They are essentially about fairness, and they are about fairness particularly for some of the most vulnerable people in our community. I congratulate the current minister and also the previous minister on the approach they have taken generally to the Housing portfolio, and I think we are all very pleased to receive the advice from the minister about this new approach to the Housing portfolio. He points out that it is a human services agency after all, and I was really happy to see some of the phrasing on the website and in the minister's material. He says that a fair approach to social housing will result in better outcomes for people living in and applying for social housing as well as for neighbours, service partners, departmental staff and the community. In my office, and I am sure it is the same for other members, we deal on a daily basis with people who really need our support. They need us to be fair, they need us to be flexible and they need the system to be so as well. I was really delighted to see that very strong and proactive approach reflected in this legislation and also in the policy going forward.

When talking about housing and the amount of work that comes through just my office, as it must be with other members, I want to commend the staff from the Buranda Housing Service Centre whom we talk to. They are almost like family members because we talk to them so often. They are very helpful and wonderful professional people, and they are Elizabeth Cottgrove, the client services manager; Heidi Iengen, the area manager; and Dylan Faulkner, the acting client service manager. I want to publicly acknowledge that my staff and I are so grateful for the wonderful work they do and the support they provide to people who need our help the most. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (5.46 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Whilst I was a member of the Transportation and Utilities Committee, I was fortunate enough to be on that committee when this bill was examined and I am now on the equivalent committee and it gives me great pleasure to report on the benefits of this bill to the people of Queensland.

As members can tell by the title of this bill, it is the plumbing aspect of the bill that has the immediate attention of everyone, but I want to emphasise that there is much more to the bill than just that aspect. On the plumbing aspect, though, we know that we do need a strong plumbing industry if we are to maintain strong public health. I think that came through very strongly from the previous minister and this minister as well. As a local councillor of many years, I know that with plumbing, sewerage and water you are only 24 hours away from a great social disaster if that is not fixed.

The Palaszczuk Labor government knows that we need to work with and not work against the plumbing industry. This bill establishes that dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body called the Service Trades Council that will sit within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, the

QBCC. I think we need to make it very clear that all submissions on this bill supported the establishment of a dedicated plumbing services regulatory body. The membership of this body will include a range of industry experts and government representatives and it will play a number of critical roles, including conferring on national policy development, licensing, discipline and other related matters and also reporting to the minister on all issues related to plumbing and drainage.

This bill gives effect to the Queensland government's election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body within the broader statewide construction industry regulatory organisation that will replace the Plumbing Industry Council, which was disbanded by the previous LNP government. When it was disbanded, its functions were transferred to the statewide construction industry regulatory organisation, the QBCC. I certainly got the impression about how popular this move was to reinstate this body when I attended the awards night last year for the Master Plumbers' Association with the then minister, the member for Algester. This was a huge gala evening attended by about 500 people. I can tell members that from that evening all parts of the plumbing industry are very grateful that we are bringing back this regulatory board for plumbing. Plumbers and plumbing company owners constantly sought me out that night and complimented our government all around for bringing back their board.

At those awards, it was really good to see all the different plumbing businesses in Queensland and see what they have achieved. It was great to see so many innovative plumbing and related industry practices being developed and used by Queensland businesses. It is a large scale industry and it utilises a great amount of local innovation. For example, plumbing businesses have been very innovative in gas piping in domestic and industrial applications. Plumbing is an integral part of the burgeoning gas industry in Queensland, especially in regional areas where to some degree they are collecting and distributing gas in operations of different scales.

At that evening, it was made very clear to me that the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland and the plumbers union are united in their strong support for the Service Trades Council. That came through very strongly. That tells us how necessary the industry regards this body that will be created. On that topic, it was also stated at that gala dinner that the plumbers are also very grateful that we reintroduced legislation so that only licensed plumbers could install water meters. That legislation was passed last year. When that bill was considered we heard from a variety of people, including local governments, that—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr WHITING: My colleagues opposite said that that legislation would have dire consequences for Queensland, that it would hamstring water utilities and councils, that people could not get plumbers to do the work, that it would cost too much. From my experience as a local councillor, let me say that we need licensed plumbers to install water meters. When you get out into the streets in suburbia, you do not know what you could find. Sometimes what you find are illegal connections, very poor connections and multiple connections and no-one knows where they came from. Many things can go disastrously wrong when a worker who is not a plumber is installing a meter. You need an expert. The message that the plumbers gave me when that legislation was considered then and the message that they are giving me now is that they need the Service Trades Council, they need that assistance and we are listening. Both that bill and this bill are examples of how we are listening to the industry.

I heartily support this bill, because it also ensures that providers of social housing can get access to bond guarantees. Tenancy guarantees are part of the Department of Housing and Public Works' RentConnect suite of products that assist people to access and sustain private rental. Those of us who have dealt with a number of housing issues in their electorates would know how vital RentConnect can be. As we have heard, a tenancy guarantee is an undertaking to pay up to a stated amount if the lessor experiences a loss through a breach by a tenant and the bond does not cover the amount of that loss. We are already providing those guarantees to private landlords. By providing this guarantee to a broader number of housing providers, that is going to lessen housing pressure throughout the state.

I refer to a local housing provider in my area, Coast2Bay. Under this bill, this fine organisation will now be able to provide a fuller and better range of housing services to people in my area. Coast2Bay is an independent, not-for-profit company committed to providing safe, affordable and appropriate homes to individuals and families throughout the Sunshine Coast, Noosa, Moreton Bay, Redcliffe and Gympie regions. I know from working with that company and talking to them that they lead the way in developing community and affordable housing by working with their partners in government, the private

sector and the community to expand local housing options. Coast2Bay manages over 491 dwellings through the National Rental Affordability Scheme. Their mission statement states—

Coast2Bay Housing Group is a professional and socially responsible community housing company working in partnership with communities, governments and the private sector. It delivers appropriate social and affordable housing programs that support and empower people to improve their lives, progress to independence and contribute to sustainable communities.

It is organisations such as Coast2Bay that will benefit from this bill as it endeavours to provide more housing options. It is wonderful that Coast2Bay can get partial support from this bill.

While I am talking about initiatives that deliver better housing options for Queenslanders, one of the most notable aspects of this bill is the action that it delivers on residential tenancy databases. As the minister said when this bill was introduced, we are delivering fairness to Queenslanders. We want to make sure that these tenancy databases treat Queenslanders fairly. If the database system is not working fairly, it can have a devastating effect on those Queenslanders who need housing. Through this bill, we are adopting the national standards.

This bill makes sure that these residential tenancy databases contain only current and accurate information. The bill recognises the rights of lessors and agents to list tenants on the database, but introduces limitations and obligations on lessors and their agents and makes sure that these limitations are used fairly. As we have heard, the bill makes sure that tenants have to be consulted before they are put on the list. Tenants have to be advised of the person who listed them and how they can challenge that listing. Lessors and database operators are to take steps to ensure that the information that they hold is accurate and remove information that is inaccurate and out of date. Crucially, this bill makes sure that tenants can be on the list for only three years. That is absolutely crucial. We know that people can be put on these databases for only small amounts outstanding. Five years is too long to be constantly denied housing.

In my previous life as president of a neighbourhood centre and as a real estate agent, I have seen what happens to people who are on these databases for all the wrong reasons. I know of people whose names were on lease agreements, they have split up with their partners and all of a sudden they are left with a debt that they did not incur. As we have heard, sometimes these people are single-parent families. One of the best aspects of this bill is that it makes sure that we have a fair system in relation to these databases. Therefore, I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (5.56 pm): I rise to speak in support of this vital legislation that delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body. Although the bill addresses other important matters, such as tenants' rights, I will focus my remarks on those amendments in the bill that relate to the plumbing industry.

As promised at the election, the Palaszczuk Labor government is strengthening the industry to give it back its voice. The industry lost its voice under the former LNP Government when it dismantled the Plumbing Industry Council. Once again, it is Labor governments that stand on the side of certainty and fairness for Queenslanders, listening intently to industry to ensure growth and proper representation.

This bill re-establishes a form of plumbing regulation that has been in place since the 1950s. Although from time to time it is appropriate to reform and improve some things, demolishing them is not the right way to go. The abolition of the Plumbing Industry Council is a great example of that. In a former government, I served as the minister responsible for plumbing regulation. I played a role in the appropriate reform of this regulation with the establishment of the Plumbing Industry Council.

The move last year to create the Service Trades Council, which will take over the plumbing and drainage regulatory responsibilities, is a very good move indeed. Stakeholders constantly have come to the government supporting this move, as we know that this system will help deliver world-leading health and safety outcomes for Queenslanders. Importantly, the Service Trades Council will create a panel of experts to review complex licencing applications. These experts will uphold the standards that Queenslanders expect to be maintained.

The Service Trades Council will play a critical role in ensuring that the industry is properly represented. I note that, in March 2015, the Department of Housing and Public Works met with industry stakeholders to develop a model for the Service Trades Council. The Service Trades Council will also represent the industry on national policy development and will directly report to the Minister for Housing and Public Works on issues relating to plumbing and drainage.

The membership of the Service Trades Council will be diverse and ensure that it is well represented by industry and government. Members will include the assistant commissioner as a representative of the QBCC, representatives of a range of relevant departments and industry entities and, importantly, a consumer representative.

I lament the fact that the opposition opposes the move to support the creation of an assistant commissioner. I know that the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland—a very fine body that is focused on best practice in the industry—is strongly in support of this position. Members on this side of the House also know that that position will play a vital role in ensuring the proper functioning of the Service Trades Council.

As I have alluded to earlier, this position is simply the recreation of a previous position, that of the Plumbing Industry Council Registrar. I note that there were some concerns outlined by the member for Redlands in his letter to the chair of the Transportation and Utilities Committee about the costs of this role.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

MOTION

Casino Gaming Licences



Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.00 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Labor government to adopt the LNP's policy and develop an offshore boutique casino gaming licence policy to encourage investment in job-creating developments such as that proposed for Great Keppel Island.

Indeed, I think it behoves all of us to make sure that we continue to innovate in regard to tourism products that enable our regions to develop. This government talks about innovation. It talks about opportunities. Tonight is another opportunity for this government to really stand up and put its money where its mouth is; otherwise this will be nothing but hollow words.

Last night in this parliament we had the extraordinary set of circumstances where the government accepted word for word our motion around the immediate approval for all remaining state government instruments in relation to Adani's Carmichael mine. Today we see the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines moving away from that, despite the fact that last evening he agreed that the government, and he in particular, should immediately provide that particular approval.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I just want to clarify that we are debating the notice of motion that was put forward this morning rather than the one yesterday.

Mr SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I was indicating that last evening we had extraordinary circumstances, gave a bit of a potted history and now I was moving on to this evening where we again have a job-creation motion moved in this parliament by the LNP. The only job-creating motions, the job-creating bills or the job-creating positions in this parliament this week are being put forward by the LNP.

I have recently had the pleasure for the second time of going to the Capricorn Coast and speaking to the people in that community in regard to their motivations and their very clarion call for the opportunity for development of Great Keppel Island. They see it as critically important that, as a part of that development, there is a product that enables long-term sustainability around a resort development proposal. We know from the history of island resort developments up and down the Queensland coast that their long-term sustainability can be somewhat challenging. Therefore, the whole idea of having a specifically created category of boutique gaming licence to suit that circumstance makes a lot of sense.

This will be nowhere near the same magnitude of Crown Casino in Melbourne or our other onshore casinos in Queensland. We are talking about a boutique casino licensing opportunity that may not necessarily only benefit the likes of Great Keppel Island but also potentially other places up and down the Queensland coast. The reason that we wish to constrain this to the area of island or offshore licences is that it enables those circumstances to be packaged to bring particular tourists, investment and opportunities from other places within the country and also internationally. We know what happens with regard to high rollers and the sorts of products that are specifically targeted towards a particular clientele. This motion does not seek to spread it beyond that to an onshore environment where I think we already have many opportunities that can be made available. It is specifically targeted for a particular purpose.

If we look at Great Keppel Island on its own with regard to what has been proposed, there will be some 1,500 jobs through the creation and the development of this resort with the resultant boutique licence if it were to be granted. Not only that, there is a real chance for ongoing jobs as well. We believe that, as we may not get a chance to put our position thoroughly to the people of Queensland until maybe another 18 months or two years, depending upon the time of the election, and given the fact that since we have announced our policy it has been met with a great degree of enthusiasm from people within the electorate of Keppel and Central Queensland, this government should follow suit and not deny the people of that region or resorts up and down the coast the opportunity to be sustained by such a unique opportunity.

This motion is about jobs. This is a real opportunity to do something. This is an opportunity for this government to put its money where its mouth is and to follow on from last night, where the LNP successfully moved a motion in this place to support something for Central Queensland where jobs are critically needed and critically important.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.05 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. The Palaszczuk government sees running a casino as a serious business and not one to be gambled with. Creating a boutique casino licence on a whim is reckless policy. Frankly, you are a casino or you are not a casino. What is the policy anyway? It is classic boutique policy: small on detail, tiny on facts and no substance whatsoever. Is the reason for creating this policy jobs? No. Never. It is because, in the words of the Leader of the Opposition, 'There was nothing that actually catered for exactly what Tower wanted.' It is interesting to see the Leader of the Opposition come to the House promoting Tower Holdings' proposition. He seems quite prepared to parrot anything they want. I wonder if they told him that within a year of signing multiple 99-year leases on Great Keppel Island they are now in arrears to the state in the order of \$250,000. Just as Tower may not have told the Leader of the Opposition everything, has he told us everything? Has he given them a nod and a wink on the licence? It is also extremely difficult to find any detail on the LNP's new about-face policy on boutique casino licences. It certainly does not appear in its Real Economic Plan, probably because it is not about jobs at all, it is all about politics. I do not know what game the Leader of the Opposition is playing other than hustling the people of Keppel for their votes.

Casinos are regulated for a reason. Established casinos have invested hundreds of millions of dollars with all of their structures and regulated compliance licensing. Regulated compliance licensing is something that should not be watered down. The market rightly expects Australian governments to guarantee an unchanged regulatory environment for extensive periods of time. I have said it before and I will say it again: running a casino is a serious business. There are significant barriers to entry, large up-front and ongoing operational costs and the financial risk of operating a casino due to probity, compliance and security. They are important issues: probity, compliance and security. All of these rightly demand that operations be and continue to be viable. Additionally, Queenslanders need to be assured via probity that projects are bankable and feasible. If a casino fails the state may need to step in and mop up the mess, particularly if it is funding public infrastructure. This highlights yet again another good reason that there are no current boutique casinos. They are not often financially viable unless heavily subsidised. To say a boutique casino can operate properly with a small number of tables and no electronic gaming machines is a myth. Look at the Canberra casino as a prime example. As reported today, it lost \$6 million this year. In order to reverse its fortune it plans to spend \$13.6 million on a refurbishment and it wants to add another 500 poker machines. To even get off the ground, boutique casinos would require and be heavily reliant on electronic gaming machines.

I ask the Leader of the Opposition: show us your policy and tell us what a boutique casino is. Thus far, the opposition has been very boutique on details. A Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* article of 5 March 2016 quotes the Leader of the Opposition as saying that Tower Holdings is after a boutique casino licence for poker machines and gaming tables at one-tenth the size of the Crown Casino in Melbourne. That is 300 poker machines and 30 gaming tables. It is hardly boutique. The Great Keppel Island group's own sales pitch includes a study that recommends a gaming supply of 560 gaming positions. Is that boutique? I will put that into perspective. The Ville Resort-Casino in Townsville has 351 poker machines and 25 gaming tables. That is less than what is being proposed for Great Keppel Island. I am confused as to how Tower Holdings' plans are boutique, when one of Queensland's major casinos has fewer gaming tables and fewer electronic gaming machines. Again, we have no detail from the LNP on its new policy. I am very confused as to what constitutes a boutique casino licence.

The Palaszczuk government is supporting jobs. We are continuing the previous government's IRD policy, but we want increased international tourism. We support a policy position that does not support the creation of fantasy boutique casinos.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.11 pm): Unlike the member for Stafford and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, I am not confused. Tonight I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, because right now Central Queensland is not bleeding; Central Queensland is haemorrhaging. It is haemorrhaging largely because of the neglect of the current clueless Palaszczuk Labor government. There is no doubt that governments, no matter their persuasion, cannot control commodity prices. There is no doubt that, like much of regional Queensland, CQ has been kicked in the guts because of the downturn in the resources sector. However, there is no reason for the government to say, 'It's not our fault,' because this government could be doing so much more. Unfortunately, they have an ideologically driven blockage of the brain that is stopping them from embracing this common-sense LNP policy.

As someone who used to live in Central Queensland, in the beef capital of Rockhampton, it pains me to see the demise of the tourism industry, particularly along the Capricorn Coast from Emu Park through to Yeppoon. Times are tough and the people of the Capricorn Coast have been let down by the Labor member for Keppel.

There is one way to fix this and that is to flick the switch. How do we flick the switch? We allow boutique casino licences to be issued for places such as Great Keppel Island or at least give them that opportunity. As the Leader of the Opposition said a moment ago, this is not just for GKI; it is for island resorts right up and down the Queensland coast—on merit. This will provide the framework for those proposals to be evaluated and it includes my beloved Whitsundays.

There is no doubt that in the Whitsundays there are people whose ears are pricked as a result of this LNP policy position, because they see the opportunities for attracting high rollers from all corners of the globe. That business will go to Macau, Vegas and other places. Queensland's grass in tourism will be cut and if that is the case those opposite can take ownership of it. I will not stand in this place and cop that, and members on this side of the House will not cop it either. Those opposite are frozen at the wheel. We all remember the glory days in Queensland tourism. A lot of members in this place, no matter their political persuasion, have been to Keppel and they will remember the 'get wrecked' promos of the past. This mob is wrecking the Queensland tourism industry, especially in the regions, and the member for Keppel is at the centrepiece of that.

The member for Keppel cannot sport that smile up and down James Street, Yeppoon saying, 'The sun will come up tomorrow and better days are coming.' The member for Keppel cannot just sit back there. She can either put the heat on her masters on the frontbench and stand up for Keppel or she can sit back there and let normal programming continue. You cannot be a lion in the electorate and a mouse in the House. Is she the member for Keppel, representing the people of Keppel in Brisbane, or is she Brisbane's voice in Keppel? That is the question that I put to the House. It is pretty simple: are you going to be a muppet or a puppet?

It is time for the people of central and regional Queensland to get a better deal and tourism is seen as a great opportunity to grow the economy and boost jobs. People are hurting, from the Tropic of Capricorn right up to Far North Queensland. We have heard from the Leader of the Opposition about this mob stalling on Adani, stalling on the Carmichael mine and stalling on Abbot Point. Now they are stalling on a new age, a new era and a new opportunity for tourism in regional Queensland. I see the Minister for Natural Resources smiling and laughing. He cannot roll into Bowen, sip on a latte and say, 'It will be a better day tomorrow.' It is time for the minister to hit the go button when it comes to Adani and Carmichael. It is time for these red-raggers, these socialists, to embrace this great opportunity to grow Queensland tourism. I call on the Bolsheviks to make it happen.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Keppel, I note that during that contribution, member for Whitsunday, you made numerous references to the member for Keppel. I also note that the member for Keppel did not make one interjection. I ask you to offer her a similar courtesy.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (6.16 pm): First and foremost, I want Queensland and the world to know that Great Keppel Island is well and truly open for business. I admire all of the business operators on the island who have kept pushing on and persevering in the face of adversity over the past eight years. Great Keppel Island is a beautiful island with white sandy beaches, blue water, great bushwalking, quality snorkelling and many friendly locals. I acknowledge the Woppaburra people, the traditional owners of Great Keppel Island, and the important role that they play in preserving the island's history and culture.

I have spoken with many community members and I know that the vast majority of constituents in my electorate are keen to see some form of development start on the island. I know our local community needs jobs and we need them now. Every single day I work hard to grow jobs now and jobs for the future. That is why I want to see this development started just as much as the majority of people in the electorate.

This issue has been going on for far too long. Two weeks ago in Sydney, I called a meeting with Tower Holdings to find solutions to the stalled development and get shovel to ground as soon as possible. It was a positive meeting where I identified some real opportunities to help kickstart this development. I have written to the federal minister for northern Australia and the federal member for Capricornia because we need Tower Holdings to apply for a slice of the \$5 billion worth of Northern Australia infrastructure funding to assist in the provision of infrastructure. That is a legitimate pathway forward. I table a copy of my letter for the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 15 March 2016, from the member for Keppel, Mrs Brittany Lauga MP, to the Minister for Northern Australia, Senator Matthew Canavan, regarding the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Plan, Tower Holdings [\[357\]](#).

I asked Tower Holdings whether their development could be revised or staged differently so that it could be started sooner rather than later. Tower Holdings representatives said that if they did not get a casino licence they would start work on a scaled back version of stage 1 of their planned development. I argue that they need to start that now.

This morning we heard from the general manager of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General that it is unlikely that Governor in Council or the minister would approve an applicant for a casino licence without an agreement with a suitable casino operator. Tower Holdings does not have an agreement with any casino operator. I table letters from Australia's two largest casino operators, Crown and Echo, both confirming that they do not have an agreement with Tower Holdings.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 September 2015, from the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Echo Entertainment Group, Mr Matt Bekier, to the member for Keppel, Mrs Brittany Lauga MP, regarding the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Plan [\[358\]](#).

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 October 2015, from the Chief Executive Officer, Crown Resorts Limited, to the member for Keppel, Mrs Brittany Lauga MP, regarding the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Plan [\[359\]](#).

Casino operators must have a serious lack of confidence in Tower Holdings' ability to deliver this development. In May 2014, Tower Holdings was told by the Newman government—by you guys—that they had missed out on a casino licence. Why did Tower Holdings, that same month, go out to the global investment market with their proposed development and advertise a casino opportunity?

Page 55 of Tower's 2014 investment prospectus—and I table a copy for the benefit of the House—advertises a casino opportunity despite the fact that they were not awarded a licence.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Great Barrier Reef Australia, Great Keppel Island—The World's Premier Eco-Luxury Island Resort & Villa Development Opportunity' [\[360\]](#).

I table a copy of Tower's project website which today is still advertising a casino opportunity.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland Tourism website, undated, titled 'Great Keppel Island: Great Barrier Reef Australia—The World's Premier Eco-Luxury Island Resort & Villa Development Opportunity' [\[361\]](#).

This is extremely misleading to genuine investors—false advertising almost. Page 55 of the investment prospectus also forecasts half a billion dollars in revenue from a casino in the first five years. This is an extraordinarily inflated revenue forecast given that the Reef Hotel Casino in Cairns reported \$24 million in revenue in 2013 and \$23 million in revenue in 2014. That is a far cry from the hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue Tower forecasts a casino on Great Keppel Island will generate. I table a copy of the Reef Hotel Casino's 2014 profit and loss statement.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2014' [\[362\]](#).

Mr Springborg interjected.

A government member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition and minister, if you want to have a private conversation I would urge you to take it outside.

Mrs LAUGA: According to Mr Agnew, Tower's cash flow projections are based on 70 per cent of casino revenue coming from the local market, essentially lining investors' pockets with hundreds of millions of dollars and bleeding local Central Queenslanders dry.

In September 2014, four months after they were told by the Newman government they did not get a licence, Tower signed detailed lease agreements with the government which required them to start work within three years. The reality is that, even if there were another casino licence made available, there is no guarantee that Tower Holdings would be the successful bidder. I was adamant, as they are, that a casino licence was the only way forward.

In 2014 Mr Agnew promised that work would start in the second half of 2015, whether or not a casino licence was granted. I table a copy of Mr Agnew's promise for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Morning Bulletin* online, dated 3 April 2014, titled 'Casino aspect sets back Tower Holdings' plans 12 months' [363].

Tower Holdings should be focused on getting shovel to ground on this project. However, it is clear that sadly Tower Holdings has a political agenda. Tower Holdings need to honour their numerous promises and get to work. They need to apply for the Northern Australia infrastructure funding and start the scaled back development ASAP.

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (6.21 pm): Mr Speaker—

Government members interjected.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members! Leader of the House, you will be warned if you persist. I am waiting for silence so I can call the member for Callide for his contribution.

Mr SEENEY: I too am waiting for silence to say that I do not think I have ever seen a local member destroy an investment opportunity in their electorate quite as comprehensively as the member for Keppel. I do not think I have ever seen a local member so disregard the concerns of their electorate.

The motion that has been moved by the Leader of the Opposition is about a lot more than Great Keppel Island. It is primarily about the enormous incompetence that we have seen from the minister responsible. There is a rumour around that the member for Stafford would rather be the health minister. Could I suggest that the member for Stafford should be the health minister because he is an appalling Minister for State Development.

I have sat here for a little over 12 months and watched him hand in the homework of the government ministers that made up the previous government—the work that I did in my department, the work that the member for Hinchinbrook did in his department, the work that the member for Glass House did in his department.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SEENEY: I knew that. I have seen the minister take credit for all of those things that we put in place. Even this morning he was in here taking credit for the IRDs, the international resort developments, that we put in place. It was an entirely new concept that we developed so that the Queensland tourism industry could be competitive in the world market.

We identified the Queensland tourism industry as one of the pillars of the Queensland economy. Together with the minister for tourism at the time, the member for Currumbin, we looked at what the Queensland tourism industry needed to be competitive on the international tourist scene because we have to be. We compete in a worldwide market. We compete with tourism developments all over the world.

One of the things we identified was the need for these signature resorts, these destination type resorts—the international resort developments that the minister spoke about earlier and that we facilitated when we were in government. The first one was the Queen's Wharf development. There was an opportunity for two others.

In pursuing that opportunity and in calling for tenders for those other two licences that we initially made available it became immediately apparent that there was another level of tourism development that needed to be addressed. There was another level of tourism operators who needed to compete in the international market. They were offshore islands. They were the islands all the way up and down the coast of Queensland that have an enormous natural attraction for people from all over the world.

The case was made to us by a number of operators of resorts or potential operators of resorts on those islands that to compete in the international market they had to have an ability to provide gaming facilities for the guests that they hope to attract. For the minister to come in here tonight and

suggest that somehow or other that product is a comparison with the casinos that already exist in Queensland or that exist in other cities is incredibly ignorant of the challenge that the Queensland tourism industry faces. I have sat here and listened to some puerile, juvenile interjections from a minister who is responsible—

Dr LYNHAM: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. Naturally I take offence at that.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, the minister has taken offence and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr SEENEY: I withdraw, but can I say that any member who comes into this House—

Mr SPEAKER: It is an unconditional withdrawal.

Mr SEENEY: I unconditionally withdraw. Any member in this debate who yells across the chamber, 'How many tables? How many roulette wheels?' is puerile and juvenile in their approach.

Dr LYNHAM: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I take offence to those remarks.

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. He did not refer to the member. He said any member.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr SEENEY: What this motion calls for is what my department was doing. It was developing a policy, developing a template with the resort operators. We were consulting and working with the people who have to compete in the international tourism market on the product that they needed in order to compete so that the Queensland tourism industry could continue to be a pillar of our economy. The absurdity of the approach that the minister has taken tonight is that those tourism operators are going to be denied the opportunity to invest in Queensland. The jobs that they would create will go somewhere else.

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (6.27 pm): I rise to speak against the motion tonight. The \$8.15 billion Aquis development is proposed to be constructed in my electorate of Barron River on the outskirts of Yorkeys Knob. I start by confirming that I am in favour of this development. I have met with the proponents many times, as well as people who oppose it.

The LNP launched the integrated resort development process on 19 December 2013. It was the LNP that short-listed preferred proponents in Queensland on 27 May 2014. Under the terms of the EOI process, all proponents were required to address a number of mandatory elements which formed the evaluation criteria in the evaluation plan and they included: that the proponent had to have experience and capability, they had to have financial capability, they had to have project understanding and they had to have concept details. Aquis met the criteria and was short-listed. However, Great Keppel Island did not meet the criteria for reasons unknown to me. Under the LNP's mandatory elements, as I just listed, it was that side of the House who decided not to short-list Great Keppel Island, not this side.

Mr Seeneey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Callide!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members! Pause the clock.

Mr CRAWFORD: The IRD is a superior policy because it is targeted to the international tourism market. International tourism markets take time to develop. They take time to grow. Cairns is a fine example of a flourishing tourist market, catering for international tourists as well as domestic tourists. For many years it has been a playground for the Japanese, for the Americans, for the Europeans and recently for the Chinese. Cairns is not just a market for gambling; it is an established tourist industry underpinned by a city with a population of around 150,000 people, a major international and domestic airport, tourism infrastructure already in place and a market share already thriving.

Currently tourism contributes \$23 billion to the Queensland economy and supports 230,000 jobs. Tourists, particularly those from the growing Asian tourist market, are demanding large resorts, with an array of facilities within easy access to international airports. They want the whole package in one location. They want Singapore. They want Macau. They want Honolulu. They want Vegas. They want Cairns. They want the Gold Coast and they want Brisbane.

In Cairns the community wants Aquis. Research identifies the majority of Cairns residents want Aquis. They want the construction jobs. They want the ongoing operation to complement the tourism infrastructure already on the ground. By introducing boutique gaming licences such as Great Keppel

Island, we begin to take away from major centres such as Cairns the bulk tourism market that would normally be flooding in. If we allowed Great Keppel Island to have a licence based purely on the fact that they are an island and nothing else—a tourist destination on the Great Barrier Reef—we water down the very thing that we are trying to create. Boutique gambling licences will potentially pop up on islands like pokies in a pub. There is nothing significant about Great Keppel Island that makes them any different to any other island in the Great Barrier Reef. You give it to one and you give it to all of them.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member.

Mr CRAWFORD: Queensland needs to be competitive on the world stage as a destination for the new Asian market. For Cairns our tourist market is shifting from competing with Queensland destinations such as Townsville, Mackay, Whitsundays and the Gold Coast to now having to gear up to compete with Las Vegas, Singapore and Macau.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Hinchinbrook!

Mr CRAWFORD: To compete at this level you need more than just a casino licence. You need to be a destination on the world stage. You need to be known. You need to be easily accessible by direct international flights with—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member.

Mr CRAWFORD: This is going to take forever, Mr Speaker—modern airports that already have the infrastructure in place to accept and process incoming tourists. You have to be an existing marketplace which is already well and truly entrenched in this area. But importantly you have to be a place that a major developer is prepared to invest in a large-scale development without fear of smaller competition eroding their business away. It was the LNP that decided that Great Keppel Island did not meet the short-listing, not this government. To quote the member for Whitsunday, they have ownership of that.

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

AYES, 41:

LNP, 41—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, Seenev, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 43:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, 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, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

Resolved in the negative.

Sitting suspended from 6.38 pm to 7.38 pm.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Member for Cairns



Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (7.38 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. In response to a question from the member for Southern Downs earlier today, I indicated I was on leave at the time a document was received in my office. To avoid any confusion, I want to clarify that, while the correspondence was received in my electorate office on Tuesday, 15 December, I did not see the correspondence prior to going on leave at close of business on Friday, 19 December. As I indicated earlier today, I consider that I and my office have acted at all times appropriately and provided appropriate advice in relation to this matter.

HEALTH LEGISLATION (WAITING LIST INTEGRITY) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 24 February (see p. 546), on motion of Mr McArdle—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (7.39 pm), continuing: Obviously it is unusual to have my speech truncated by a number of weeks. I will touch on a couple of things again.

Mr Rickuss: Are you sure you have to? You don't have to.

Mr WHITING: I do thank members opposite for their very kind guidance in assisting me. One of the things that I did talk about is what the member for Caloundra said in his introductory speech. I note what he did say. He said that the intention was—

... to create an independent body to audit clinical waiting times and publish this information in an open and transparent way. Independent auditing and the publishing of waiting times are aimed to provide peace of mind for patients in the Queensland health system.

One of the things I thought when reading this—and obviously the phrase 'peace of mind' comes to mind—is the peace of mind that perhaps the people of Queensland would have expected to get with the opening of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. I refer to the advanced and rapid opening of the hospital, as has been said before; so that it was ready on time. When that was being opened, I heard from all kinds of people who were working on that project about all the things that were not going down well. I heard that there was rushing to make decisions on furniture, fittings and carpet. The word was that they did not care; it had to be finished and opened by a deadline. I am quite familiar with that kind of phenomenon. In local government we used to call it 'red ribbon fever'. That is the overwhelming desire to have some physical infrastructure open and ready just before an election. The quality of the job perhaps comes secondary to other aspects.

After reading the member for Caloundra's words and remembering what happened with the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, it seems to me that in Queensland Health often non-patient priority is the priority of the LNP. I think this is supported when I hear that they wanted to provide certainty in clinical waiting times in Queensland hospitals. What I think of when I hear the phrase 'certainty for Queensland hospitals' is the phrase 'restore federal funding'. If they want to ensure there is certainty, they should join with us and ask for federal funding to be restored to our hospitals.

I will quickly talk about some of the things that the federal government has done. The first federal Liberal budget slashed \$11.8 billion from public hospital funding, and we have been actively campaigning against that. These cuts are getting deeper, cutting health workforce programs, including education and training, across the nation by \$595 million. They are also making changes to bulk-billing to the tune of \$650 million that will shift the cost back to patients and hit hip pockets hard. These are the reasons why we cannot trust the LNP to deliver on health. Our bills are always aimed at delivering, and do deliver, the best result in health outcomes. I will say that again: \$11.8 billion has been cut over seven years. That is the reason I think we can all say that we are safe in opposing this bill.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (7.43 pm), in reply: I rise to sum up the debate. In doing so, I wish to start by making a number of comments.

Ms PEASE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I was due to speak next.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Lytton, I did not see you; I saw the member for Caloundra on his feet.

Mr Hinchliffe: You have a list for a reason.

Mr McARDLE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Caloundra, just one moment. I did not see the member for Lytton rise to seek the call; the member for Caloundra did. I have called the member for Caloundra. Having been granted the call, he will continue. I did not see the member for Lytton rise.

Ms PEASE: I thought there was a list, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr McARDLE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have made a ruling in relation to this matter. I seek your indulgence to continue with my summing-up speech in relation to this bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I said, I did not see you rise to seek the call, member for Lytton. I saw the member for Caloundra rise and seek the call, and I have given him the call. He has the call and he will be able to continue his contribution.

Mr McARDLE: I rise to sum up the debate now before the chamber. I wish to make a number of comments in relation to contributions by members opposite. The first thing I want to address is that the government seems to believe that having more speakers on their side therefore makes them right in relation to a debate. I make the point that, if a thing is true, then having said it once is enough to establish the fact of its truth. It is as simple and as straightforward as that. In looking across at the ALP members, I am reminded of the words of the song *Desiderata*—

... even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.

The proposal, based upon a childish concept that more speakers voicing an opinion on one side of the chamber is better than another, is completely irrelevant. Often those who condemn what is a truism and a true fact will scream louder and more often because they try to drown out the truth in relation to a statement that has been made.

The other point I want to raise is this notion of what is core to a government. It has been said by members opposite that there is an ombudsman statement that he believes the bill is not core to exactly what he does. This chamber determines what is core, not the ombudsman. This chamber determines what is core. In the past 12 years that I have been in this chamber we have passed, amended, altered and changed legislation to give new, complicated procedures to government bodies or commissions. This body dictates what is core, not the ombudsman. If we believe a situation requires a change to give added obligation to an organisation or body, we will do so in this chamber.

Go back to the history and we will find that governments in Queensland have had interest in the sale of beer at one point in time. We have had interest in sawn and milled timber, interest in retail fish shops, and had 90 butcher shops at one stage. We had greengrocers and we had bakeries. Twenty or 30 years ago the core of teaching was the three Rs, but now that is not the case. When you ask teachers these days what the core business of teaching is, it is multifaceted. We have bullying, sexting, and we have the sad situation of Daniel Morcombe. Therefore, it is no longer the case that teaching has the core of three Rs. At the end of the day, departments and governments evolve. It would be a disaster for good government if it were to be satisfied and accept that no change was to occur because it would impact upon the core business of a department or an independent body. To be quite frank, that is a nonsense. Governments evolve, departments evolve and commissioners evolve as and when required.

The next point I want to raise is a contribution by the member for Murrumba. The member made an attack on the formation of the LNP. The kindest one could be to his contribution is to label it based upon ignorance and arrogance. That is the gentlest one could be in relation to that contribution and that facile attack on the LNP. Why ignorance? It is simply because the member has no idea of the history of this side of the chamber nor the processes put in place to achieve the formation of both parties and the LNP. We are still here today and I can guarantee the member that we will be here for many, many years to come.

Why arrogance? It is because it is borne out of a belief pattern within the ALP that they are born to rule and they are the only ones who have the model of excellence. The problem is that between the last sitting week and this sitting week we had what can only be called the debacle of Western Australia where Stephen Smith, the former federal minister for defence, tried to move on the current ALP opposition leader in Western Australia. He tried to in fact replicate the LNP model in the Western Australian ALP—where we had someone who was not a member of parliament at the time take control—but they could not even get that right because he did not actually go out there and talk to the members of parliament. They could not even get the basics right. They could not even understand that to make that happen—as we did here in Queensland in the LNP with Campbell Newman—they had to actually get the people on side. I would have thought rule 101 is that if you are going to do a coup you have to get people on side. The member for Murrumba had this wonderful idea that the ALP is a fountain of knowledge. The problem is of course that, when the ALP tried to replicate it, it completely fell down.

What did Labor frontbencher Rita Saffioti say about this? She said that Mr Smith's move was 'a crazy idea' and 'insulting' to Labor MPs and the Western Australian public. Her colleague John Quigley said he was mystified and found the plan 'laughable'. Not only that, Mr McGowan claimed that Mr Smith's idea was bringing to Western Australia the 'Canberra disease'. The *Australian* paper quoted him as saying, 'I would have thought Stephen would have learnt from those experiences. This sort of behaviour is unacceptable.' The ALP cannot even get a basic idea right, and they are trying to claim that in some way they are the holder of all knowledge in relation to this matter. We have ignorance and arrogance—that is a watershed across the whole of the ALP in all that they do. They proclaim the LNP cannot achieve an outcome, but then they try to replicate it and they completely make a botch of the whole exercise. What incompetence and what absolute stupidity.

The members for Thuringowa and Barron River also commented in the debate. I recognise that both members have a medical background and I think it is important in any debate that there is some form of recognition of members on the opposite side of the chamber—

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr McARDLE: I take the comment from the member for Moggill as well—they do need to be listened to. Yes, I agree; we do share some common themes in relation to the health system and where we are going. I think on that side of the House those two members recognise that the health system is now in evolution, that we need to move forward and that we will have debate after debate on exactly the right way to proceed in that evolution. I acknowledge their contribution. I disagree with them, but I do praise the fact that they accepted the concept of this side of the House and, more importantly, that it is of some value.

Mr Crandon: The member for Keppel does not agree with him either.

Mr McARDLE: I take the interjection. I must admit that the six o'clock debate proved to be an absolute gem as far as I am concerned. I can just see the blazing headlines in the paper regarding the member for Keppel and the member for Barron River.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr McARDLE: It will go down in the annals and history books; I take the member's comment. I acknowledge their contribution and I do say that it is important in relation to these sorts of debates that there is an ongoing dialogue between the two parties so we can come up with a better idea and a better concept. The member for Murrumba made further comments about trusting the LNP on Health. Let us flip that over to trusting the ALP on Health. What crawls out of there when we say that? We could spend hours and hours and hours debating so many topics.

Mr Rickuss: What did the previous premier say about that?

Mr McARDLE: That is a good question. The previous ALP premier, Anna Bligh, made it quite clear that the health department under the ALP was 'dysfunctional'—I think that was her word. We could spend hours talking about the historical dogma and the wonderful learnings of Health under the ALP and what they did to our health system, but I will move back to the bill, if I can.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr McARDLE: Wait on. Are there some words of wisdom across the chamber? It would be the first time in the chamber if there were.

The bill before the House seeks to do a number of things. Firstly, at its very core, it seeks to take away the competitive toing and froing that has occurred in relation to waiting lists irrespective of who was in government and who was in opposition. We know that the issue of waiting lists has been a thorn in the side of both sides of the chamber. We know that, historically, the waiting lists have been an issue of great debate in this chamber and the media. The bill simply tries to extract the heat from any argument by appointing the Health Ombudsman as the independent reviewer of clinical data in relation to waiting lists. In doing that, we can be confident that the data produced by the Health Ombudsman is the correct data. This person—and we have a male at the moment but we could have a female in the future—has the capacity under the terms of this bill to audit wait-time data to ensure that the data is transparent and accountable so as to provide security for the public in understanding where they are on the waiting list and, more importantly, how long they will be on that waiting list. As I said before, it

has been the claim and counterclaim of government and opposition that waiting list data has been manipulated, was inaccurate or was a combination thereof. At the end of the day, the bill simply moves to alleviate that concern.

What does the data we are talking about include? It contains data of patients on HHS waiting lists waiting longer than clinically appropriate for surgery by type of surgery; that is under clause 4 of the bill. I remember some years ago that the major hospitals from Cairns to the Gold Coast and out west were listed in relation to the 30-day, 90-day and 365-day waiting periods for people in categories 1, 2 and 3. That data was intensive and also carried with it a great history of where people sat on the list. That data was released on a quarterly basis and they were tracked through and through, but it did not matter because when the data was released it was attacked by the opposition as being inaccurate, inefficient or not up to scratch. Again, this particular clause will allow the ombudsman to assess and check that data.

Secondly, it looks at patients who are waiting longer than two years for general dental care by type of dental care. When we on this side of the chamber came to power in 2012, the dental waiting list was almost non-existent because at the end of the day referrals were placed in bottom drawers and there were tens of thousands of people waiting for dental surgery. This will alleviate that issue because the ombudsman will have the power to assess, audit and publish data in relation to that. Wait-time data also means data on the time an outpatient of a HHS waits for an initial consultation with a specialist health practitioner by type of specialist health practitioner. Wait-time data also includes other data prescribed by regulation. This will give the ombudsman the power to actually go through the data provided by the HHSs on a hospital basis, audit it and then publish the data to ensure it is the best possible data available. Isn't that what Queenslanders want? They want transparency and accountability and they want to be certain they are being told the truth. It will also take away from this House the issues that come with this.

One has to wonder why the appointment of an independent body is anathema to the ALP members on the committee and also the ALP members of this House. What is the problem with appointing an independent party to assess the data and make a report available? Indeed, under section 80 of the Health Ombudsman Act he also has the authority to investigate any other matter that he deems sufficient under the terms of his jurisdiction. In my opinion, if under the terms of this bill he comes to the conclusion that he can use section 80, that should be used by him to investigate other matters that are of concern to him and then report according to the terms of the act to the health minister and then to the parliament at the end.

It is time, I think, for this chamber to look at ways of making certain that data that is released can be trusted and relied upon not just by members of the government of the day, but also by members of this House and the public. It is time to take the matter out of the hands of Queensland Health and place it into the hands of an independent person or body. The fact that it remains within Queensland Health is always going to provide a suspicion as to the truth or otherwise of the data. It does not matter whether the data is presented in a manner that is open and transparent to the employees of Queensland Health, whom I do not doubt for a second. However, it does matter that that does and can create a suspicion in people's mind, and the debate around that issue needs to be closed down.

In closing, my comment in relation to the bill would be that now is the time for the parliament to consider the best course of action in relation to this matter. Now is the time for this parliament to consider that we have had enough years in relation to the debate between both sides of the chamber and now is the time to consider an independent party looking at the data and then coming to a conclusion as to whether what is given to that person is correct and then publishing that data in a manner that satisfies all concerned. It does more than that because the Hunter report made it quite clear that there were questions in relation to—and this is the word they used—the integrity of the data. The integrity of the data identified by the Hunter report, particularly when we are talking about patient data, is critical for the planning for the growth of the HHSs; the growth of the hospital system; and, more importantly, the placement of doctors, nurses, resources, manpower and the like. The issue here not only is making certain that the data is correct for publication, but also making certain the data is correct to allow the growth of the HHSs and to place funding where required at the best possible time.

I close on this one final sentence: this is a matter that all members should now endorse because it does end once and for all the question of data being correct and, more fulsomely, allows better planning in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 43:

LNP, 41—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, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

NOES, 43:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, 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, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

Resolved in the negative.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (8.09 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Hervey Bay Historical Village and Museum

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (8.09 pm): I rise tonight to talk about the Hervey Bay Historical Village and Museum. The Hervey Bay Historical Village and Museum had a tragic fire on 1 December last year. The fire started at the rear of the building adjacent to the workshop. The museum lost several vehicles under restoration, including the much admired 1934 red truck—and a lot of time was spent on its restoration—a TE20 Ferguson tractor—

An opposition member: Oh no!

Mr SORENSEN: Yes, the old Ferguson tractor. Numerous stationery engines were also lost as well as the most important part of the workshop, the big lathe, and much more. A fire in a museum is never a good thing no matter where it starts.

In true Hervey Bay community style, a fundraiser was organised to raise funds for the village with the help of Handyhire and the Beach House Hotel owner, Warren Persal. He does a tremendous amount for Hervey Bay and sponsored the whole night. On 26 February many people came along to have a night out and support the fundraising to replace some of the lost items. About 300 people would have been there on the night. It was a great night. The support that the people gave us that night was really wonderful.

Mr Nicholls: Any dancing?

Mr SORENSEN: Yes there was dancing. The Hervey Bay people have a great community spirit and everyone chips in and helps. The night had a theme that required people to come dressed in outfits they had purchased from the op shop. They needed a receipt from the op shop to be able to win some of the prizes on the night.

Mr Nicholls: Wouldn't go so well in Ascot!

Mr SORENSEN: No, it most probably would not. It was marvellous to see some of the dresses that were worn. I can tell honourable members that it is marvellous what one can pick up at the op shop. Numerous donors gave items to the auction on the night. The amount of \$28,000 was raised to put towards the construction of a new building. Many of the communities also donated items such as a lathe, tools and lots of other memorabilia. I think it was great that somebody came along and gave them a lathe.

I would like to thank my old schoolteacher Johnny Anderson, who was the president of the museum; he put in a big effort. I would like to also thank his team for all their hard work. He still has his sense of humour after the tragedy, and he kept everyone's spirits up and made it a great night out for everybody.

Lowe, Mr R; Pitt, Mr D

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (8.12 pm): I have spoken in this House in the past about the fantastic community groups and the fantastic community members that I have in my local community. I am sorry to say that we recently lost a couple of fantastic community members in Roger Lowe and David Pitt. It would be impossible for me to fully convey the contribution of these two men to my local community in the short time available; however, I think it is important that their contribution is recorded.

During the course of his contribution to the Pinelands Lions, Roger Lowe received the Professor Ian Frazer Humanitarian Award, two president's appreciation awards, and a 100 per cent seven-year attendance award. Roger was the Runcorn Tavern raffle seller king. He would put his name down for every roster to sell tickets for the regular raffles our Lions Club held. If members have ever visited the Runcorn Tavern bottle shop—and it has been known by a few different names over the years—there is a very good chance they would have bought a ticket from Roger. He certainly sold a lot more tickets than I did when we were rostered together. His charm was hard to resist and there were not many people who could say no to him. Roger was also very active in selling Lions Christmas cakes, and he would take his young daughter Karen to every shift at the Calamvale shopping centre, where she would sit and read and do her colouring-in books. Roger's wife, Jenny, would attend as many Lions functions as she could and was very supportive of Roger and the Lions.

David Pitt was a strong supporter of the Sunnybank Men's Shed, which has been located in my electorate since its inception. He was always keen to have a chat and always had a great sense of humour. Sunnybank's Men's Shed has made a fantastic contribution to our local community. It has become a very central part of our community, and David Pitt was an important part of that. He was very community-minded, being active in community groups and also with the church. During the course of his life he was actively involved in choirs, loved teaching dance and even hosted a Saturday afternoon radio show at one stage. David would have been 79 on the day of his funeral when *Happy Birthday* was sung. David is survived by his wife, Sylvia, daughters Marilyn and Cath and son Rodney.

I know that Roger and David will be missed by my local community. It will not feel the same attending a meeting at the Pinelands Lions without Roger or the Sunnybank Men's Shed without David, although I know they will not be forgotten. Thank you, Roger. Thank you, David.

Snowflakes in Stanthorpe

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (8.15 pm): I rise to talk about a significant community event that is going to happen in my electorate between 1 and 3 July this year, and indeed it will happen in Stanthorpe. The Granite Belt is one of the very few areas in this state where each and every year people can enjoy the regular changing of the seasons. As we saw on 17 July last year, there was a significant snowfall which was the best they had seen on the Granite Belt in over 30 years. Some four inches of snow fell right across the Granite Belt as far down as Wallangarra.

Going back to 2013, a very energetic and forward-thinking group of four young women decided to host what they thought would be an interesting community event. They got a snow-making machine and they invited the community and anyone else who was interested—some 300 expected arrivals turned into 3,000. There was a snowball-throwing competition, a snowman-making competition and also markets.

As is the state of the spirit of the people of the Granite Belt, this year there is going to be a fully-fledged Snowflakes in Stanthorpe which will happen from 1 to 3 July. Some of the events I think will be very interesting to many people in Queensland. They will have a real snow-making machine. There will be other ice events in case it does not snow naturally. There will be classic cars as well.

There will be a frosty family fun run—and I can indicate to honourable members that, whilst it sounds exciting, they will be very happy to get back into the warm places—a winter pyjama party; a kite-making workshop; a big breakfast bash; and an iceman competition, where I suspect that participants will have to jump into some very, very cool water and swim after they have run and possibly even cycled. There will be markets in the snow; wineries in the snow; a human snow globe; fire drums;

a jumping castle; pantomime on ice; an ice-skating rink; a movie marathon with an icy theme; face painting; and of course after getting hungry in the cold weather there will be a hangi; a quilt competition; and a photo competition. If members could see the photos I have here with stalactites hanging off clotheslines about 30 to 35 centimetres long, they will understand what happens in Stanthorpe or on the Granite Belt during the winter.

I would like to commend all of the fantastic and energetic people on the Granite Belt who have been involved—from the local council, the local show society, the local chamber of commerce, the art gallery and all of the other wonderful organisations, including Destination Southern Downs and Stanthorpe Community Development Services—for the great job they have done. I invite everyone to a wonderful weekend!

Upper Ross Community Voice

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (8.18 pm): I rise tonight to inform the House of a fantastic group of individuals who are leading the way in my electorate of Thuringowa. The Upper Ross area, spanning the three suburbs of Condon, Rasmussen and Kelso, has some 24,000 residents and over the last few years it has received little real representation. It has experienced high youth unemployment and particular problems in the area of youth crime. Having worked in the area as a paramedic and having lived there over the last 15 years—and in particular since I was a candidate—I wanted to make a positive change to address those local issues. After my success in the 2015 state election and with much collaboration with key stakeholders, including our schools, the fantastic staff at the newly opened community centre and local police, who play an integral role in the aforementioned group, I went about the task of inviting local residents to attend an inaugural meeting on 10 February 2016. I must acknowledge Joanne Keune, who was an abundance of energy and assistance in getting the information flyers made up and assisting with their delivery in the local area.

I was inspired to do this after seeing and being a part of the Northern Beaches Police Community Consultation Group, also in the electorate of Thuringowa, which has worked very closely with members of their community. I thought this could be replicated in the Upper Ross to address local issues. I commend Mr Paul Jacob from that group on his outstanding support and assistance.

I am pleased to report the success of the inaugural Upper Ross Community Voice, as they have now named it, with over 80 locals in attendance on that first night. These groups provide a local platform to address local and state issues, to be raised through an agenda driven process, resulting in feedback to those community groups via local or state government representatives and agencies. As an example, we achieved a new school crossing on Veales Road, Jensen, on the Northern Beaches. After the first couple of meetings in Upper Ross, the issue of Riverway Drive was raised. That has just been funded by the State Infrastructure Plan to the tune of \$30 million. I know that they will be happy. It is an issue that has been around for a while.

I acknowledge the following community champions who have raised their hands to run the Upper Ross group: Ms Claudine Moncur, a local school principal, president; Mr Frank Hall, a local resident and business operator, vice-president; Senior Constable Les Groves from the local police beat, secretary; and Mr Soa Tini, local resident and now treasurer. I look forward to working with this particular group and achieving real outcomes with Upper Ross Community Voice.

Local Government Elections

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (8.21 pm): I rise to pay tribute to some retiring local government representatives in the Burnett and Bundaberg region. I pay respect to retiring Mayor Mal Forman, who has made the personal decision to step out of public life to focus on his health and his beloved wife, Joy, and family. Mal has spent 14 years serving our community, with the last four as the Bundaberg Regional Council mayor. Under his leadership, Bundaberg council has played a major role in projects worth \$180 million that will unfold across the region in 2016. These include projects of the magnitude of Rubyanna Wastewater Treatment Plant, the gas pipeline, Knauf Plasterboard and the multi-use sport complex. These projects do not happen without hard work such as Mal has put in.

In his local community Mal is the patron of four local organisations and serves as a director on numerous boards. He is the current chair of the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Organisation of Councils, enabling him to promote our region to state and federal government decision-makers.

When elected mayor in 2012, Mal Forman promoted a platform of economic stimulus for the region. No-one could have foreseen the 2013 flood and tornado disaster that disrupted the lives of so many people in our community and slowed down the progress of the vision of growth for the region. With the major flood and mini tornado events, council faced a huge financial task simply to ensure infrastructure was repaired. The recovery came at a cost to council's reserves of some \$20 million. We look forward to seeing the financial position in which Mal has left the council. Mal Forman can be proud of council's response in the wake of the flood disasters and subsequent consultations to address community concerns about flood mitigation issues.

I am privileged to pay tribute to Councillor Tony Ricciardi, who retires at the forthcoming elections as representative for division 2 in Bundaberg. Councillor Ricciardi has been in local government since 1992. He served as deputy mayor of the former Isis shire council and became deputy mayor of the amalgamated council in 2008. Tony is an active member of his local community and served as president of the Childers Apex Club from 1986 to 1987 and remains a senior member in the Childers club. Tony is a life member of the Forest View Aged Care Facility and patron of Bundaberg Rugby League. Tony has served as council's representative on the Burnett Mary Regional Group. His work after the floods should not be underestimated.

I also pay tribute to Danny Rowleson, the councillor for division 6. He has worked hard to improve the quality of life across the Bundaberg region and has made an unbelievable contribution. Danny was instrumental in ensuring the protection of shorebirds and in other areas of environmental protection. Danny has supported council's decision to reduce council's electricity consumption, decreasing council's carbon footprint. With our iconic and endangered nesting sea turtles coming ashore to nest along the local coastline, Danny has continued to oversee turtle-friendly lighting installed in sensitive areas. Danny lives with his wife, Rhonda, and we wish them all the very best.

Safe Schools Program

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (8.24 pm): I am proud to support the Safe Schools program, because I am proud of the work they are doing here in Queensland for LGBTIQ students, their parents and their teachers. The program is aimed at creating safe and inclusive school environments for same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families. How could anyone disagree that all schoolchildren should be safe, happy and healthy? How could anyone disagree that all schoolchildren should be treated with dignity and respect?

I was appalled when the member for Everton attacked the program, citing exposure to resources that specifically address transgender issues as his reasons. He said that through the program young children were being exposed to adult concepts, but for a trans child their gender identity and the way they feel about their body is not an adult concept; it is their reality. We know that many transgender children begin expressing their true gender identity from an early age, so to suggest that we should prevent them access to vital counselling and support until they are 18 is nothing short of cruel. The member for Everton cited one link to an external site that is not at the core of the Safe Schools program anyway. I do not think he actually knows what the program does. He said that he thought bullying in schools was unacceptable—which it is—but saying that you want schools to be safe and happy places is easier said than done.

Kids can be cruel to other kids who are different, but I think these kids, just like adults, are afraid of what they do not understand. That is why Safe Schools is such an important resource. They visit classrooms and explain gender diversity in an age-appropriate manner. They work with students to set up and develop student led activities, events and groups such as gay-straight alliances. They empower students to create cultural change in their schools—a school culture that condemns bullying and embraces gender diversity.

The Safe Schools program people also work with teachers to provide staff presentations, specialised training modules and workshops. They provide training materials that draw upon national and international research and best practice to give teachers and other school staff insights, ideas and confidence when working with LGBTIQ children.

I think where the program really comes into its own—the telling thing that resonates the most with me—is what it does for parents. Like many parents, I love my three children unconditionally. It does not scare me that they might identify as LGBTIQ. What scares me is that they might be teased, tormented or bullied for that. I recommend that anyone who is concerned about the program reads the

testimonials of parents who have engaged with Safe Schools. Transitioning can be difficult no matter how much support you have, and Safe Schools is there for staff, students and parents for the long term. This assistance is invaluable for parents, and I am proud to offer my support to this program and its use in Queensland schools.

Sumners Road Overpass

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (8.27 pm): On Sunday the Palaszczuk Labor government announced its so-called state infrastructure vision—and what an interesting vision it is! In the words of the Deputy Premier, something was needed ‘to kick-start the economy’. Well, at least that shows acceptance by those opposite that the economy has stalled under their watch.

I want to tell the House about an important piece of infrastructure that is needed in the electorate of Mount Ommaney—the Sumners Road overpass. For those in the House who have not heard me talk about this many times in the past, let me elaborate. This inadequate single-lane overpass has been the bane of the local community for more than 20 years. Thousands of vehicles use this overpass every day.

In 2009 the Bligh government announced a planning study—something Labor is very good at—and it sounded too good to be true. In March 2010 Transport and Main Roads called for community feedback. The community was heartened by this. In 2011 the former member for Mount Ommaney announced in the local *South-West News* the budget to include \$57 million for the overpass. ‘Hallelujah,’ the community collectively breathed.

But here is where Labor, as always, is at its tricky best. This vital piece of infrastructure that is so vital was still only in the concept stage in the Queensland Infrastructure Plan 2011. In fact, only \$2 million had been allocated to it. How can Queenslanders trust that this new plan of Labor’s, delivered last weekend, would be any different? We cannot.

I return to Sumners Road. This very important piece of infrastructure is needed and at least one person on the Labor side agrees with me. On 21 May 2013 this document that I now table was laid upon the table of this House. It is a petition that states—

... requesting the House to immediately fund the Sumners Road interchange project.

Tabled paper: Petition (2115-13): Ms Palaszczuk, from 301 petitioners, requesting the House to fund the Sumners Road interchange project [364].

The petition was sponsored and signed by none other than the member for Inala, Ms Anastacia Palaszczuk. Yes, the Premier also wants this piece of infrastructure built. It is that important to her that she even sponsored a petition calling on the House—and I will say again it—to immediately fund the Sumners Road interchange project.

The real tragedy is that, when I look through the recent state infrastructure vision document, I see that there is no reference to Sumners Road. Why would the Premier walk away from something that was so vitally important to her? I now table a document containing 3,151 signatures calling on the Sumners Road interchange project to be built. I table this petition and ask the government to just build it.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding fixing Sumners Road [365].

Fall of Singapore, 75th Anniversary

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (8.30 pm): Next year, 15 February 2017, will mark the 75th anniversary of the fall of Singapore during the Second World War. Singapore in 2016 is a global commerce, financial and transportation hub of the Asia-Pacific region. It enjoys political autonomy and has a thriving economy. It also has iconic institutions such as Raffles Hotel, named after the founder of modern Singapore, Sir Stamford Raffles. We enjoy healthy trade relationships with the Asia-Pacific region, each year welcoming tourists to our shores with open arms. These are vital relationships that we must continue to develop and embrace.

However, in 1942 the world was a different place from what we now know it to be. Europe had been at war since 1939 and Japan entered the Pacific conflict with its well-recorded attack on Pearl Harbor on 8 December 1941. At that time Singapore was a British protectorate, not gaining independence from Britain until 1963. The British defence of Singapore had been based upon the Singapore Strategy, which history shows failed.

The purpose of my speech is not to reopen wounds that through the course of time and diplomatic relationships have long since healed, nor to glorify war, but to recognise and pay tribute to the strength of character and resolve of our Australian service men and women who served in both Malaya and Singapore in 1942 and valiantly fought to defend Singapore from the advancing Japanese forces.

Last month, I was asked to represent the Premier at the 2nd/10th Field Regiment Association's annual remembrance service marking 74 years since the fall of Singapore. I had the honour and privilege to meet with two servicemen who were members of the 2nd/10th Field Regiment: Mr Mervyn Neil, a lance bombardier, and Mr Robert Christie, a gunner. They are part of a small and declining number.

Queensland's 2nd/10th Field Regiment was formed at Redbank Camp, Brisbane, as one of the 8th Division's three artillery regiments. Men from across Queensland joined the regiment, including a group of lifesavers from Tugun, who had an average age of 21. The 2nd/10th Field Regiment arrived in the Malayan southern peninsula on 19 February 1941 and were stationed there for the remainder of 1941. Events escalated rapidly on 8 December 1941 with the entry of Japan into the Second World War. The 2nd/10th Field Regiment location came under enemy fire and they were later captured.

Triple P—Positive Parenting Program

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (8.33 pm): As a mother, grandmother and former teacher, I have always been passionate about ensuring that all children, whatever their circumstances, are afforded the opportunity to realise their potential. This is why I support the Palaszczuk government's commitment to funding the \$6.6 million two-year rollout of the innovative Triple P—Positive Parenting Program to give parents free access to evidence based parenting support. Triple P introduces parents to a range of well-researched, effective parenting strategies that can be adapted for all types of family situations and challenges. The program was developed by a team of researchers at the University of Queensland, led by international parenting expert Professor Matt Sanders.

We are committed to making sure that all Queensland mums, dads, grandparents and caregivers know that they are not alone in raising the next generation of Queenslanders. Offering parents free access to the Triple P program will help mums and dads access strategies to assist them in what is the most important but often the most challenging task of their lives. A recent survey of 200 parents in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton revealed the most challenging parenting issues for Queensland mums and dads in 2016.

Over 250 parents attended the first Triple P parenting program seminar, held in Mackay in early March. The event was a resounding success. I spoke to many of the mums and dads, grandparents and carers who attended on the night and each one left feeling informed and reassured. As we know, every family is different and has different challenges, stressors, goals and needs. Triple P is not about telling families what to do or judging them; rather, it offers a range of tools and strategies to suit individual families and the various developmental stages of children.

As part of the free, statewide rollout of Triple P, the Queensland government is making parenting support available through seminars such as the one I attended recently in Mackay. Triple P will also be delivered through small group sessions, one-on-one consultations and topic-specific discussion groups. Parents can also undertake the program online and through a self-help workbook. Everyone who has children knows the truth in the phrase, 'Being a parent is one of the toughest and yet most rewarding jobs.' I think it is also true that it takes a village to raise a child.

Pine Rivers State High School

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (8.36 pm): I rise to inform the House of a small group of committed students from Pine Rivers State High School who have been toiling away over their breaks, weekends and even school holidays to compete in the Land Rover 4x4 in Schools Technology Challenge and the F1 in Schools Technology Challenge. Pine Rivers State High School has a rich and successful track record in these competitions and I was very pleased to head out to the school recently to see their creations firsthand.

F1 in Schools, 4x4 in Schools and SUBS in Schools are programs that are run by the REA Foundation. These programs are designed to enhance the younger generation's ability to undertake tasks in science, technology, engineering and maths—STEM. Their goal is to increase the number of young Australians involved in the engineering industry to improve career options for our students in the future.

As I said, I visited the school prior to the competition weekend and saw firsthand the hard work and dedication that the students were putting into their models. Pine Rivers State High School had three teams that went down to Penrith in New South Wales to compete in the Australian national finals on Saturday, 6 March. The teams were the Wombat Warriors, Lily, Taj, Kiernan, Marcus and Grayson in years 10 11 competing in the Land Rover 4x4 in Schools; the Fair Dinkum 4x4, Brodie, Lucas, Paris, Reilly, Jackson and Gemma in years 9 and 10 competing in the Land Rover 4x4 in Schools; and Sonic Snitch, an all-girls team of Leah, Natarsja and Paris in year 9 competing in the F1 in Schools.

The 4x4 in Schools competition consists of the following components: written portfolio, verbal presentation, scrutineering, engineering, track assessment, trailer tow and pit display. The Wombat Warriors designed a large proportion of their vehicle using Autodesk Inventor and printed these parts using a 3D printer. The Fair Dinkum 4x4 team designed and built most of their vehicle using Meccano and used recycled aluminium cans for their shell—all in the name of sustainability.

The F1 in Schools competition consists of the following components: written portfolio, verbal presentation, scrutineering, engineering, reaction racing and tournament racing. Sonic Snitch designed and built a Formula 1 car from balsa wood—and I can inform the House that it is very light.

Upon the students' return I was so pleased to host a breakfast at the school with the education minister, Kate Jones. All of the teams placed as finalists, including an overall win for the Wombat Warriors, which will see them return to compete in the international competition.

I am in total admiration of the students' skills, expertise and talent. This is exactly the kind of innovation that is driving our Advance Queensland agenda. I am proud to be part of a government that is promoting STEM through our schools and skilling the leaders of tomorrow today.

I would like to congratulate all of the participants in the program for their hard work and dedication. I would also like to congratulate and thank the teachers. They have dedicated school holidays, weekends and out-of-hours time to helping these kids along. I also acknowledge the principal of Pine Rivers State High School, Mr John Schuh.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 8.40 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, 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, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams