



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 30 August 2016

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TUESDAY, 30 AUGUST 2016



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

REPORT

Office of the Speaker



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I lay upon the table of the House the *Statement for public disclosure: expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016*.

Tabled paper: Statement for Public Disclosure: Expenditure of the Office of the Speaker for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 [[1340](#)].

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Randell, Mr JH



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.32 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late James Henry Randell, a former member of the parliament of Queensland and minister of the state; and
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

James Henry Randell—fondly known as Jim—was born in Mackay on 13 August 1928. With strong interests in the sugar and beef industries, Mr Randell was active as a member of the Australian Brahman Breeders' Association, a member of the Mackay Regional Development Bureau and chairman of the National Party's sugar policy committee.

In 1976, Mr Randell was elected as a councillor on the Broadsound shire council, centred on St Lawrence. In 1979, he became chairman of the council, serving in that position until 1982. In 1980, the then National Party member for the state seat of Mirani, Tom Newbery, decided to retire from the parliament and Mr Randell was selected by the National Party to replace him. He held the seat of Mirani until he decided to resign from the parliament on 31 March 1994.

Mr Randell served as a temporary chairman of committees from 1983 to 1986. From 1982 to 1987 he was a member of a number of committees, covering portfolios that would have been close to his heart, such as primary industries, local government, mines and northern development. Following Mike Ahern's appointment to the position of premier of Queensland in December 1987, Mr Randell was elevated to cabinet and became minister for local government and racing. In September 1989, with the elevation of Russell Cooper as premier, he was appointed minister for works and housing.

Following the defeat of the National Party in December 1989, Mr Randell served as opposition spokesman for administrative services during 1990 and 1991 and was opposition spokesman for the sugar industry during 1991 and 1992. Mr Randell was also a member of the public works committee from 1990 to 1992 and was a member of the select committee for members' interests from 1992 to 1994.

Mr Randell also served as a member of the parliamentary service commission from 1992 to 1994. Some members may recall that the parliamentary service commission, which existed from 1988 to 1995, was an all-party commission of seven members who were, among other things, responsible for determining major policies to guide the operation and management of the Parliamentary Service. My father, Henry, also served on the commission with Mr Randell during that time.

Sadly, James Henry Randell passed away on 21 June 2016, aged 87 years. A funeral service to commemorate his life was held at the Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Mackay on 27 June 2016. Mr Randell, born in Mackay and passed away in Mackay, was a strong advocate for that region for all

of his life. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service that Mr Randell gave to his community as a local and state government representative. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Randell's family and friends.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.35 am): I rise to add my personal support, and that of the entire opposition, to the condolence motion moved in respect of the late Jim Randell, the former member for Mirani. I am sure that others who follow me will say some words in relation to Mr Randell in respect of his service to his local community, but it has been revealed to me that Mr Randell was fondly known by his constituents as 'Possum' Randell—perhaps a reference to some of his features and how he looked. I am not quite sure how much further I can go into that particular discussion.

It is sobering to note that the honourable members for Southern Downs and Maroochydore are the only current members of the House who served with Jim. That not only is a reflection of perhaps the transient nature of politics but also serves to remind us that it is over 22 years since Jim Randell retired from the Legislative Assembly. As has been indicated, Jim served as the member for Mirani from 1980 until 1994. During that time he developed a reputation as a dedicated advocate for the people of his electorate, the people of Central Queensland generally and, in particular, for the three great industries of that region: sugar, beef and mining.

Jim Randell was born in Mackay in 1928 and his election to parliament could be seen as a logical step in his lifelong involvement in and commitment and dedication to his local community. As a canefarmer and grazier, Jim saw his role as being an outspoken champion of those industries. The three years that he served as a councillor and the three years that he served as chairman of the then Broadsound shire council attests to his commitment to his local community. Indeed, it is interesting to note that, for two years, he served as both the Broadsound shire chairman as well as the member for Mirani.

In 1980, Jim was elected as the member for Mirani, replacing the retiring Tom Newbery, who had represented the area since 1965. Jim went on to win five successive elections. In his maiden speech to parliament in 1981, Jim demonstrated his pride in his electorate and the Mackay region, highlighting the contribution of the sugar industry with its then six sugar mills located in the Mirani electorate, the growing coalmining industry and the developing tourism industry. In the same speech he drew the attention of the House to some key concerns of locals—concerns that demanded solutions. He said—

The Mirani electorate has many small country towns and a large rural population.

He went on to say—

... it is my conviction that the problems of poor opportunity for employment for women and special difficulties for school-leavers, call for fresh initiatives.

These are the themes that characterised Jim's representation of the people of Mirani during his 14 years in this House. The former National Party deputy leader and member for Whitsunday, Ron Camm, claimed Jim Randell as a relative by marriage and Jim enjoyed a close relationship with his former electoral neighbour. As a parliamentarian, Jim served as temporary chairman of committees between 1983 and 1986 as well as a member of numerous parliamentary and party committees. As the Premier has indicated, for nearly two years he was the minister for local government and racing in the Ahern government before being appointed the minister for works and housing in the Cooper ministry.

Jim Randell served through a tumultuous period in Queensland's political history and resigned from parliament on 31 March 1994. He will be remembered as a fierce and fearless representative of his electorate, a dedicated parliamentarian and a hardworking minister. His philosophy was relatively simple—and, again, I refer to his maiden speech where he said—

I sincerely believe that if we are to share the resources of this great State with justice, we must do it within a philosophy founded on the principles of free enterprise; of social changes being brought about within the framework of the law; of justice for all our citizens; and compassion for the under-privileged.

On behalf of the opposition, I support the motion of condolence and extend our condolences to the family of Jim Randell.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.39 am): I rise this morning to echo the sentiments expressed by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in paying tribute to the late James Henry Randell. In the 1980s growing up in Mackay people like me looked up to Jim Randell. Possie, or Poss, as he was affectionately known, was certainly a great champion of the people not only of the Mirani electorate but also of the broader Mackay region and, indeed, the people of Central Queensland. Cane, cattle and coal were the industries that made Mirani tick and in Jim's time in public office he oversaw

some great opportunities for people in his own electorate and, indeed, people right across the state of Queensland. In the 1980s some of the projects that come to mind include the electrification of the Goonyella railway line and the opening up of the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal—in fact, the plaque there carries his name. Jim was a person who was not interested in seeing his name on plaques, he was there for all the right reasons: to make his community a better place. I refer to *Hansard* and the maiden speech of the former member for Mirani, Ted Malone, when he came into this place. He said of the late Jim Randell—

Jim Randell represented the electorate of Mirani with distinction, both as a Minister of the Crown and as a backbencher. Jim's strength was that he was able to put his stamp on all that he did. He was still able to do this in a calm and gentlemanly manner.

He was 'Gentleman Jim'. The lady that I always look back on as my second mum in life, the late Marcia Mackenzie, always thought highly of Jim when they were growing up in the small cane-growing community of Carmila. Former Pioneer shire councillor Marie Murray, who served on the Pioneer shire when Jim was at the peak of his powers as minister for local government, also thought highly of Jim. Murray looked up to Jim as a big brother in those days as kids growing up in Carmila.

Jimmy Randell was one of the first people I spoke to when I was considering running for public office. I remember having a conversation with him at Toscani's cafe in the Sydney Street Markets. I said to Poss, 'I'm thinking about running; what do you think?' He said, 'Go for it.' As I said, growing up in Mackay he was a man who we had up on a pedestal. He was a great advocate for the people of Mirani, particularly those small communities in the Pioneer Valley, the coastal country in the Broadsound and into the hinterland.

I offer my condolences to the family, particularly the children: Vicki and her brothers, Jim, Ron and Duncan. On the day of Jim's passing I went to the Mackay showgrounds and, in addressing the crowd on the microphone with Angus Lane that day, I said, 'It's my sad duty today to inform showgoers that we have lost a great man who was a regular at the Mackay show, the Sarina show and other big events. He never skipped a beat.' In paying tribute to Jim Randell, I am sure I speak for everyone across the Mirani electorate and the broader Central Queensland community in saying that he will be sorely missed.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (9.43 am): I rise to pay my respects to James Henry Randell, who, sadly, passed away on 21 June 2016. Jim represented the electorate of Mirani from 1980 to 1994, the electorate that I now proudly represent in this place. In fact, he was the member for Mirani when I first came to this place in 1989 as the member for Broadsound. Jim was also a Broadsound shire councillor, a place where I was a councillor back in 1988-89.

Much has already been said about Jim here this morning and I find it not sensible to simply repeat all those things, but I did want to say that his history as a family man, a farmer and a politician was well known. The Premier and Leader of the Opposition have already said many positive things. I prefer to keep my contribution short and remember the man as the member for Mirani, my neighbour as a member of parliament and a bit of a character.

Mirani historically was a safe conservative seat with Country Party, Liberal Party and National Party members from 1947 to 2015. Jim resigned on 31 March 1994. Some people on that side of the House might not like to hear this, but Jim believed that the Nationals should operate independently. Wayne Goss said of Jim Randell's decision to retire from the parliament that he was sorry that one of the gentlemen of parliament was quitting. I think that is a pretty fair rap. Jim was a good local member, respected by those he represented. I offer my condolences to the family and friends of Jim Randell and thank him for his service to the state.

Mr SPEAKER: Will honourable members indicate their agreement by standing in silence for one minute, please.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will start at 10.46 am.

PETITION

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

The following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk is lodged for presentation—

Abortion Laws

From 521 petitioners, requesting the House to reject any changes to current Queensland abortion legislation [[1341](#)]

Petition received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

19 August 2016—

- [1330](#) Transportation and Utilities Committee: Report No. 22, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 April 2016 and 24 May 2016
- [1331](#) Transportation and Utilities Committee: Report No. 23, 55th Parliament—Queensland Auditor-General reports to Parliament on the financial statements of state government agencies and public sector entities 2011-12 to 2014-15
- [1332](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 30, 55th Parliament—Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016
- [1333](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 31, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 April 2016 and 24 May 2016
- [1334](#) Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 17, 55th Parliament—Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016

24 August 2016—

- [1335](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 28, 55th Parliament—Fire and Emergency Services (Smoke Alarms) Amendment Bill 2015 and Fire and Emergency Services (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Amendment Bill 2016, government response

25 August 2016—

- [1336](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon Byrne) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Police Service (Discipline) Regulations 1990

26 August 2016—

- [1337](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 24, 55th Parliament—Abortion Law Reform (Woman's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016 and Inquiry into laws governing termination of pregnancy in Queensland
- [1338](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on a visit to Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Wellington) to attend the 47th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference, 11-13 July 2016

29 August 2016—

- [1339](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal: Review of Salary Levels of Members of the Queensland Parliament, Determination 12/2016, 29 August 2016

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Statutory Instruments Act 1992—

- [1342](#) Statutory Instruments Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 134
- [1343](#) Statutory Instruments Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 134, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000—

- [1344](#) Water Resource (Great Artesian Basin) Plan (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2016, No. 135
- [1345](#) Water Resource (Great Artesian Basin) Plan (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2016, No. 135, explanatory notes

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982, Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990—

- [1346](#) Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements and Other Legislation (Community Enterprise Queensland) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 136
- [1347](#) Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements and Other Legislation (Community Enterprise Queensland) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 136, explanatory notes

Child Employment Act 2006, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

- [1348](#) Child Employment Regulation 2016, No. 137
- [1349](#) Child Employment Regulation 2016, No. 137, explanatory notes

Electricity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2016—

- [1350](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 138
- [1351](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 138, explanatory notes

Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Act 2003—

- [1352](#) Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Regulation 2016, No. 139
- [1353](#) Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Regulation 2016, No. 139, explanatory notes

Private Health Facilities Act 1999—

[1354](#) Private Health Facilities Regulation 2016, No. 140

[1355](#) Private Health Facilities Regulation 2016, No. 140, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[1356](#) Traffic Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2016, No. 141

[1357](#) Traffic Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2016, No. 141, explanatory notes

Gladstone Power Station Agreement Act 1993—

[1358](#) Gladstone Power Station Agreement Regulation 2016, No. 142

[1359](#) Gladstone Power Station Agreement Regulation 2016, No. 142, explanatory notes

Legal Profession Act 2007—

[1360](#) Legal Profession (Barristers Rules) Notice 2016, No. 143

[1361](#) Legal Profession (Barristers Rules) Notice 2016, No. 143, explanatory notes

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Act 2016—

[1362](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 144

[1363](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 144, explanatory notes

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998—

[1364](#) Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 145

[1365](#) Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 145, explanatory notes

Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Act 2016—

[1366](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 146

[1367](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 146, explanatory notes

Liquor Act 1992—

[1368](#) Liquor Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2016, No. 147

[1369](#) Liquor Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2016, No. 147, explanatory notes

Public Trustee Act 1978—

[1370](#) Public Trustee Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 148

[1371](#) Public Trustee Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 148, explanatory notes

Government Owned Corporations Act 1993, Marine Parks Act 2004, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994—

[1372](#) Transport Infrastructure (Ports) Regulation 2016, No. 149

[1373](#) Transport Infrastructure (Ports) Regulation 2016, No. 149, explanatory notes

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[1374](#) Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 150

[1375](#) Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 150, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Marine Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2016—

[1376](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 151

[1377](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 151, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Act 2016—

[1378](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 152

[1379](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 152, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Act 2016—

[1380](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Regulation 2016, No. 153

[1381](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Regulation 2016, No. 153, explanatory notes

Fisheries Act 1994, Health Act 1937, Marine Parks Act 2004, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[1382](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016, No. 154

[1383](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016, No. 154, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994—

[1384](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Transitional Regulation 2016, No. 155

[1385](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Transitional Regulation 2016, No. 155, explanatory notes

Youth Justice Act 1992—

[1386](#) Youth Justice Regulation 2016, No. 156

[1387](#) Youth Justice Regulation 2016, No. 156, explanatory notes

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council, Report

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.47 am): Today I table the six-monthly report from the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council. This report outlines the progress the government has made in working with stakeholders to implement the recommendations from the landmark *Not now, not ever* report. I would like to thank Minister Fentiman and council chair, Dame Quentin Bryce, as well as all members of the council, for their excellent efforts thus far. I am pleased to report to the parliament that in the six months from December to May significant progress had been made in implementing the report's 121 recommendations to government.

Tabled paper: Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council: Six-Month Report—Dec 2015-May 2016 [[1388](#)].

Work had started on 77 recommendations and 32 have been achieved, with the remaining 12 scheduled for the future action plan. Since the report was written five more recommendations have been completed. We have also introduced legislation to make issuing DVOs simpler for police, ensure cross-agency collaboration and to ensure safety for victims of domestic violence, including children.

Some of the key recommendations that have been implemented include the release of the 10-Year Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy; the opening of 72-hour crisis shelters in Brisbane and Townsville, which have helped more than 1,000 victims escape violence, and since the six-month report a further \$8.7 million has been allocated for regional shelters in Charters Towers and Roma; the trial of a specialist domestic and family violence court at Southport—to build on the trial, the 2016-17 budget included \$42.4 million over four years to roll out more specialist courts; a suite of laws, including amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act, to make domestic violence an aggravating factor and laws to make non-fatal strangulation a separate offence; the development of the Respectful Relationships education program for all Queensland schools to counter attitudes and behaviours that underpin violence later in life; and this month, further laws were introduced to parliament to give police the powers to act more quickly to protect victims and increase the length of DV orders.

While we have a long road to travel, I get a real sense from the community that everyone is ready to stand up, work together and bring about real change. From the front-line workers who deal with victims everyday all the way through to the COAG table, there is a real sense of urgency when it comes to domestic and family violence reforms. We can all be proud of the significant achievements to date, but it is imperative that we keep this momentum going so that we can break the cycle of domestic and family violence.

In October, Queensland will be the focus of the entire nation when I host fellow first ministers and the Prime Minister at the first Domestic and Family Violence National Summit. I look forward to outlining Queensland's progress to date, as well as listening to measures the other states and territories have introduced. By working together, we can all achieve real outcomes. Through these measures, the legislation we introduced last sitting and the groundswell of determination in our community, I am convinced we can achieve more for domestic and family violence sufferers.

Farm Business Debt Mediation Legislation

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.50 am): The farm business debt mediation bill, which is to be introduced by the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries later today, demonstrates this government's commitment to helping producers and communities affected by debt and drought. The bill will provide a process for the efficient and equitable resolution of farm debt disputes between creditors and primary producers. It also will help to remove some of the overwhelming power of the banks when financial situations get difficult for farmers.

The work done by the member for Mount Isa and the Rural Debt Taskforce clearly demonstrated that current voluntary farm debt mediation arrangements are inconsistently applied by lenders. Our bill will make mediation compulsory before a creditor can take possession of a property or take other enforcement action under a farm mortgage. In addition, the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority's current role in administering government financial assistance programs will be expanded. The authority will now also oversee mediation arrangements, accredit mediators, undertake policy research and

provide advice regarding the financial performance of Queensland's agricultural sector. In recognition of this wider remit, the authority will be renamed the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority.

In supporting the bill, I also draw the attention of members to my government's ongoing financial commitment to the bush. This includes our \$77.9 million Rural Assistance and Drought Package. My government is committed to supporting our rural producers and communities across the state. The agriculture minister will have more to say about the bill later today.

Serious Organised Crime Legislation

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.52 am): My government is committed to keeping Queenslanders safe. When the parliament last sat, we secured support for new laws to give our police additional powers to protect Queenslanders amid ongoing terrorism threats around the world. My government has committed extra resources and restored services to the frontline, including an additional 266 police officers. We have restored community policing boards to give local communities input into how we tackle crime and the causes of crime. Consistent with our commitments to addressing serious organized crime, we instigated the Queensland Organised Crime Commission of Inquiry and established a high-level task force to oversee the review of the VLAD laws. The commission's findings and the task force report showed that Queensland needs robust and enforceable laws to address serious organised crime, including child exploitation, boiler room fraud and outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Today, the Attorney-General, the police minister and I are outlining our response and the serious and organised crime amendment bill that will be introduced next sitting week. We have accepted the advice of the commission to do more to tackle the scourge of illicit drugs and the horrific crimes of child sexual exploitation. Through these proposed laws, we will introduce tough new offences to tackle serious organised crime. We will give our police and prosecutors the laws they need. We will increase penalties for existing offences and write into our laws tough penalties for new offences.

In terms of child exploitation material, these laws will establish new offences that will apply to people who: (1) administer child exploitation websites; (2) encourage the use of child exploitation websites; and (3) provide advice on how to avoid detection in gaining access to child exploitation websites. The maximum penalty for child exploitation offences will be increased from 14 to 20 years. We will also provide powers for police to seek an order in a search warrant to require a person to provide passwords and information to allow access to electronically stored information.

In terms of illicit drugs, these laws will increase maximum penalties for trafficking. The maximum penalty for trafficking dangerous drugs will increase from 20 years to 25 years. In addition, we will establish a new post-conviction organised crime control order. It will be a new sentencing order for Queensland. This is an Australian first; no other Australian jurisdiction has an organised crime control order as part of its sentencing laws. I repeat: it will be a first for Australia.

The court can set any conditions necessary to protect the public by preventing, disrupting and restricting offenders convicted of the new serious organised crime circumstance of aggravation, offenders convicted of the new consorting offence and offenders found by the court to be participants in criminal organisations. This could mean restricting the access that a convicted child sex offender, who is part of a paedophile network, has to internet access or camera equipped devices or how close to schools they are allowed to go; preventing convicted fraudsters, who are involved in sophisticated boiler room frauds, from registering certain types of businesses; and preventing a convicted drug trafficker, who is part of a drug syndicate, from meeting with or speaking to their drug associates.

These laws will be comprehensive. These laws will be robust. These laws will be enforceable. They will ensure the offenders are punished and the community is safe. Queenslanders can have confidence in these laws because we have developed them in consultation with stakeholders and following a commission of inquiry and a task force review. We have not rushed them through the parliament in the dead of night and we will commit them to full parliamentary scrutiny, as the public expects us to do. My government makes no apologies for tough laws on serious organised crime. Australia needs a coordinated approach and I am determined to work with my interstate colleagues and the Prime Minister of this country to ensure that we have a tough and workable approach to serious organized crime throughout our nation.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Attorney-General, I remind members that if you do not have the call to speak please do not activate your microphone. I am informed that we have student leaders from the Merrimac State School, in the electorate of Mudgeeraba, observing our proceedings.

Serious Organised Crime Legislation

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (9.57 am): At the 2015 state election, Labor committed to reviewing the 2013 suite of laws that the LNP brought in known as the VLAD laws. Labor promised a commission of inquiry into organised crime for the purpose of having a comprehensive review of serious and organised crime in this state. That important body of work was undertaken to ensure that Queensland has the best laws going forward to tackle organised crime in all its forms. The Palaszczuk government initiated a task force made up of highly experienced people in the field of criminal law to review the suite of laws currently in place. The task force on organised crime legislation recommended the repeal of the greater part of the 2013 antibikie legislation, including the VLAD act, and establishing a new regime that focuses on individual offending rather than a defined organisation.

The new serious and organised crime bill will balance the need for strong and robust laws, both legally and operationally, for both police and prosecutors. Importantly, the regime includes judicial oversight in key areas. The new regime will provide a wide range of tools to tackle organised crime, providing police with the powers they need to target organised crime in Queensland. The new serious organised crime regime will include a new consorting offence; a new public safety order scheme consisting of public safety orders, restricted premises orders and fortification orders; mandatory cumulative sentencing to encourage cooperation with police; and a new post-conviction control order scheme.

This will give the police the powers needed to disrupt and dismantle criminal organisations. Just as it is an offence to wear criminal motorcycle gang colours in licensed venues under the current Liquor Act, it will now be an offence to wear those prohibited items in public. The current laws brought in by the previous government recognise that families should be able to eat in a licensed restaurant without being intimidated by individuals wearing or displaying bikie colours, yet the same protections are not provided to a family eating in an unlicensed cafe. This just does not make sense.

One of the key provisions of our new laws will be a new consorting offence, based on the New South Wales laws, that will make it an offence for a person to consort on two occasions, following a warning on at least one occasion, with two others who have convictions of serious indictable offences. In addition, we will provide for a new public safety order scheme. The scheme will consist of three orders. Firstly, the public safety order will empower police to issue public safety orders for up to seven days. Orders for periods longer than seven days can be issued by a magistrate. Secondly, the restricted premises order will maintain the closure of outlaw motorcycle gang clubhouses. However, it will go further. A restricted premises order declared by a court will empower police to search, seize and forfeit specified property linked to specified activities. Thirdly, the fortification order will require an owner or occupier of premises frequented by participants in criminal organisations or who engage in certain activities to remove any fortification that hinders entry to that property. In urgent circumstances police can issue cease and desist fortification orders to prevent further fortification while obtaining a court order.

The laws will provide for a new serious organised crime circumstance of aggravation punishable by a mandatory term of imprisonment with the length of the additional mandatory imprisonment being seven years for offences that carry a maximum sentence of seven years or more or alternatively, where the offences carry a maximum sentence of less than seven years, the maximum sentence for the offence. These offences are in addition to those outlined by the Premier this morning, which target organised crime in all its forms. These laws will be strong, robust and, importantly, have the scrutiny of this parliament by going through a proper parliamentary committee process to ensure we get these laws right.

Youth Justice

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.01 am): I also want to briefly touch on the coverage in the *Courier-Mail* this morning to clarify for the record that neither I nor my office were contacted about the story or given a right of reply, despite the obvious and dishonest attempt to attack my credibility. I have made it clear when speaking on youth justice matters that my role is as the minister responsible for youth justice and youth detention centres.

I have made it clear, including in the face of criticism from others, that our modern youth justice system is based on trauma informed care and deals with young people in very difficult circumstances, often victims of abuse themselves. It is Labor Party policy to remove 17-year-olds from adult prisons

and Labor is committed to achieving this aim. I will continue to stand up for a youth justice system that aims to turn around the lives of young people to give them a better chance to return to school or get into the workforce and in the process create a safer community for everyone. I do not expect to be verballed on the front page of a newspaper for doing so.

Youth Justice

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.02 am): Since 1992 17-year-old prisoners are accommodated in adult custody. Special consideration is given to the management of 17-year-old prisoners within Queensland correctional centres, with meaningful activities and specialty interventions delivered by the non-government sector. As is the case for all prisoners, restraints and the use of force are used only when it has been deemed necessary and sufficient warnings have been given. The image used in media reports today shows correction officers applying a helmet. This is used to protect a prisoner from injuring themselves.

This government also takes the safety of our corrections officers seriously. Protective equipment is used in adult correctional facilities when the safety and security of prisoners and correctional officers are at risk. Importantly, the safety of our correctional officers comes first. This government does not tolerate the mistreatment of prisoners. Every complaint and suspicion of mistreatment is investigated. All complaints of assault against prisoners are referred to the police.

I am working with the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills on the issue of 17-year-olds in adult prisons. I am advised operational procedures are in place to ensure 17-year-old prisoners are kept safe and close to any family members. Community visitors from the Office of the Public Guardian visit 17-year-old prisoners monthly. The Office of the Public Guardian is advised of all admissions, pending transfers and discharges.

While the incident highlighted today occurred in 2013, under the previous government, I am advised that Corrective Services investigated the matter at the time. However, I have asked that Corrective Services review that investigation to ensure that public confidence in the corrective services system is maintained.

International Education and Training

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.05 am): International education and training is one of Queensland's most valuable industries. It is estimated to add \$2.9 billion to our export revenues. Importantly, it is also predicted to be one of the fastest growing industries globally, meaning we have an opportunity to capitalise on this growth to create jobs for Queenslanders.

The Newman government neglected this important sector and academic institutions, training providers, local councils and regional development organisations have lobbied the Palaszczuk government to pick up the slack and do more to grow the international education and training sector. That is why this year's state budget commits more than \$25 million over five years to catapult Queensland's international education and training industry onto the world stage.

To guide this investment, I released in June a draft international education and training strategy for Queensland. This strategy spells out the Palaszczuk government's vision for the sector by providing a framework for educational institutions, local government and associated industries, such as tourism, to work together to grow an industry that last year supported around 19,000 jobs.

Since the release of the strategy we have been undertaking consultation. As part of this, Trade & Investment Queensland is currently holding nine forums around the state to engage the sector and the community. The first of the forums was held in Toowoomba on 17 August. The final forum will be held in Rockhampton this Friday. Other forums have been held, or are about to be held, in Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns and on the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast. In total more than 270 participants have either attended or registered their intention to attend the consultation sessions that are still yet to occur.

Last week I attended the forum in Townsville where I joined with more than 30 industry leaders to discuss the draft strategy and our focus on jobs, including in regional areas. Deloitte Access Economics says that with the right policies in place the industry could be worth approximately \$7.5 billion in annual export income and generate more than 6,800 jobs for Queensland by 2026. Importantly, the whole state will benefit.

The regions outside of Brisbane account for almost \$1 billion of the export revenue generated by Queensland's international education and training industry and are key differentiators for our state. The strategy will ensure that every region will receive increased direct benefits from international education and training. Queensland's regions also gain significant indirect benefits as a result of the increased demand for goods and services and tourism visits from international students based in other parts of the state, as well as visiting friends and relatives. That is why we are making sure that our international education and training strategy is focussed on growing this industry so we can deliver a strong, diversified Queensland economy and more jobs right across the state.

Jobs

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government was elected to create jobs and that remains our daily focus. ABS statewide figures for July show a net gain of 40,000 jobs in the past 18 months since the election. I know that some commentators question the validity of comparisons between the LNP and Labor, but the 40,000 net new jobs compare with a net 26,900 jobs in almost three years under the former LNP government. In other words, the Palaszczuk government has created more jobs in around half the time, but we know that we have more work to do to deliver more jobs across our state.

When Labor took office we inherited an unemployment rate of 6.6 per cent. That is now down to 6.3 per cent in trend terms in July. Looking at the more volatile seasonally adjusted rate, we saw a drop from 6.4 per cent in June to 6.1 per cent. More recently, labour force figures for regional Queensland were released by the ABS. Last Thursday's figures were accompanied by information from the ABS advising users to focus on the 12-month average figures rather than the more volatile monthly data. The ABS is now publishing 12-month average figures for regional labour force data, giving a more reliable picture of trends. This should lead to a more considered assessment of the figures and hopefully put an end to the cherry-picking by some who wish to talk down our state.

The figures for July show jobless rates are lower in 12 of the 19 ABS regions in Queensland compared with a year ago. There were improvements in unemployment rates for regions such as the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Wide Bay and Ipswich, among others.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: Those opposite may wish to listen. The Darling Downs-Maranoa region recorded the lowest regional unemployment rate in the state at 3.6 per cent compared with 3.9 per cent a year ago. The Logan-Beaudesert region recorded the largest drop in the unemployment rate, down 2.7 percentage points compared with a year earlier to reach 6.3 per cent. However, the ABS figures also confirm that some regions including Townsville and Cairns are still experiencing higher unemployment rates than a year ago. We have always acknowledged some regions are doing better than others as the state transitions to a post-mining boom economy.

People being paid fairly and having secure jobs are at the heart of Labor's economic plan. That is why the state budget included initiatives to support regional economies and jobs, including our \$40 billion Capital Works Program over four years to target transport, health, education, energy and water infrastructure. Around \$10.7 billion was allocated for 2016-17 and is estimated to support around 31,000 jobs, with almost half of the investment in our regions.

Our focus on our regions includes the Accelerated Works Program, with more than \$440 million worth of projects brought forward to support almost 1,000 jobs. At the end of July, 92 accelerated works projects were completed, 35 were under construction, with more projects to move to construction over coming months. These initiatives are reflected in the latest Deloitte Access Economics Investment Monitor, which again showed the value of current and planned major projects in Queensland outstripping those in New South Wales and Victoria.

The June quarter Investment Monitor outlines almost \$183.5 billion in planned or committed public and private sector projects in our state ahead of New South Wales with \$129.5 billion and \$78 billion in Victoria. It also shows a pipeline of projects in the tourism sector across Australia, with a significant proportion being in Queensland. The importance of these was underlined at the Premier's Connecting to Asia Forum in Cairns last week. The forum highlighted the way we are working with the tourist industry and all sectors of the business community to capitalise on new tourism opportunities generated by the rising middle class in China and the rest of Asia. More tourists mean more jobs throughout our state.

The state budget also doubled to 50 per cent the incentive offered to Queensland business operators wanting to employ apprentices and trainees. Our Back to Work program is providing a two-year, \$100 million package to give regional employers incentives to engage a total of up to 8,000 jobseekers. Last week in Cairns I saw firsthand the benefits of the program. I met three young people who will soon become employees of technology firm Nexus Labs. All of them are completing their final year of technology studies at James Cook University in Cairns. It is great to see this new program making a real and measurable change in the lives of young people starting their careers. I congratulate all employers who have taken advantage of this and other programs that we have put in place to create jobs and to strengthen our local, regional and state economies.

Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council, Report

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.13 am): Last week Dame Quentin Bryce presented the Premier and me with the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council's six-month report, which the Premier has tabled this morning. As the report indicated, of the 121 recommendations targeted at government, we have already implemented 32 and a further 77 are underway. I am pleased to inform the House that since that report was written an additional five recommendations have been finalised.

Since accepting the report's recommendations, we have fast-tracked a number of legislative amendments to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account. We have opened two new domestic and family violence shelters in Brisbane and Townsville and funded the establishment of two more in Charters Towers and Roma. We are rolling out communication strategies, including the successful 'Not Now, Not Ever' community challenge during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, and our Respectful relationships education program for Queensland schools. We have set up a new specialist DV court trial at Southport and expanded the domestic violence duty lawyer service to help victims navigate the legal system.

There is clearly confidence in the system, as we have seen a record number of victims of domestic violence on the Gold Coast come forward seeking help at the Southport court. When the implementation council met at Mount Isa in April this year, I was pleased to join Dame Quentin Bryce at the North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service to announce Mount Isa as one of three locations for a domestic and family integrated service response trial—the others being at Logan and Cherbourg.

The trial at Cherbourg is a new approach to domestic and family violence that will explore the best way to respond to violence and abuse in homes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. While visiting Cherbourg earlier this month, I spoke with Mayor Arnold Murray and councillors from Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and heard firsthand about domestic and family violence and the effect it has on local residents. I also met with two incredible local women—Aunty Grace Stanley and Aunty Lillian Gray—who told me about the women's group they championed and were keen to get up and running again to make a difference in their community.

It is stories like these from passionate advocates like Aunty Grace and Aunty Lillian that make me so proud that the Palaszczuk government is working incredibly hard towards eliminating domestic violence across Queensland by committing to addressing every recommendation from the *Not now, not ever* report and, of course, we have allocated a record \$200 million across government in this year's budget to achieve this.

I would like to thank the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council for their oversight role as we continue our work delivering on all of the recommendations in the report. I thank council members and Dame Quentin Bryce for the important role they have played in achieving our vision of a Queensland free from domestic and family violence.

Healthy Hearing Program

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.16 am): Every year, as many as 100 Queensland babies may be born with serious hearing problems. If hearing problems are detected early and treatment begins before babies are six months old, they have a strong chance of heading off future communication, health and learning problems. In 2004, the Beattie Labor government launched the Healthy Hearing Program to screen all newborns at birth for hearing loss across Queensland. Since 2004, Queensland Health staff have performed more

than 660,000 hearing tests, identifying more than 1,350 children with a hearing loss. The program ensures that families of children born with a bilateral moderate or greater degree of hearing loss—approximately one child in every 1,000—get access to the support and treatment they need sooner. This program is now getting a significant boost.

I am pleased to report to the House that Queensland's Healthy Hearing Program will be the first in Australia to use the handheld AccuScreen device to screen for hearing loss. This new technology can screen a baby for hearing loss in as little as 12 seconds. Given that previous screening equipment took as long as seven minutes to get a result, this will dramatically improve the efficiency of the program and allow better use of resources, and the testing of babies can occur when they are asleep.

I am pleased to announce that the Palaszczuk government will roll out the device to all 64 birthing hospitals, both public and private, across the state by January 2018. The new AccuScreen device went live at the Mater Mothers' Hospital in Brisbane earlier this month with great success. It is now also available in Caboolture, Redcliffe and Mater Hospital Redlands. It will then be progressively rolled out across the state from September starting with Hervey Bay and Bundaberg and then Beaudesert, Redlands and the Gold Coast in October.

Using new technology to more efficiently screen newborn babies for hearing loss is exactly the sort of front-line service delivery our government is focused on. This measure will allow us to better use front-line staff, while also being less disruptive for newborn babies and their parents.

Tourism Infrastructure Investment

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (10.18 am): As the Treasurer said this morning, last week we held the very successful Connecting to Asia Forum in Cairns. As part of the forum there was a major focus on how we can secure more tourism investment infrastructure to Queensland to create jobs. Right now Queensland has more than \$12 billion in tourism infrastructure investment in the pipeline. With record growth in tourism, we need investment to ensure that we capture market share and create more jobs for Queenslanders. Our Tourism Investment Attraction Unit is working to snare more investment. In Cairns I met with a delegation from the Fullshare Group, including Chairman Ji, to discuss future investment opportunities in Queensland.

The Fullshare Group recognises the great potential for tourism growth in our great state. Chairman Ji told me he believes Queensland, including the Whitsundays and Cairns, is the best place in the world to invest in tourism right now and I could not agree more. That is why I have committed to working with Chairman Ji and the Fullshare Group to support its ongoing development plans. Fullshare recently completed a major \$43 million upgrade to the Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas Resort opened by the Premier and Treasurer last week. Fullshare also owns the Mirage Whitsundays in Airlie Beach and the Laguna resort development in Mackay where they are planning a \$2 billion redevelopment.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Ms JONES: Thank you for your support, member for Whitsundays. I also met with Shakespeare Property Group, which has purchased two Cairns CBD hotels—the Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort and the Pullman Cairns International hotel—with plans to invest a further \$30 million across both hotels. Also, the GA Group has made its first tourism investment in Cairns, purchasing the Rydges Tradewinds hotel with an additional \$40 million upgrade committed. These major investments are a strong vote of confidence in Queensland's tourism industry. We are working hard to ensure investors bring their dollars to Queensland, develop more hotels, resorts and tourist attractions, and create more tourism jobs.

Finally, on another note, I am sure I express the views of all members of parliament this morning in wishing our year 12 students all the very best this week as they complete their QCS tests.

Back to Work Program

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.20 am): The Palaszczuk government's \$100 million Back to Work regional jobs package is an investment in jobs and an investment in our regions. After just eight weeks, this two-year \$100 million package is already delivering great results, with 46 regional employers successfully applying for and receiving support payments of nearly \$300,000 since the Back to Work eligibility payments commenced only four weeks ago. This includes eight employers in the Far North, 11 in North Queensland, five in Mackay-Whitsunday, seven in Central

Queensland and 15 in Wide Bay. To date, in just four weeks 64 regional Queensland unemployed jobseekers are back on the job thanks to Back to Work, and more than half of these—36—are long-term unemployed.

The program's success stories include Cairns mum Tanya Primrose, whom I visited on Sunday at her new workplace, Living Colour of the Tropics gift shop in Edge Hill. Tanya and her employer, Carol North, are great examples of Back to Work, and there are others: a Bundaberg manufacturing worker, a Mackay automotive industry worker, a Townsville healthcare worker and construction workers in Gladstone and Cairns. We hope to see many more success stories in coming weeks. We have a further 35 employers applying for support payments which are currently being processed.

While the latest ABS labour force data shows unemployment falling in some regions, such as a 3.7 per cent fall in youth unemployment in the Mackay area, it remains a challenge throughout regional Queensland, particularly youth unemployment. That is why we have specifically targeted Back to Work at regions outside the south-east where the greatest employment challenge is. It is important to recognise that, to be eligible for an employer support payment, employers need their new employees to have started work on or after 1 July 2016 and to have been employed for at least four weeks. There will be employers who have already hired a new worker but are yet to apply for a support payment. The further we get into this program, the more applications we are likely to see. These are early days.

Seven Back to Work teams are in place across regional Queensland, connecting employers and jobseekers. Queensland's peak industry group, the CCIQ, is also getting behind Back to Work, distributing a webinar to inform members of the benefits. Across regional Queensland businesses and employers are getting behind Back to Work, which is giving them the support and confidence they need. This is boosting local economies and is supporting real jobs and real employers—jobs now and jobs for the future.

Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (10.23 am): I rise today to update the House on the progress made by the Palaszczuk government in tackling the re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis. Last session I outlined to the House our three-pronged strategy to tackle this disease. It is important for this government to work with other governments, both state and federal, to ensure prevention of this insidious disease.

Last week I travelled to Canberra where state, territory and Commonwealth ministers met to discuss a national strategy for tackling coal workers' pneumoconiosis. The re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis is a national issue with national implications. This is a disease that develops over time, and miners or retired miners may no longer be living in the coalmining state where they once worked. That is why I am seeking a national chest X-ray program for coalminers who are retired or otherwise no longer working in the industry. The meeting agreed that New South Wales and Queensland will work together as the two key coalmining states to progress a national black lung screening system for retired underground coalminers.

Meanwhile our underground coal companies are offering their employees new chest X-rays or re-reading of X-rays that are less than two years old. These X-rays are being double-checked—first by an Australian radiologist to the ILO standard and, as an interim measure, then by a US based reader. Already 88 X-rays have been digitally transferred to the US for a second reading since this double-checking process was introduced last month.

The COAG meeting was overall very productive. Whilst we continue to work with the New South Wales government to develop a national framework, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee is due to deliver to me its recommendations. These recommendations on proposed new regulations will ensure that respirable dust levels at Queensland's coalmines are kept at a safe level. I will continue to work with my colleague Minister Grace to ensure that all workers can access the workers compensation safety net. There is an enormous amount of work ahead, but I am confident that this government can restore faith and the commitment of all parties to putting the health of Queensland coalminers first and foremost.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.26 am): The Palaszczuk government has seen 18 months of decision and delivery under the leadership of the Premier—18 months of landing the big reforms; changing the culture and working for

every Queenslander regardless of who they are or where they live; 18 months of delivering more jobs across the state and supporting and attracting businesses to support even more jobs into the future; 18 months of listening, deciding and delivering.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering the single largest cut and restructure to public transport fares in the state's history. We have supported getting more freight off the road and on to rail, lowering the Toowoomba tunnels and improving the north coast line. We have increased choice and services in personal mobility, putting pressure on point-to-point fares. We are building the public transport infrastructure of the future, duplicating the Gold Coast line and delivering stage 2 of the Gold Coast Light Rail. We are boosting the number of train services by rolling out 21st century signalling technology for the very first time in Queensland. We are putting the Gold Coast on show in 2018 for the Commonwealth Games, delivering our new world-class venues on time and on budget, leaving a legacy of a world-class events city here in Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is backing up its words with actions right across the state. We are seeing government investments on the Gold Coast supporting strong property prices, stimulating business development and boosting confidence off the back of the games, and also off the back of the tireless work of the Minister for Tourism and the huge investments being made in diversifying our services economy.

I am thrilled that the Minister for Main Roads and I have been able to contribute to a State Infrastructure Plan for the first time in five years thanks to the Deputy Premier. We are working for our regions, whether it is freight improvement projects and sensible heavy vehicle rulings in my portfolio or supporting regional councils through the Minister for State Development's Building our Regions fund.

The Minister for Agriculture has been advocating for greater and even more efficient movements of freight across our transport network to support trade and jobs, and our achievements to date show that we are serious about the task. There is no greater sign of our passion for the north than the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland championing the Townsville stadium and working with me to finally get federal funding for the Townsville eastern access corridor business case.

In the last 18 months we have restored accountability to government and through the parliament, driven by the Premier and the Attorney-General. We are also driving change on how we deliver government services. As the deliverer of so many front-line services, my department is working closely with the Minister for Innovation and the Minister for Public Works on the task of how to better connect Queenslanders quickly and easily with government, and supporting our hardworking employees as well.

There can be no greater silent scourge in our state than domestic violence. The Minister for Communities is delivering on the Quentin Bryce report and I am pleased to say that my department, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, has achieved full White Ribbon accreditation as our part of this task.

The Treasurer's back-to-work package that doubled the payroll incentives for apprentices showed how serious we are about strengthening our skills base for new workers. Across my portfolios we are leading by example, engaging approximately 60 apprentices on our Commonwealth Games venues and village construction works alone.

This has been a busy 18 months for the Palaszczuk government. We have listened, we have decided and we have delivered. We will continue to do so and we will do so in the best interests of Queenslanders right across the whole of this state.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Reports

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (10.30 am): I lay upon the table of the House the following reports of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: report No. 35 titled *Oversight of the Office of the Ombudsman*; report No. 36 titled *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner*; and report No. 37 titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 March 2016 and 14 June 2016*. I commend the reports to the House.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 35—Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman [[1389](#)].

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 36—Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner [[1390](#)].

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 37—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 March 2016 and 14 June 2016 [[1391](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Carmichael Mine

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (10.30 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House:

1. notes the Federal Court has dismissed an Australian Conservation Foundation case against Adani's \$16 billion Carmichael mine;
2. supports the development of Adani's Carmichael mine and other new thermal coal mines in Queensland; and
3. calls on the Palaszczuk government to prioritise its commitment to Land Court reform to expedite the consideration of resource projects in Queensland.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Organised Crime

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (10.31 am): For those who have not been around Queensland politics for a time, I can say that we have heard it all before when it comes to Labor talking tough on bikies. Rewind to March 2009 and then Labor premier Anna Bligh said—

We will not be left behind—Queensland will match any State in regard to the toughness of our laws to deal with the threat of outlaw motorcycle gangs.

In the same year the then attorney-general, Cameron Dick, currently the member for Woodridge, said when he introduced the Criminal Organisation Act that it was the tough medicine needed 'to disrupt and restrict the activities of criminal organisations and their members and associates'. That act has been a spectacular failure, a disaster. Organised crime flourished and it produced zero declarations of criminal organisations.

The government has made a lot of the task force led by retired Supreme Court judge Alan Wilson which was designed to repeal and replace the 2013 laws passed by the LNP. There was another Wilson review released at that time. There was not as much fanfare about that. It reviewed Labor's Criminal Organisation Act, an act that is still in place. It was described by Mr Wilson as an act that 'in practice has not proved useful and holds no promise of becoming so'.

We saw on Sunday that Labor want to get tough on what bikies wear. However, they need to get tough on what they actually do. Now we see Labor spruiking their new laws that will include control orders, public safety orders and fortification removal orders. These are not new. They were part of that failed Criminal Organisation Act 2009 and they are still in place today. Mr Wilson concluded—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock one moment. I apologise for interrupting. Minister for Health, if you proceed, you will be warned under standing order 253A.

Mr WALKER: Mr Wilson concluded that in relation to control orders, public safety orders and fortification removal orders—all the things we heard about this morning, these new big deals—

... none of these stratagems have proved useful in the fight against organised crime elsewhere in Australia, with one possible exception: A variant of public safety orders used in South Australia.

He also said that 'fortification orders lack utility as a means of disturbing outlaw criminal motorcycle gangs'. It has been seven years and no orders have been made. There have been no fortification removal orders, no public safety orders and no declared criminal organisations. Labor has got to where it is by talking tough on bikies but passing totally ineffective laws. The bikies know that they will be weaker and they are out there recruiting. The lawyers know that they are going to be weaker and they are madly delaying their cases as a result. Queenslanders know they are going to be weaker because Labor is notoriously soft on crime.

The facts speak for themselves. Only the LNP can be trusted when it comes to keeping Queenslanders safe in dealing with organised crime.

International Education and Training

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.34 am): This morning I described the importance of international education and training to Queensland jobs. Globally, it is one of the fastest growing service industries and Queensland is well placed to take full advantage of this global

growth. We want jobs for our state, but quite clearly the LNP are just not interested. They were not interested when they were in government and we saw the metrics in relation to international students dive. Now they are not interested in opposition. We know that because they are interested in preference deals with One Nation in back rooms. That is what we know. We know what that will do to our international education and training sector in Queensland.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. One moment, Deputy Premier. Thank you, members.

Ms TRAD: We know that this will have an impact on the international education and training sector here in Queensland and we know that it will drive down investment and jobs. It is quite an extraordinary choice that the Leader of the Opposition is making. The Leader of the Opposition is putting his own political interests ahead of the Queensland economy and Queensland jobs.

Let's look at what happened last time One Nation rose to prominence in Queensland. In 1994 and 1995 Queensland had the highest rate of international student growth in this country—23 per cent and 30 per cent year on year—but it plummeted to be one of the lowest following the election of Pauline Hanson in 1996. In 1998, the same year One Nation won 11 seats in this parliament, the number of international students coming to Queensland fell by double digits, by more than 10 per cent. If that happens now, it could cost the Queensland economy nearly \$300 million and 1,900 jobs just in this one sector alone. We can see the same risk to tourism and foreign direct investment. This is the price the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to pay by pandering to extremists.

Eight years ago when he formed the LNP, the member for Southern Downs got it right when he rejected One Nation and he said about the LNP—

This is a moderate, middle of the road political party, those people that don't subscribe to those views would not be welcome anywhere near it.

It is a terrible shame that the member for Clayfield has turned his back on these principles in the desperate hope of clawing into power.

(Time expired)

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (10.37 am): As the Premier and her cabinet disagree and dither over how to keep Queenslanders safe, the crime rates across this state continue to escalate. There is no greater example of this than on the Gold Coast. Over the last 12 months on the Gold Coast assaults have increased by 45 per cent, robberies have increased by 15 per cent and drug offences have increased by around 12 per cent. It is no coincidence that this crime rate has escalated after this government gutted Taskforce Maxima. Despite that, they still do some fantastic work.

Today criminal motorcycle gangs will be welcoming the announcement by the Premier about the weakening of these laws. They have been sniffing around over the last 18 months knowing that this government is weak on crime and their activity has increased. There are reports that the Finks bikie gang is looking at re-establishing its headquarters at Molendinar. We have seen those allegedly deliberately lit fires at Nobby Beach businesses; mum-and-dad businesses are being burnt down and allegedly linked to extortion by the Hells Angels.

There were gunshots fired at the Aria holiday apartments at Broadbeach, allegedly by a Comanchero bikie, and last week there was a shocking incident when a bus driver in Cavill Avenue, in the middle of Surfers Paradise, went to drive into a bay allocated for him and there was a car there. For the safety of his passengers he got out to ask those people to move on, but his mistake was that he came in contact with two Comanchero bikies. What did they do? They punched him in the face straightaway. He rang for the police on a mobile phone and then went back into the bus. They allegedly pulled him out of the bus and punched him while he was on the ground—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I raise concerns that the member for Everton may be traversing the principles of sub judice and I ask that you give him some guidance.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, can you assure me that the comments you are making do not contravene the standing or sessional orders?

Mr MANDER: As far as I know, Mr Speaker, yes.

Mr SPEAKER: Have you taken advice to assure me that the comments you are making or have made do not transgress the standing or sessional orders?

Mr MANDER: I am simply repeating what has been reported in the newspapers, which I can table now.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under standing order 253A. Member for Everton, can you assure me there are no charges pending in relation to the matters you are referring to?

Mr MANDER: I can assure you that I am simply reporting what has been published in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*.

Mr SPEAKER: I know what you have said, but I am asking whether you can assure me that the matters you are referring to do not relate to matters that have currently been charged or are before the courts.

Mr MANDER: I cannot assure you that charges have not been laid.

Mr SPEAKER: I would urge you to resume your seat, member for Everton. I now call the Treasurer for your contribution.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. The member for Everton may well have had other issues that he would like to address in the continuation of his speech. I accept the ruling that you have made with regard to that particular issue, but surely the member for Everton should be given a chance to use his remaining time to address further issues.

Mr SPEAKER: If the member for Everton has other matters that do not touch on the matters that he has been speaking about, I will allow him the remaining 49 seconds.

Mr MANDER: Three years ago the bikies on the Gold Coast said, 'We run this town'—

Mr SPEAKER: We do not need a prop, member for Everton.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. The member for Everton continues to disregard the standing orders and the ruling that you have made and I ask that you draw him to order.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you have 38 seconds.

Mr MANDER: As I said, three years ago the bikies claimed that they ran the Gold Coast. They will welcome the introduction of these new laws which the Premier announced this morning because these are the proud 'one per centers', the people who say they are above the law. They will welcome this announcement by the Premier because they have absolutely no respect for the law whatsoever. Their activity has increased dramatically on the Gold Coast because they knew this would happen. They knew this government would go weak on these laws. Under these new laws proposed by the Premier the bikies are back.

Queensland Economy, Jobs

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (10.43 am): What we have just heard from the member for Everton is an admission that the LNP's laws—the laws which we currently have in this state—are failing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! We are not going to have a shouting match or I will start naming members and you can leave the chamber. I call the Treasurer.

Mr PITT: He has all but thrown the member for Kawana under a bus in terms of the laws that he brought in; that is what we have heard from the member for Everton this morning.

I am here to talk about some good things for Queensland. The good news is there are great reasons to be confident about the Queensland economy. We have the best resource of human capital in the Southern Hemisphere, which of course is supporting the high-knowledge jobs of tomorrow. We are blessed with natural resources that support our agriculture and mining sectors. We have a spectacular natural environment which is the envy of the world and supports and attracts tourists to our shores, and all of this is on the doorstep of the biggest middle class in the world: Asia. Yet those purveyors of doom opposite are again talking down the Queensland economy, and of course they are asking us not to shine a light on what happened during their time in office. Of course they would, because under Labor 40,000 jobs have been created in this state in 18 months; under the LNP only 26,900 jobs were created in almost three years. That is more jobs in half the time under Labor. When it comes to creating jobs, those opposite seem addicted to negativity. They just do not know what to do.

When they came to office in 2012, those opposite inherited a trend unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent. They promised to bring it down to four per cent. The first step of the now opposition leader was to sack 14,000 government workers in his first budget. His answer to slowing employment growth in the public sector was a complete overreaction. It was like trying to trim a bonsai with a chainsaw. He took a chainsaw to the public sector, and of course it was no surprise that unemployment went in the wrong direction. It was no surprise that regional economies in particular closed their wallets and stopped spending. That is why we saw GSP come down to 0.8 per cent in 2014-15. Those opposite inherited a GSP of 5.8 per cent in 2011-12 when they came to office, and the member for Clayfield—the now opposition leader—when he was treasurer oversaw that coming down to 0.8 per cent. He dragged it down. As they say in the classics, you reap what you sow.

We know there was a bitter harvest of sustained negativity which really damaged our economy. It is funny that you do not hear much about asset sales from those opposite anymore. When the opposition leader talks about hard choices he is slipping because he is really talking about Strong Choices. We know what his No. 1 plan is for the state; it is his only plan. The member for Clayfield should be held to account, as should all of those opposite, for the damage they did to Queensland during their time in office.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition I would like to remind members of standing order 233(2), the sub judice rule, which states—

Members should not refer to in the House matters awaiting or under adjudication in all courts exercising a criminal jurisdiction (including in motions, debate or questions) from the moment the charge is made against the relevant person. This Standing Order shall cease to have effect when the verdict and sentence have been announced or judgment given, but shall again have effect should a Court of Criminal Appeal order a new trial.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.47 am): Just looking across the chamber, there were more people interested in the audition by the member for Sandgate for the Treasurer's job than there were in the two statements issued by the member for Mulgrave. That is not altogether surprising, because at least the member for Sandgate is out there speaking to the business community. The member for Mulgrave had to send the Premier in to have an emergency meeting with business leaders last week, where she got an earful about their decision on Uber. The only thing we know about this government is that the one person no-one wants to speak to in relation to what is going on in this state is the member for Mulgrave.

What is happening in this state? Another day, another delay by a government that does not know what it wants to do. This is a government that cannot make a decision in relation to protecting and securing Queenslanders in their homes, Queenslanders when they go out to enjoy themselves with their families and Queenslanders undertaking their businesses. What we have here is a government that cannot make a decision. The LNP ran the bikies out of Queensland; Labor is bringing them back.

Government members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Well may they laugh, because that is the only solution they have. They cannot make their laws any tougher. They have rolled out three ministers over three days to try to get the message out there that they are tough on crime, but Queenslanders know that they are notoriously soft on crime.

We know that we have the member for Pine Rivers and the member for Kallangur writing letters on behalf of the Rebel Mick Kosenko, asking why he cannot carry out his business, why we do not weaken the laws. They are making submissions to the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General cannot get her laws through and she timidly only says, 'We will have only seven years for a circumstance of aggravation.' It was the LNP that put in place the powers that made it 20 years and that started breaking the backs of the criminal gangs. It was the LNP that put in place the powers the police have to search, to detain and to interrogate. It was the LNP that put in place the powers that ran the bikies off the Gold Coast and made it safer for us all.

We are reading about turf wars coming back to the Gold Coast and to Brisbane. We know that there is only one turf war going on in Queensland, and that is the turf war in the Labor Party. We have the Hells Angels led by the member for South Brisbane and we have the Comancheros led by the member for Mulgrave. The big question is: who is the Rebel over there?

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will finish at 11.51 am.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (10.51 am): My question is to the Premier. Since the introduction of the LNP's tough-on-crime laws in 2013 we have not seen the bikie related public brawls or the open clubhouses as we saw under Labor's 2009 failed laws. Why is the Premier changing laws that worked?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Government ministers, I would ask you to allow the Premier to answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. What we saw just before question time started was the Leader of the Opposition making a mockery of outlaw criminal motorcycle gangs in this state. That is something my government will never do.

Let me go through it again so that those opposite can be very clear about the process. Before we went to the election we said that we would conduct an inquiry into serious organised crime. We did that. My government wants to tackle all forms of serious organised crime in this state. That means illicit drugs. That means trafficking. It also means child exploitation rings that have been occurring. By condemning what my government is doing, those opposite are saying that they do not believe that these things are happening in Queensland, that they do not support the tough new measures my government will introduce in terms of maximum penalties for these offences.

The Attorney promised to review the VLAD legislation, which she did utilising a former Supreme Court judge. My government promised to introduce a bill—it will be introduced next sitting week—tackling all aspects of serious organised crime. That includes outlaw motorcycle gangs. We will get these laws right, because the public expects us to get them right. They will be introduced into the parliament and they will go to the committee for a full and detailed examination. Over the next two weeks the Attorney-General will be conducting extensive consultation with the Bar Association, the Law Society, the police union and other interest groups to make sure that when the bills are introduced into this parliament they are robust.

The laws we will introduce will ensure we get convictions. The failed Newman-Nicholls-Bleijie laws have failed to secure convictions, to the extent that the shadow Attorney-General, who I do not believe is fit and proper to hold that office, says—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, the shadow Attorney-General said—

We don't want more convictions. We don't want the courts overloaded—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition for his second question, I am informed that we have students from the Childers State School in the electorate of Burnett observing our proceedings. Welcome.

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question is also to the Premier. Why is the Premier more concerned with the clothes bikies wear than the crimes they commit?

Ms PALASZCZUK: My government takes very seriously matters dealing with the crimes that serious organised crime people do. That is why we are going to introduce a comprehensive suite of legislation. Let us go back in history a little bit. I remember a former premier talking about the wearing of bikie colours being the same as the wearing of a football jersey. That is how tough they were. The task force found very clearly that outlaw motorcycle gang members wearing colours seek to intimidate the public. Under the laws of those opposite, motorcycle gang members were banned from wearing colours only if they were in a licensed venue. My government will have the toughest laws in Australia, because those people will not be able to wear their colours in any public place.

We just heard some extraordinary statements from the shadow police minister, complaining about crimes being committed. The fear and intimidation that some outlaw motorcycle gangs actually pose to the public mean they are less likely to go and report the crimes.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Those opposite were so concerned with colours that the former attorney-general wanted to lock them up and put them in pink jumpsuits. That was the attitude of the former attorney-general towards this. What an embarrassment!

What we saw under the former government was rushed laws that would not withstand a constitutional challenge. My government's laws will be workable and robust and they will withstand a constitutional challenge because we are getting the legal advice. We are making sure they are robust.

Mr Pitt: They will get convictions.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. We will make sure that people who commit crimes will go to prison—unlike those opposite. I also thank the Premier of New South Wales, Mike Baird. The Attorney-General, the police minister and I went to New South Wales and had extensive consultations about their consorting laws.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Bulimba, I am informed that students from St Mary's College in the electorate of Ipswich are observing our proceedings in the gallery. Welcome.

Public Service

Ms FARMER: My question is directed to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier outline to the House the importance of government workers in providing services throughout Queensland? Is she aware of any 'right size' when it comes to front-line services?

Ms PALASZCZUK: At the outset I thank the member for Bulimba for that very important question, but before I answer I acknowledge students from St Mary's high school. It is my old high school in Ipswich and it is lovely that they are here to observe the operations of this parliament. Welcome to Parliament House. I also acknowledge the member for Ipswich in the chamber, Jennifer Howard.

I was very concerned of reports made recently by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the Public Service. We cannot trust those opposite when it comes to treating the Public Service of this state with dignity and respect. The three years of trauma that many public servants went through under the former government still resonates with them. I am constantly stopped by people talking to me about the way that they were treated under the former government. Many had to have counselling because they were worried about their jobs. The former premier, Campbell Newman, said very clearly that public servants had nothing to fear, but in his very first budget the then treasurer and now Leader of the Opposition cut 14,000 public servants and those people felt the effects of that. Is it any wonder that we heard the Leader of the Opposition talking recently about wanting to 'right size' the Public Service when it comes to front-line services?

Mr Pitt: What does 'right size' mean?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection from the Treasurer, because I went back through a bit of history—I like going back through history; it is always a good reminder—and I came across an article that was written and the headline of the media release from the then premier, the honourable Campbell Newman, was 'Government committed to 'right size' Public Service'. We know that 'right size' means massive cuts and we know that this former treasurer has form when it comes to the treatment of public servants in this state. I give this commitment to the Public Service of Queensland: my government will always respect it. We value its contribution and work and we will continue to restore front-line services throughout this state because that is what Queenslanders elected us to do and that is what we will continue to do.

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs, Member for Kallangur

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to revelations last week that the member for Kallangur lobbied the Attorney-General on behalf of the president of the Rebels outlaw motorcycle gang, 'Little Mick' Kosenko. Why is this government more concerned about bikies than Queenslanders' safety?

Ms PALASZCZUK: From the outset I reject the premise of the question asked by the deputy leader. It is an irresponsible question to ask. My government values the protection and safety of Queenslanders above everything else. That is why we are tackling issues around child sexual exploitation, illicit drugs, boiler room fraud issues as well as outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Ms Grace: And paedophile rings.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And paedophile rings; absolutely.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection, because the member for Mansfield does not want convictions. He has said that on the public record. How irresponsible is that? 'We do not want convictions,' is what he has said. It is appalling! The Leader of the Opposition has said that it does not matter what they wear. There is no consistency on that side about serious organised crime, and the test will come when the laws are introduced and debated. Will they back my government's view about tackling all aspects of serious organised crime, making these laws the toughest in Australia? The Prime Minister is at the moment in conversations with the states about stronger national counterterrorism laws. That is a fact. I also firmly believe that we need national consistency when it comes to tackling all aspects of serious organised crime and I will be writing to the Prime Minister about this matter because these issues are too important for Queenslanders.

Public Housing

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is directed to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is increasing the construction of social housing for those most in need?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Maryborough for the question. The construction of more than 400 new homes across Queensland is part of my government's commitment to provide housing for those most in need in our community while also providing employment for tradies across the length and breadth of our state. We know how important it is to have a roof over people's heads. My housing minister has been consulting and conducting forums right across the state about a new housing strategy. He is also determined to get more tradies involved and this minister is working very hard to achieve that. He will not be entering into any contracts like the former government did that do not stack up and are not rolled out successfully, were ill-conceived and a waste of taxpayers' money.

Right now almost \$100 million worth of projects are either under construction or shovel ready when it comes to housing projects across the state. The work will provide employment for approximately 2,000 tradies across Queensland this financial year alone, and that means jobs for Queenslanders. These are real jobs for local tradespeople working on building sites in regions. From Ashgrove to Stafford to Southport, Townsville to Toowoomba, Murarrie to Morningside, Enoggera to Everton Park, these projects will provide employment and an economic stimulus to these regions. Importantly, these constructions will provide homes for hundreds of people who are at risk of homelessness.

My government is building apartment blocks in Burleigh Heads and Booval, Rangeville, Everton Park, Mermaid Beach, Zillmere, Lawnton, South Toowoomba, Tugun and Keperra. We are building units in Palm Beach, Aitkenvale and Bundaberg North and houses in Bundamba and Tewantin. These projects mean millions of dollars injected into local economies, with almost \$9.5 million into Ipswich—and I am quite sure that the students from St Mary's would be very happy to hear that—\$14.5 million into Mundingburra, \$3.5 million into Pine Rivers, \$2.7 million into Rockhampton, \$6 million into Toowoomba South, \$5 million into Everton and \$6.7 million into Broadwater. These projects are expected to be completed by the end of June next year.

Already this financial year we have seen more than \$7.7 million worth of government-led housing construction projects completed across the state. I am very happy to report that this construction is well underway and it means jobs for Queenslanders and jobs for tradies. It is happening right across the length and breadth of our state, creating jobs and making sure that people have a roof over their heads.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Mansfield, Leader of the Opposition, I give you a little bit more latitude than other members. I am informed that we have another group of students from the Childers State School in the electorate of Burnett observing our proceedings in the gallery. Welcome.

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs, Member for Pine Rivers

Mr WALKER: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to revelations last week that the member for Pine Rivers also met with the Attorney-General to lobby on behalf of the president of the Rebels outlaw motorcycle gang, 'Little Mick' Kosenko. Why has the Premier not banned her members from advocating for bikies?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. Once again, this is a question from the shadow Attorney-General. I want to read this quote out again. He said—

We don't want more convictions. We don't want the courts overloaded and police overloaded.'

That is their legacy. I am not aware of any meeting with the Attorney-General. I would ask the member to direct that question to the Attorney-General.

Trade

Mr RUSSO: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on Queensland's trade performance and any challenges on the horizon?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Sunnybank for the question. Of course, the member for Sunnybank is very keenly interested in stronger links between some of our biggest trading partners, particularly in Asia. I want to acknowledge that there is quite a significant population of Chinese-speaking people within his electorate.

I am very pleased to again report to the House that, at a time when exports went backwards nationally, in the year to June 2016 the value of Queensland merchandise exports increased by \$1.1 billion to be \$47.6 billion. That is something we should be very proud of. Today, I am pleased to advise the House that Trade & Investment Queensland—or TIQ—helped to facilitate \$405 million worth of investment in 2015-16. That constitutes about 26 new deals, contributing over 440 new jobs. Importantly, we are using our geographical advantage to create jobs, with almost 70 per cent of these deals created through partnerships with Asia and almost 80 per cent of the value of inwards investment coming from Asia. In terms of trading partners and source investment, Asia is our No. 1 partner.

More trade with Asia means more jobs for Queenslanders. It is as simple as that. But, sadly, the LNP is now putting its political interests first instead of Queensland jobs. That was very clear when the LNP made the decision to reregulate the sugar industry, which has shaken investor confidence in Queensland. In its submission to the national Productivity Commission, Wilmar said—

The Act has created uncertainty for investors in the Queensland sugar industry. The impact has been profound and immediate.

Within a week of this legislation, MSF Sugar put future investments on hold and Wilmar has since suspended planning for a new \$75 million storage facility. But we know that more is on the horizon because of the dirty preference deal that the LNP is chasing down with One Nation. It would be incredibly prudent for the Leader of the Opposition to take advice from former leader and former premier, Rob Borbidge, on this issue. The impact of cosying up to One Nation in Queensland will have a direct hit to our economy through lower investment, lower trade and lower tourism numbers coming to Queensland. If you want to take the rug out from under the economy, you preference One Nation, which is exactly what they are looking at doing.

(Time expired)

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's comments on 5 April of, 'I want more convictions not less,' and I ask: does not more convictions mean more crime? Should not we keep the laws that reduce crime and cause criminal gangs to disband and members to flee the state?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I do not know who wrote that question. Obviously, it shows a complete lack of understanding of the judicial system that we have in this state. I think that the Leader of the Opposition is a former lawyer. He might be able to give the member for Everton some help. Maybe it is a set-up—I do not know. He is a rival. You never know what is going on.

I want more convictions. That is why we will have the toughest laws in this state. I have been very clear that we will be tackling outlaw motorcycle gangs, people involved—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you are warned under standing order 253A. You have had a pretty good go all morning.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, we will create new offences for child exploitation—for administering and encouraging the use of child exploitation websites. The maximum penalties are going up from 14 years to 20 years. As I said in my ministerial statement, when it comes to illicit drugs, we are increasing the penalties from 20 years to 25 years. As I said in my ministerial statement, in an Australia first, there will be a post-conviction organised crime control order to cut down the amount of crime that is happening in the state.

My government is serious about getting the laws right. That is why we have had the inquiry into serious organised crime. That is why the Attorney-General has had the VLAD task force review. I think that those opposite should wait until they read the legislation before they start jumping to conclusions. They should read the legislation; they should understand it.

As I stated previously, the Attorney-General, the police minister and I went with the Police Commissioner down to meet with Mike Baird and discuss the consorting laws. The consorting laws have withstood a High Court challenge. The VLAD laws have not withstood a High Court challenge. We will get these laws right, because that is what Queenslanders expect. That is what stakeholders expect.

I also understand, as reported in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* on Monday, the following—

Queensland Police Union president Ian Leavers said he was pleased with Labor's proposed new laws.

'Banning outlaw motorcycle gang colours altogether in Queensland is a move we should be proud of and all other states should follow our lead,' he said.

As I said, these laws are robust. They are workable. They will be introduced to the parliament and they will go to a committee hearing, because that is exactly what the people in Queensland expect us to do. That is what my government will do.

(Time expired)

Queensland Economy

Mr PEGG: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to recent comments about Queensland's economic performance, and I ask: will the Treasurer update the House on how the Queensland economy compares to the economy under the former government and with other states?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for the question. As Queensland Treasurer, it is my job to be positive about the Queensland economy, to help drive more jobs and growth and encourage investment and build confidence. I never have and never will whitewash or airbrush it away. As I have said on numerous occasions, Queensland needs to transition to a post mining boom economy. That means that certain sectors and certain regions are doing it tougher than others. That is our challenge as a government.

My message has been consistent. It has been suggested that we should stop comparing ourselves to the previous government. I know that those opposite would love that. They would like to forget the time that they were in office and I can tell members that Queenslanders certainly will not forget their time in office. I cannot think of a more blatant example of airbrushing or whitewashing than trying to forget Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls heading up the state and driving it downwards in a self-fulfilling prophecy of a power-dive into the abyss. That is what they achieved in their time in office.

After 18 months, we have budgets that are in surplus. We have combined surpluses over the forward estimates of \$3.2 billion. That is despite \$4.7 billion in revenue writedowns that would have affected any government. In contrast, we had an \$8 billion black hole that the member for Clayfield, with his spendometer, keeps projecting. He wants to keep pushing his own agenda because he wants to be negative. He is addicted to negativity.

Of course, we have improved front-line services. We have improved services for paramedics, police, teachers, nurses and firefighters—all of those people who those opposite wanted to ride roughshod over. Their answer was to sack everyone—14,000 in the first budget of the member for Clayfield.

There has been the suggestion that, when we compare ourselves to other states, we should talk about the other states a bit more. Maybe those members opposite might not want us to compare ourselves so much with the other states, because we might bruise their delicate little egos. In 2016-17, we have forecast the strongest economic growth in the nation—of all the states and territories—of four per cent. In the last financial year, we achieved growth of 3½ per cent.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr PITT: The member for Indooroopilly should listen. We are ahead of the other states and territories. Last year, growth in New South Wales was 2¾ percent. In Victoria, growth was three per cent. The national rate was 2½ per cent. That is no whitewashing and no airbrushing, just the facts. The former treasurer inherited 5.8 per cent growth and drove the economy down to get GSP of below one per cent—0.8 per cent—for the 2014-15 year. Our per capita tax advantage is \$808 lower.

This is all about those opposite and other critics wanting one thing. It is all code. It is all about saying that other states and territories have sold their assets so why hasn't Queensland. Guess what? We keep our promises on this side of the House. We are not going to sell your assets; we are keeping them. We are keeping the \$2 billion a year that they bring in. What is the position of those opposite on asset sales? They do not have one because they are addicted to privatisation, just as they are addicted to negativity.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Indooroopilly, you are warned under standing order 253A for your disorderly conduct.

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Premier. Given that it was revealed last week that the cabinet is split on proposed changes to the LNP criminal gang laws, I ask: if the government wants to be just as tough on—

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, you are warned under standing order 253A for your unnecessary interjections. Member for Mudgeeraba, will you repeat your question, please.

Ms BATES: Given that it was revealed last week that the cabinet is split on proposed changes to the LNP criminal gang laws, I ask: if the government wants to be just as tough on bikies as the previous government then why change the laws?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member very much for the question. Of course the member would understand cabinet deliberations because she spent such a long time there in the last government. In fact, I think from memory she actually—

Mr SPEAKER: Please do not debate the issue, Premier. Can you please make your answer relevant.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me make it clear: my cabinet and my government is fully supportive of our tough new laws to tackle all forms of serious organised crime. We are 100 per cent united because we are delivering on our commitment that we made to Queenslanders. I have just found some other interesting revelations from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* where the member for Surfers Paradise made some comments recently about their legislation and the bikies on the Gold Coast. He said he was convinced the bikies had never truly left the Gold Coast. He said—

I think they are still here ... The arrests we have had in the last few days with alleged associations with bikie gangs and the drugs with large amounts of cash show that they never left.

The member for Kawana is hanging his head. He is not looking up because we know that the laws that he introduced were rushed, irresponsible and did not work. Let me once again reassure Queenslanders—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! You have had a pretty good go, member for Kawana.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me once again reassure all Queenslanders that my government is 100 per cent committed to tackling all forms of serious organised crime throughout this state. My government's laws will work, they will be robust, they will be enforceable and we will get convictions. We will clearly focus on all aspects. We will work with the police, Queenslanders and the legal profession to ensure their constitutional validity in this state.

Health Exports

Mr WILLIAMS: My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on the initiatives the government is taking to increase Queensland health exports?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Pumicestone for his question. I report to the House that our government is very keen on building Queensland exports. We are taking specific measures to build exports and trade opportunities for Queensland businesses and also those in the clinical space to allow them to engage with other countries, particularly countries in the Asia-Pacific region. We want to export our technical expertise. Why do we want to do that? So that we can generate jobs for Queenslanders, which is central to our mission as a government. It is not just medical systems that we can take to the world but the skills and expertise we have in medical and clinical infrastructure to create revenue and jobs for Queenslanders.

Earlier this month I hosted the first of a series of high-level round tables with private sector health industry leaders with the aim of increasing our health exports. I am pleased to report to the House that at that round table I announced the establishment of a Queensland health export and investment advisory council to help facilitate the export of our health service expertise. We will have further high-level round tables to get the structure right, to talk to business and to talk to industry about how we can do this.

All of this is put at jeopardy if the LNP continues to engage with One Nation. As the Deputy Premier made clear earlier today, if we engage with One Nation it sends a negative signal to the rest of the world. The future for Australia and the future for Queensland is engaging with the Asia-Pacific region. This is a test of leadership for the Leader of the Opposition. Those members here who remember the 1998 election know why 11 members of One Nation came through that door into this House. It was because the LNP refused to stand up to them. We know that in the LNP the right hand does not know what the far right hand is doing. They get confused. The Leader of the Opposition will not stand up to his party. He will not put One Nation last. He is sending a signal to the rest of the world that we accept the principles and policies of One Nation. That is what his political organisation is doing. It puts jobs at risk, it puts trade and investment at risk and it puts Queensland at risk.

I am calling on the Leader of the Opposition to demonstrate leadership to his party. Say no to One Nation. Put One Nation last and put Queensland first. Those opposite are not interested in Queensland jobs, they are only interested in their own jobs. That is why they are preferencing One Nation: to put themselves first and Queensland second.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Beaudesert, you are now warned under standing order 253A and I will continue to look for people to put on the list.

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Attorney-General. On 17 February last year the Attorney said—

We do not support mandatory sentencing and we've made that clear and that is one area that we will be making clear to the taskforce that we want removed from these laws.

On the weekend it was reported that there were elements of mandatory sentencing in Labor's bikie laws, and I ask: has the Attorney-General changed her mind or was the Attorney-General rolled in cabinet last week?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I find it extraordinary that over the last 18 months and when we released the terms of reference of the task force those opposite have been bleating that we were dictating to the task force what the recommendations had to be, that they had no discretion whatsoever, that we had made it clear exactly what we wanted as far as recommendations went and that is what we would get. Now we are hearing that the government is following along the task force considerations and options put forward and those opposite are criticising that.

This is the same party that this year back and forth across its shadow ministers have made inconsistent statements in relation to convictions and bikies and whether they are here, they are not here, they have come back or they were never here in the first place. We are a little bit unsure what they are actually saying.

I can say that I have the full support of the cabinet in relation to these laws and what has been developed. Why? It is because the laws have been developed through proper consultation—through a commission of inquiry into organised crime, a task force inquiring into the 2013 suite of legislation that was introduced by the LNP government and a review into the criminal organisation legislation. We have taken the advice and we have listened to the Police Service in relation to the issues. We have taken note of the recommendations and the options that the task force put forward. We are making sure that not only will our laws be legally robust and stand up to challenges; they will operationally work on the ground for the police as well.

We acknowledge the task force's comments about the importance of having a sentencing regime in relation to serious organised crime offences that ensures that there is an incentive for people to cooperate with the police. What those on the other side got fundamentally wrong was that they put in such a crushing sentence that it was seen to be disproportionate to the actual offences committed, affecting what they were seeking to achieve. We can achieve the same end with sensible laws and that is the difference. We will have strong laws that look at all organised crime in this state. Those on the opposite side rushed together comprehensive but flawed legislation in a matter of days and then put it through this parliament in a matter of hours. We will do it right to ensure that all stakeholders, including those opposite, have the opportunity to properly scrutinise the legislation. That is what should occur and that is what will happen with the legislation that will be introduced in a couple of weeks.

Connecting to Asia Tourism Forum

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Will the minister update the House on the outcomes of the Palaszczuk government's Connecting to Asia Tourism Forum, which was held in Far North Queensland last week, and other opportunities to grow tourism from Asia?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for Mackay for her question. I know how passionate she is about growing tourism and tourism jobs in this state. That is why, at the Premier's instigation, in Cairns last week we held the Connecting to Asia Tourism Forum, which was attended by more than 300 tourism business operators, including international guests, as well as a number of government members who came because they too want to see a growth in tourism and tourism jobs in their local communities. The feedback that I have already received from the tourism industry is that it was one of the very best tourism forums they have ever attended and that they got very practical and pragmatic advice to take back to their tourism businesses so that they can grow jobs and work towards getting a share of the Asian market.

In tourism we know that our growth, our future and, indeed, the whole economic future of Queensland are intrinsically linked to our relationship with Asia. While we as a government were talking to tourism operators about how we can grow those relationships, how we can grow cultural understanding and how we can grow tourism jobs—in fact, through its new tourism strategy, TEQ expects to grow an extra 30,000 tourism jobs in Queensland, because of our connection to Asia—we saw the Leader of the Opposition getting into bed with One Nation. That is what we saw. We saw him getting busy, getting into bed with One Nation.

While we are saying that we need to grow cultural understanding and we need to grow jobs, because we understand that 60 per cent of the world's population is going to be living in Asia and we are the closest Australian state to Asia, which presents us with a unique opportunity, we have the member for Clayfield and Leader of the Opposition saying, 'We don't care about that. All we care about is LNP deals with One Nation!' The shame of it is that I know, having stood in this parliament on and off for 10 years, that the member for Southern Downs would not stoop that low. No! Lawrence Springborg stood up for conviction. Lawrence Springborg said no to a deal with One Nation, but not the member for Clayfield. From the leafy suburbs of Ascot, he is happy to sell his soul to get into bed with One Nation and do dirty deals.

I say to every single Queenslander that while I am standing in this parliament I will be putting One Nation last, as will all of my colleagues, because we know that getting into bed with One Nation costs Queenslanders jobs. It costs them their jobs. We owe it to the people who elect us to fight for their jobs and for economic prosperity, and not jeopardise it on some LNP dirty deal with One Nation.

Mr SPEAKER: I remind members that the Leader of the Opposition is able to rise on a point of order if he feels something is offensive. He does not need other members to assist him.

Commonwealth Games, Bandidos

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police. Given the Premier's outlined intention to remove the tough and successful criminal gang laws, will the minister guarantee that under Labor's new laws a group of unpatched Bandidos will not be able to gather at the Commonwealth Games?

Mr BYRNE: Yes.

Townsville Stadium

Mr STEWART: My question is to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Will the minister please update the House on the progress of the North Queensland stadium?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Townsville for his question. Just last weekend in Townsville, it was great to be able to announce a significant milestone for the project with the member and the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. I am pleased to inform the House that expressions of interest to kick off the \$250 million North Queensland stadium opened yesterday. The first tender process is now live on the ICN gateway for principal consultants to put forward design teams. As well, local contractors can register their interest in future work on this city-changing project at the QTenders website. I am pleased to advise members that, as of 9 am today, 212 suppliers and companies have sought information online about this stadium tender. Of those, 54 companies have now lodged 97 expressions of interest on the work packages for this stadium. The remaining 158 are suppliers who have downloaded the expressions of interest information.

The Townsville Stadium will be the biggest job-creation project in the north for decades. It will create 750 much needed jobs and generate millions of dollars in business opportunities for years to come. From the initial expressions of interest, we will short list a number of consortiums to submit a

concept design for the new stadium as part of the design tender. We want a consortia that will use local businesses, form local alliances and identify opportunities for local industry and innovation. We will deliver to the people of North Queensland an early Christmas present, that is, the concept design for the stadium that they have fought so hard to get. Who can forget the Cowboys captain, Johnathan Thurston, speaking in support of this stadium at the grand final? Now, play is well and truly underway.

The Palaszczuk government knows that the people of North Queensland and Townsville need jobs. We want to keep jobs local and help bring back to the region the confidence that was lost under the LNP. I say to businesses and contractors in North Queensland: register now to be part of this contract. Get along to my department of state development's next quarterly industry breakfast on 6 September to make sure you are in the loop for this really exciting time for the north. This is the jump start that the North Queensland economy and community needs. There will be no stopping them now.

Surfside Buslines, Safety

Mrs STUCKEY: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport. In the last few months on Gold Coast Surfside Buslines buses there have been numerous reports of violent attacks on bus drivers and passengers, and dangerous rock-throwing incidents. In light of those reports, can the minister advise what extra measures are being implemented to ensure the safety of passengers and drivers?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for the question. This is a very serious and important matter. Indeed, it is a very important matter that is dealt with by the government working very closely with industry, the Queensland Police Service and the relevant authorities to address safety issues on the whole of our public transport network. I am particularly aware of concerns and issues on our network on the Gold Coast.

The bus safety forum, which is chaired by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, allows a range of key stakeholders to collaboratively work with government departments to explore and discuss a broad range of issues and explore potential solutions and present innovative ideas for improving bus driver and passenger safety. The first forum was held on 22 February 2016. Another is planned for October. The members of the bus safety forum include representatives from transport groups, unions, police, academia and advocacy groups.

That is one example of the way in which the government is committed to continually improving safety for all workers across our public transport network, particularly our bus drivers. I am aware of the Transport Workers Union's Get on Board campaign. The Transport Workers Union, in partnership with the Queensland Bus Industry Council, QBIC, on Friday, 19 August launched their Get on Board campaign to demand action in reducing violence on the public transport network, and more specifically violence against bus drivers.

The safety of all bus drivers and customers is a top priority of TransLink. It actively supports and engages with industry through forums such as the bus safety forum. The industry also works closely with police to ensure all drivers have safe working conditions and that any reports of assaults are investigated immediately. Our bus operators have initiatives in place to minimise violence towards drivers, including CCTV, security surveillance and training to de-escalate violent behaviour. That is a very important element. That is something that we want to work even more closely on with drivers.

That is why last week, for instance, I actually met with a number of bus drivers at the TWU's bus driver council. A number of Gold Coast drivers specifically expressed their concerns and firsthand experiences. I assure members that I will redouble this government's efforts to work cooperatively with the industry and drivers, who are at the front line in this space, to ensure that we have the right set and range of arrangements in place to protect drivers, to increase and improve the physical arrangements that protect drivers and, very importantly, to make sure that we do not have that bad element using our bus network.

Townsville, Police Service

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services. Will the minister update the House on the work the Queensland Police Service is doing to address crime in Townsville?

Mr BYRNE: I thank the member for his question and for his strong advocacy on this issue. The Palaszczuk government is committed to community safety in Townsville and right across Queensland. The Townsville Tactical Crime Squad and the Townsville Rapid Action and Patrols continue to conduct high-visibility patrols and case-manage young offenders on court ordered curfews.

Police have had significant success with operations Lorry, Enchase and Conflate, with almost 2,000 charges against more than 600 offenders this year. The Palaszczuk government has listened to the Townsville community's concerns. That is why we have delivered an extra 24 police to Townsville since we came to government. That is why we are rolling out body worn video cameras as a priority for front-line police in Townsville. Some 108 body worn cameras will soon go to general duties officers and 30 to the Road Policing Command. Under the previous Liberal National Party government police had to buy their own body worn video camera devices.

Police advise that a large number of property crime offences involve unlocked or unsecure premises making them soft targets for offenders. The Lock It or Lose It crime prevention program has been rolled out in a bid to ensure that homes, businesses and vehicles are secure to prevent break-ins and thefts. There is an element of individual responsibility here.

There has also been increased confidence in reporting incidents of domestic and family violence. At divisional policing levels, all officers in charge have ownership of solving domestic and family violence offences within 14 days. To achieve this, stations have implemented dedicated domestic and family violence teams.

The detection of drug offences has increased, reflecting a swift response by police to the illicit drug trade. We have met an election commitment to establish community policing boards in all police districts. In Townsville the board is giving the local community an opportunity to work with police, local businesses and government departments on local crime issues and solutions generated locally. We know that by working together we are best placed to achieve the best outcomes for Townsville and other regional centres across Queensland. That was a concept that seemed to have been lost on the previous government.

The Townsville community policing board has been structured quite deliberately within a terms of reference to deliver our election commitment. It was our election commitment to involve people in their local communities to frankly and honestly discuss the issues and work towards solutions that suit those communities. Every police district in Queensland now has a community policing board. They are led by the district officers and they are working effectively towards addressing those issues. It is a great credit to this government that we have had that policy implemented.

Felton, Mineral Development Licence

Mr WEIR: My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources. Landholders in the Felton Valley received correspondence from Newmont Pacific Energy Pty Ltd in late May 2016 notifying them of a renewal for a further five years of the mineral development licence 304. Can the minister advise why this MDL will be extended given that the Felton Valley is located in a priority agricultural area?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for his question regarding the Felton Valley. Members would recall that the Felton Valley had a great deal of media prominence during the time of the last government in terms of providing mining development lease applications in this valley.

As the member is aware, the Felton Valley is a rich agricultural area in this state. It is one of the richest agricultural areas. A mining development lease is one up from an exploration lease. It is to prove up a resource. It is not actually to mine a specific resource. There are a number of safeguards that come before and after an MDL. I am quite happy to get some further information for the member and am quite happy to have a discussion with the member about the precious Felton Valley.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

Ms PEASE: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister please provide the House with information about the opening of the next round of Skilling Queenslanders for Work funding?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I note the very positive community response to the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative in her electorate and her ongoing commitment to giving Queenslanders these important opportunities.

Today I want to announce that the next round of funding for Skilling Queenslanders for Work is now open, allowing organisations to make a difference to people's lives by giving them a chance to gain skills and qualifications and to work in their local communities. Just 18 months after the Palaszczuk

government there have been three funding rounds and in total 576 community driven projects worth around \$90 million will be delivered across Queensland providing nationally recognised training, skills development and job opportunities for unemployed and disadvantaged Queenslanders.

Since the reintroduction of Skilling Queenslanders for Work it has been very encouraging to see community organisations from across the state becoming re-engaged with the program, making applications, being successful with funding and rolling out programs in their local areas. It says a lot about the resilience of these community groups that they have managed to rebuild so quickly after the cuts of the previous government. It is also a powerful testament to the Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs that they have provided the flexibility to be adopted in communities right across this state.

I am pleased to advise the House that as part of this funding round the Palaszczuk government is increasing the number of traineeships available to local governments to 300 places, up from 250. This recognises the high demand from local government for places in the program. We are giving more Queenslanders the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification and 12 months employment. I would like to thank all the local government authorities that have taken part thus far, as well as the leadership of the LGAQ that continue to demonstrate their genuine commitment to skills and training in this area.

Finally, I would like to announce that there has been an adjustment to the Work Start incentives—that is, the program that gives a payment to employers who take on a graduate of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. This increase will serve as a confidence boost for employers to take on a Skilling Queenslanders for Work graduate and complements the government's broader jobs agenda and the ready for work program.

I encourage all members to get involved and support these important programs and encourage the participation of their local organisations in Skilling Queenslanders for Work, to help ensure that all Queenslanders receive the most benefit, the most opportunity and the most success from the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.

Roma, Teacher Accommodation

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. I refer to the comments by the Roma branch of the Queensland Teachers' Union about the two-month delay in getting a response from the minister about staff accommodation issues. Mr Smith says, 'It's either he's deliberately ignoring us or his department is incompetent.' When will additional funding be provided to resolve the accommodation issues?

Mr SPEAKER: I call the minister. You have two minutes.

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. I think the question relates to the provision of government employee housing right across Queensland. We are very proud of the service that we are able to provide. The Queensland government provides government employee housing in places like Roma, in the Torres Strait and right across this state to make sure that we are able to deliver front-line services and to house public servants such as teachers, nurses and police. We want to make sure that that accommodation is available so that we can deliver those services in those places.

In relation to the inquiry about teacher accommodation, I have today made sure that the Queensland Teachers' Union has been responded to. We have indicated that we are working through the process of upgrading and maintaining those homes right across the state. There is a significant amount of work to be done in all homes across the state to make sure that they meet the expectations of those tenants, and that work is ongoing.

Mr SPEAKER: Question time has now concluded.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Optional Preferential Voting

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.51 am): We have heard much today from those opposite in relation to how people might choose to vote at the next election. Here we have the height of hypocrisy by the Labor Party. We had the screeching of the member for Ashgrove across the chamber in her usual banshee fashion. We had the protestations—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Those comments are unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. We had the protestations of the member for Ashgrove in her usual high-pitched fashion across the chamber with more and more vitriol as she sought political advantage. We had the comments by the member for South Brisbane in relation to trade and investment and those sorts of issues, completely discounting the effects of the 1997 Asian economic meltdown, which made no indentation whatsoever in relation to trade and overseas trade! We had the complete and utter meltdown in term of comments from the Premier about the issues in relation to the re-emergence of Pauline Hanson and One Nation. What we did not have was an apology to the people of Queensland for changing the voting system on 18 minutes notice in this place. What we did not have from 'Mr Apology', the member for Greenslopes—I mean the member for Woodridge—was an apology for the changes that he brought in—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the House, if you persist you will be warned. It is not a good look.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I have made similar comments about the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Woodridge comes in here and says, 'The member for Southern Downs should apologise.' He says, 'The member for Surfers Paradise should apologise.' He says, 'The member for Clayfield should apologise.' It was the member for Woodridge when he was the member for Greenslopes who steadfastly refused to apologise for doctors and nurses not being paid and who backed everyone else up in the House. It was only when he lost—it was only when he was ruminating on the decision of the people in 2012—that he came out and said on *Sky News*, 'I think we got the message wrong on debt and deficit. Those are really important to people.' He found that out too late. He came in here and apologised way too late—after people had not been paid and after people had lost their jobs—for the blunders in the health system. He still fails now to apologise for being part of a government that introduced changes to Queensland's voting system without any public discussion, without any consultation and, indeed, without even having gone through cabinet or the party room to change the voting system on less than 18 minutes notice.

Why did they make that change? What did they foresee happening? They foresaw the member for South Brisbane and the member for Mount Coot-tha losing their seats to the Green movement. We saw the Labor Party lose the inner-city seat of the Gabba in the March council elections. What was the first thing that focused their minds? The first thing that focused their minds was the voting system and how they were going to change it. That was the only reason it was done. We had the spurious argument from the member for Sandgate, who stood up and said, 'The system has been in place for 25 years now. Why don't we chuck it out and change it? It's time for a new system.' He went on ABC Radio, a place where the Premier does not dare venture—she is afraid to go on and speak to Steve Austin. The poor old member for Sandgate was rolled up to go out there and explain why the changes were made on 18 minutes notice, why that was done to preserve the seats of the member for South Brisbane and the member for Mount Coot-tha.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: When it comes to verballing, old son, you are the master, so we will listen to you. They come in here today and piously claim a holier-than-thou position on no foundations whatsoever. The foundations of their argument are not built on stone; they are built on sand and they sink as quickly. Here is the challenge: if the Labor Party in government under Annastacia Palaszczuk and Jackie Trad are so opposed—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to refer to members by their formal titles please.

Mr NICHOLLS: If the Labor Party in Queensland under the auspices of the member for Inala and the member for South Brisbane are so opposed to One Nation having a say in Queensland politics, here is the challenge: change the law back to what it should be. It is an easy thing to do. We will agree to it. All they need to do is have the member for Sandgate pick up the phone to the member for Callide and say, 'We have a bill that we want to bring to this House. We are restoring people's rights to vote in a manner that they choose fit and we are restoring their right not to vote if they do not want to.' That is the secret. We will agree with it. It will simply be going back to the situation as it was at the time before that fateful 18 minutes that saw those changes introduced.

It is a simple challenge. The question is: are the Labor Party up to it or are they going to shirk the responsible thing to do? Are they going to give the voters of Queensland back the choice that they had prior to the changes that were made in March earlier this year? Are they going to make the changes that will allow people to cast their vote where they want and, importantly, to not cast their vote should they choose not to or are they going to continue to cravenly kowtow to the extreme green movement—a green movement that does not want to see jobs and prosperity in Queensland, a green movement that hates farmers and hates development of the land, a green movement that used every fibre of their being to pass vegetation management laws that would have stifled agricultural development in this state, that would have led to serious harm to families and small businesses the length and breadth of the state, that would have restrained Indigenous development on the cape and that would have led to an increase in the price of housing for everyone buying a new home being developed in this state on greenfield land?

Those are not the words of the LNP. Those are the words of the people on the cape, the Indigenous communities on the cape; they are the words of the Property Council and the UDIA; they are the words of AgForce and Growcom—all of the groups who know that Labor getting into bed with the extreme greens is bad for business and is bad for jobs in Queensland. It is the extreme greens who continue to hold up the development of the resources sector in Queensland. It is the extreme greens wielding their power in the seat of South Brisbane—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask the Leader of the House to cease interjecting. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is the extreme greens who exercised their muscle power in the seat of South Brisbane and in the seat of Mount Coot-tha to get the government to say: no more do we want to see a coal industry in Queensland. No more do we want to see fossil fuels in Queensland. We do not support the transition to a low-emissions, gas-fired economy. We do not want to see anymore exploration development in Queensland.

The poor old member for Stafford knows what I am talking about. He does not have to go too far to find the extreme greens. He does not even have to go to South Brisbane; he just has to go to a caucus meeting on a Monday afternoon to find a few of them there. One might be the member for Yeerongpilly, that famous car driver sitting right behind him, who has no sympathy. He does not want nuclear, he does not want coal and he does not want gas; all he wants to do is ride around on a bike.

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition misquoted me and verbed me. I find it personally offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister finds your comments offensive.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker. What we do know is he wanted a carbon tax. Remember the carbon tax that the Palaszczuk government was talking about? That lasted about 48 hours. Whatever the member for Yeerongpilly's position is on gas, coal or nuclear power, what we do know is that he wants a carbon trading scheme in Queensland. He came out and spoke about it. The poor old member for Stafford knows what that means. That will be more fugitive emissions coming out of the caucus room than you could imagine.

There are many failings of this Labor government. They dither, they delay, they do nothing. They cannot decide amongst themselves. They cannot deliver jobs for the people of Queensland. They cannot deliver infrastructure for the people of Queensland. Importantly, their hypocrisy on the issue of compulsory preferential voting can be changed tomorrow if they change the legislation and abandon their extreme green views.

(Time expired)

TAFE Queensland South West

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.02 pm): I rise to speak on the excellent work that is currently happening on the rebuilding of TAFE after attempts to decimate it by the LNP. In particular, I will focus on the activities that have occurred at TAFE Queensland South West. The Palaszczuk government is committed to rescuing TAFE and restoring its status as the premier public provider of vocational education and training, or VET, in Queensland.

A key component of this commitment is the Queensland government's working Queensland employment policy, which includes the Rescuing TAFE funding arrangement. This agreement has allocated \$22.8 million over three years—2015-16 to 2017-18—to TAFE Queensland to ensure that TAFE once again is the premier public provider of VET in Queensland.

A total of 801 students, or 29.35 per cent of the enrolments, were at TAFE Queensland South West. As the enrolment places were offered to eligible students where there was student demand for training, I think it is safe to assume that the south-west region, and in particular Ipswich, shows a high demand for training and vocation education. TAFE Queensland South West focused its activities on expanding and improving regional support programs in small locations and increasing courses available under VET in Schools in specific areas. This has allowed additional subsidised training places in a range of qualifications for students who had already extinguished their entitlement under the 2016-17 annual VET investment plan.

TQSW had a Rescuing TAFE allocation of \$353,000 for 2015-16. During this period, of the 801 students who accessed funding, half of them were either VET in Schools or second-chance funding. The funding was targeted at investing in student support services, providing foundation skills courses for disadvantaged learners, increasing courses available under VET in Schools, subsidising second-chance training opportunities, and creating new full-time-equivalent positions.

TAFE Queensland commenced activities under the Rescuing TAFE program in February 2015, with \$5 million allocated for the 2015-16 financial year. These activities have been well received by the community, with over 2,729 student enrolments in Rescuing TAFE supported courses occurring in 2015-16. I am pleased to say that TAFE Queensland South West had the highest number of enrolments in this program out of the six TAFE Queensland centres in the state. TQSW includes the regions of Ipswich, Springfield, Chinchilla, Kingaroy, Nurunderi, Roma, Toowoomba and Warwick. Forty-five per cent of other enrolments at TQSW were certificate III, with the remainder being split between certificate I, II, IV and a handful of skill sets. With this in mind, we can see that a large proportion of this funding is giving students a head start in vocational education and it is also giving students a second chance.

I am pleased that of the TQSW enrolments almost 25 per cent of them were at the Ipswich campus. Of the regions in TQSW, only Toowoomba had a higher number of enrolments. Members might be wondering what qualifications were obtained in the Ipswich region. The range of courses and qualifications included a diploma of community services work; food safety supervision; certificate II qualifications in automotive underbody technology, electrotechnology, hospitality, kitchen operations, retail make-up and skin care, and retail services. The certificate III qualifications were in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care; business administration; community pharmacy; driving operations; early childhood education and care; horticulture; hospitality; information, digital media and technology; retail operations; rural operations; and warehousing operations. As we can see, the range of qualifications being delivered by TQSW in Ipswich is as diverse as the region itself.

I commend the Palaszczuk government for its forethought and planning in its working in employment policy and, in particular, the Rescuing TAFE funding that it has provided. I believe that it is programs like Rescuing TAFE that has led to a decrease in youth unemployment in the Ipswich region from 16.5 per cent in July last year to 12.4 per cent in July this year. This decrease in youth unemployment is reflected in other regions in the state including Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Toowoomba, which all reported improvements, with unemployment now lower compared to this time last year. TAFE is a wonderful pathway into tertiary education for many students in my electorate. I commend the Rescuing TAFE program to the House.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.07 pm): It gives me absolutely no joy to rise in this House again to address yet another failure of the Palaszczuk Labor government. When it comes to infrastructure, they know no bounds. In a media report today, engineering firm RPS has identified that public spending on infrastructure is the lowest it has been in 10 years. This is just months after we sat in this House and listened to the Premier, the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier boasting about their infrastructure budget.

RPS makes the point that failing public infrastructure funding is depriving future generations of the infrastructure they need. We have seen the failure of this Palaszczuk government when it comes to their touted infrastructure budget which was a non-event. As I have said in this House many times, it

was \$2 billion less than our previous LNP budget. Not only that, we also saw a massive underspend of the infrastructure spend for the previous 12 months that the Deputy Premier was in control of. That money simply did not get out the door.

The problem is more immediate. I have just listened to the member for Ipswich talking about the failure of the Palaszczuk government in relation to getting jobs for Queenslanders, and it is a failure because as I travel around rural and regional Queensland the so-called jobs that the member for Ipswich is talking about simply are not there.

I am listening to people as to why those jobs are not there. They are constantly saying that it is because there is a government here in Queensland that is not doing anything. There are no projects being kick-started. There is no infrastructure being spent in many of those industries. They certainly know the real figures. They know that around 24,000 jobs have been lost since January. They also know that the fall continues in relation to this issue. It is absolutely diabolical for the people out there in rural and regional Queensland.

It is incredible as well to have sat here in this House and had to listen to others talking about One Nation, for example, when they do not talk about the jobs-destroying Greens party and why they are preferencing the jobs-destroying Greens party. We have just heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about the native vegetation laws and how the jobs-destroying Greens party was more than happy to try to ram those laws through the parliament. They also supported those opposite when the Attorney-General stood in this House and gave us 18 minutes—not just those of us in this House but all of Queensland. We all know, just like all those unemployed people out in rural and regional Queensland know, that this Palaszczuk government does not consult with Queenslanders. They are all talk, it is all rhetoric and they simply do not consult. They did not consult on the legislation regarding voting preferences which they brought into this House with only 18 minutes to go. If they are so high and mighty about protecting their jobs-destroying Greens party, why do they not then restore the rights of people to vote in the way they wish to vote? If they want to have consultation with the people, if they want to get jobs back for the people of Queensland, they would allow the people of Queensland to vote in any manner they choose. We have just heard the Leader of the Opposition say that he would support a move to have those laws overturned.

We know that it is those opposite who are relying upon the green movement and their extreme support for jobs-destroying projects. We have seen it with the Adani coalmine project. Why will they not get out of the way and get that up and going? We have seen projects that would support trade and investment here in Queensland like the Townsville eastern access. We hear nothing from the Deputy Premier and infrastructure minister about what they are doing to support that vital project. Another such project is the Rookwood Weir and we have heard nothing from the Minister for Infrastructure in relation to that project which would actually be able to kick-start that area of Queensland and get some further investment into this great state. We have heard absolutely nothing from the Minister for Infrastructure in relation to any of those projects that would actually kick-start this state and provide some jobs here for—

(Time expired)

Tropical North Queensland, Economy

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (12.12 pm): The Tropical North Queensland tourism economy is strong. As we pass the 18-month marker of the Palaszczuk government it is time to reflect on where we are at in the tropical north, where we have come from and where we are planning to go. Our economy has rebounded strongly from increased tourist numbers spurred on by a weak but stable Australian dollar and overseas safety uncertainty. We have learned that Australians are rediscovering Queensland. We have seen the evidence of the opportunities in Asia.

It is a widely known fact in tourist circles that evidence shows that the No. 1 issue that drives travellers to a location is safety and security. Clean water; fresh and clean food; airlines that are safe, well-maintained and secure; safe streets; and low terrorism likelihood are now all key elements of selecting holiday locations. It used to be bang for the buck or how far one could stretch the dollar.

Asian travellers are actively selecting Cairns and Tropical North Queensland in numbers that have equalled the 1990s and are now overtaking them on all fronts. Our hotels are full. We have not seen this for some time now. Our reef boats are full and the airlines are full. I regularly hear reports of airline cancellations in Cairns where not one single hotel room has been available to put up crew or passengers. I heard a report recently about the international terminal where Cathay or Jetstar had to sleep something like 300 people on the terminal floor overnight because there was not one single hotel room available in Cairns. For the first time since the boom of the Japanese in the 1990s we have a

serious shortage of hotel rooms in Cairns and Port Douglas. We have run out of stock. We have an urgent situation whereby the reaction time to get construction up to an operations stage will be too long even if we start construction today.

We have barely tapped the market. We know that Asians want to travel. We know that 30- to 40-year-old Asians are travelling up to four times a year. We know that the opportunities are endless. They like Australia. They like Queensland. They like Cairns. Asian interest in investment in Tropical North Queensland is strong. Project ideas—some big, some small—are everywhere. Whether it is \$10 million or \$2 billion, we need the private infrastructure; we need the hotel construction jobs. We have hotels ready to undergo multimillion dollar upgrades. New proposals for hotels and resorts are undergoing planning applications and new air routes are underway.

Our government has found a workable solution to the Cairns shipping channel development which will dramatically increase the nightly porting of international and domestic cruise liners at the Trinity Inlet cruise liner terminal. Cairns is one of the few terminals in the world where ships can dock right in the middle of town. The economic opportunities of this project are massive and it is this government, the Palaszczuk government, which is progressing this opportunity. We know that cruise line passengers spend an average of \$225 per day when in port. If honourable members do the numbers on 3,000 passengers per night with one ship per night they will see that they are staggering numbers.

The Cairns international airport is again due for redevelopment. It has only been a few years since they had the last one. It shows the rapid growth of passengers. We broke through five million passengers in any 12-month period only a few months ago. We are progressing closer to attracting regular air services direct from China, not just seasonal services but permanent air routes that do not have to come via the south-east corner.

I am concerned that those on that side of the House are now doing deals in terms of backing One Nation, a party which has publicly declared its position on Asians, a party driving the message through their leadership that they do not support Asians. They do not want the visits, they do not want the money and they do not want the investment. I listened to the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition earlier, but I did not actually hear them answer the question completely. Do they or do they not support One Nation's stand on Asians? What is the message that the LNP are sending to Chinese investors or Chinese travellers?

The Liberal National Party and One Nation Party message is simple: 'Go away. We don't want the people. We don't want your money. We don't want you to come here.' This is disgraceful. I call on the members opposite to seriously consider the impacts of negative political rhetoric and anti-Asian statements.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Coomera, the member for Barron River is not taking your interjections so please cease.

Mr CRAWFORD: They should tell their leadership that they do not support deals with One Nation. Tell their leadership that we need to continue to work with the Asian countries to ensure that we can save and grow our tourism industry further.

Vegetation Management

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.17 pm): On 18 August Queenslanders breathed a sigh of relief because the draconian vegetation management laws proposed by those opposite were voted down in this place. It was a vote for common sense. It was a vote for the future development of Queensland and, more importantly, it upheld the rights of Queensland farmers who are continuing to protect the Great Barrier Reef. The proposed laws, if passed, would have stymied development right across Queensland and put at risk thousands of jobs, the livelihoods of our farmers and the future of rural communities.

Our Queensland farmers have had their futures placed in limbo by this government for months. On 18 August Queensland sent a message to this government and that message was very clear: leave our vegetation management laws alone and do not mess with our farmers. The president of AgForce, Grant Maudsley, said—

AgForce has always been willing to work through a science and evidence based process, but the Queensland Government has been more interested in green politics than developing good policies.

All we have been asking for is fair laws for farmers so we can grow our businesses to produce more food and create more jobs for Queenslanders.

That comment was reaffirmed during the debate on this bill. What we heard from those opposite, led by the Deputy Premier, was a vitriolic attack on our farmers based on misinformation, spurious claims and hysteria. It was a desperate attempt by a government for a few Greens votes at the next election at the expense of our agriculture sector. The Deputy Premier is already on record as saying, 'If re-elected we will pass these important laws.' Indeed, dark clouds are on the horizon for our agriculture sector because while we have a Deputy Premier running around this state making statements like that our farmers' livelihoods are under threat. Comments from the Deputy Premier linking the bill's defeat to a possible Great Barrier Reef in danger declaration by UNESCO are misleading and nothing short of scaremongering.

As I said during the debate on this bill, our farmers and landowners are not environmental vandals. They are not criminals. They deserve our respect and thanks for the job they do in providing the food we eat. They are as committed to the protection of the reef as the most ardent greenie, and all they have ever asked for is a sensible, sustainable long-term vegetation management framework which they currently have in place. Already a significant number of canefarmers in my electorate of the Burdekin are committed to the Canegrowers Sugarcane BMPs, which are designed to reduce run-off to the reef and improve the efficiency of their farms. This is just one example of the commitment of our farmers to the protection of our reef.

Queensland agriculture has the potential to grow from \$17 billion per year to \$30 billion over the next decade, and that growth would have been put at serious risk if the Palaszczuk government's proposed changes had gone ahead. The voting down of the vegetation management bill has already translated into growing confidence across Queensland. Last week MSF Sugar at Maryborough announced plans for a significant expansion of its irrigated sugarcane production area, which means more jobs for Queenslanders. Last week I spoke with potential investors who are genuinely interested in the opportunities available in the agriculture sector, and of course one of the first questions they asked was, 'Are we able to clear land in Queensland?' Thankfully I can now answer that question with a yes, giving them the certainty they need to invest in our great state.

The Northern Australian Infrastructure Facility can now move forward with confidence to deliver those projects that North Queensland so desperately needs. If we are to tap into these funds and truly develop the north and unleash its potential, we need to get rid of the obstacles and reduce the red tape, and having appropriate vegetation management laws in place is a good start. We need projects that will create jobs and help to keep our rural and regional communities alive. What we do not need is a government with a track record of making decisions on the run, and of course the 18 minutes notice that was given on the introduction of compulsory preferential voting is a good example. Those opposite are treating our farmers as political footballs. Members on this side of the House are proud to support our farmers, and we will continue to do so into the future because at the end of the day every family needs a farmer.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Before I call the member for Ipswich West I would like to acknowledge in the gallery student leaders from Pine Rivers Primary School from the electorate of Pine Rivers.

Ipswich West Electorate, Infrastructure

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.22 pm): On 3 September an important event will take place at Fernvale with the official opening of the Fernvale Sports Park. This project was only made possible through funding received by the Somerset Regional Council through the state government's Get Playing Plus program. This is one more example of the Palaszczuk government delivering for the Somerset region. The sports park includes: a round field that is suitable for Australian Rules football, cricket and athletics; a rectangular field suitable for Rugby League, Rugby Union or soccer; four netball courts; a large car park; and an amenities block. Funding from the Palaszczuk government included \$800,000 through the Get Playing Plus program and \$41,638 to assist with the cost of lighting the netball courts. Recently the government provided a further grant of \$245,000 through the Cycle Network Local Government Grants program to build a 2.5-metre-wide concrete path to link the sports park with the Fernvale town centre. That is an overall contribution to the Somerset Regional Council by the Palaszczuk government of over \$1 million.

Other contributors to the sports park project include Ipswich Rugby League, led by president John Rhea—otherwise known as Jack Rhea—and the Ipswich Junior Rugby League, led by president David Nugent, who have each contributed 50 per cent to fund the cost of Rugby League posts for the rectangular field, while AFL Queensland has agreed to reimburse the council for the cost of installing Australian football posts on the round field.

Those at the Somerset Regional Council who need to be congratulated for bringing this project to fruition include: the author of the Get Playing Plus grant application, sport and recreation officer Michelle Francis under the direction of the manager for finance Geoffrey Smith; mayor Graeme Lehmann; CEO Bob Bain; manager of operations Tony Jacobs; project manager Graham Richardson; and principal contractor Albert de Ruiter of A&M Civil.

As they say, 'Build it and they will come.' While the students of the nearby Fernvale State School, where David Raine is principal, are sure to make good use of the sports park, the Brisbane Valley Rattlers Australian Football Club will be its first tenant. The enthusiastic Rattlers management committee comprises president Graham Smith, vice-president Nathan Dempsey, secretaries Roslyn Miller and Steph Knight, treasurer Brian Keen, canteen manager Lana Keen, marketing and media manager Nathan Stone and incorporation contact Shane Grattan.

The investment made by the Palaszczuk government in the Fernvale Sports Park is just one example of its commitment to the Somerset region since the state election on 31 January 2015. Over \$4 million has been spent by the Palaszczuk government to convert the goat track that was otherwise known as the Brisbane Valley Highway into the functional highway that it is today. Recently stage 4 of the Brassall Bikeway network was completed and made possible by a \$1.5 million contribution from the Palaszczuk government. This is not only a vital link to the Brassall Bikeway network but it also connects the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail with the Wulkaraka Railway Station, which was recently upgraded at a cost of \$10 million. Once again the Brisbane Valley railway easement is connected to the Ipswich-Toowoomba railway line at Wulkaraka. The 161-kilometre Brisbane Valley Rail Trail runs from Wulkaraka to Yarraman, but one section was never converted to a trail: the section from Toogoolawah to Moore. I am pleased to advise the House that the government has committed \$1.8 million to complete this final missing link in the trail.

The three years that the electorate of Ipswich West was represented in this House by the LNP from 2012 to 2015 saw a logjam of projects promised but not delivered and lots of talk but no action. In just 18 months the Palaszczuk government has not only found the money for these projects but also got them completed. The government has now cleared the logjam of projects, including the Fernvale Sports Park, fixing the Brisbane Valley Highway and stage 4 of the Brassall Bikeway network. The government has also committed \$10 million to the Minden crossroads interchange project and \$300,000 to enlarge the Lowood Recreational Complex to a four-football-field complex with three netball courts. This well-used complex is home to the Lowood Stags Rugby League Club, the Lowood Tarampa Junior Rugby League Club and the Brisbane Valley Soccer Club. Each weekend in winter the complex regularly attracts over 1,000 players, parents and supporters to Lowood.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Optional Preferential Voting; Closing the Gap

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.27 pm): We will not forget the dodgy dumping of the optional preferential voting system introduced by the Labor Party with less than 18 minutes notice. The hypocrisy of Labor to complain about preferences when it should be the choice of Queenslanders how they allocate their preferences! The right to choose not to allocate preferences if people do not want to was taken away in a dodgy, sneaky, dirty sleight of hand by this Labor government. The hypocrisy of those opposite when they want to do a preference deal with the extreme green movement, which is the greatest sovereign risk to Queenslanders! The Greens hate farmers and sustainable economic development in our state, including in rural and remote areas such as those under the control of Aboriginal farmers, who want to be able to develop their land. If this Labor government had its way, that opportunity would be locked up and that mainstream opportunity for jobs and true economic prosperity would have the door shut on it. The Labor-Greens alignment is the greatest threat to the jobs of Queenslanders from all backgrounds. Never forget that, every time Labor whines about preferences, they removed optional preferential voting in a sneaky, dirty move—

Mr Power interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Logan, I ask you to cease interjecting.

Ms SIMPSON: Labor did this with no consultation and no prior notice. If Labor is to have any credibility on this issue it will return an optional preferential voting system to Queensland.

I want to talk about the serious issue of closing the gap and the failure to measure what works in order to focus on what works, fix what does not and strive to effectively close that gap for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Do multimillion dollar government programs to close the gap measure up

in Queensland? Who would know? Most government funded programs have no meaningful published measures to identify what works—to allow for that honesty, transparency and accountability to focus on those programs that are being more effective, to fix those that need help and to ensure the most vulnerable are in fact seeing outcomes from what has been assigned. Targets are important, but you first have to measure what is happening now and have those honest conversations in order to make a serious difference, because we all need to make sure that happens.

A recent article in the *Australian*, which I table, highlighted a report by the Centre for Independent Studies which showed that only one in 10 taxpayer dollars for Indigenous programs in Australia is actually evaluated on performance.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Australian* online, undated, titled '\$6bn a year fails to help Aborigines' [\[1392\]](#).

The Queensland government spends more than \$500 million on programs to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are some terrific aims and people of great will and effort who no doubt are doing their best. No doubt there will be many good outcomes, except unfortunately these programs are seldom properly evaluated. We need to have that clarity if services are to be delivered and coordinated on the ground with the most effect in making a difference in closing the gap.

As I am sure other members have, I have travelled to many areas of our state including many remote areas. Once again, I have seen many people of good will and intent working in those areas, but even local elected officials tell me that sometimes they are not told the services that will fly in and fly out or drive in and drive out. They might find that there is not just one but two parenting programs in a relatively small community. No doubt they are great programs, but when the left hand of government does not know what the right hand is doing, is it any wonder questions are being asked about whether there is opportunity to improve how things are done?

I want to talk about the report titled *Mapping the Indigenous program and funding maze* by Sara Hudson from the Centre for Independent Studies. There is a challenge for all of us when we have Aboriginals in this state dying 20 years earlier, having a higher incarceration rate and in themselves being more likely to be victims of crime, failing to see a true, effective change with regard to the disparity of advantage in our community. I table the report, which highlights a need for us to get serious about what works and then to start focusing on that so we can start to see that money work with some real outcomes.

Tabled paper: Document, dated August 2016, by the Centre for Independent Studies titled 'Mapping the Indigenous program and funding maze' [\[1393\]](#).

We also want to talk about the need for true prosperity through economic development for all Queenslanders, particularly our Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, to break the cycle of disadvantage.

(Time expired)

Advancing Education

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.32 pm): The Palaszczuk government is determined that all Queensland children and young people will benefit from the opportunities of a quality education. We are advancing Queensland through a world-class education system that supports students to develop the knowledge, skills and qualities they need for the future.

Building a knowledge-based economy is important to create jobs for all Queenslanders. More opportunities for students to study STEM subjects, including coding and robotics, will prepare them for the challenges of the jobs of the future. Schools have to prepare students for jobs that have not yet been created, technologies that have not yet been invented and problems that we do not know will arise. In the next 10 to 15 years, 40 per cent of Australian jobs are at risk of being automated and three in four of the fastest growing occupations require, science, technology, engineering and mathematics related skills and knowledge.

Queensland students are being primed for the jobs of the future by the Palaszczuk government's strategy *Advancing education: an action plan for education in Queensland*. Our plan is for all students to be global citizens, skilled in STEM, with expertise in Asian languages and intercultural understanding, literacy and numeracy. We know that an essential ingredient of global competence is foreign language proficiency and a deep understanding of other cultures, which is why the Advancing Queensland strategy will create global schools through languages. We are expanding the study of culture and languages from prep to year 12 in state schools, with a focus on Asian languages. Recently I visited Cawarral State School, which is one of 20 schools in the state to receive a language innovation and

improvement grant to teach Japanese to prep students. This is part of the Advancing Education global schools initiative. It is great to see Keppel schools leading the way in language, learning and building students' confidence to interact with other cultures and communicate in another language, which in turn opens a whole new world of possibilities for them as global citizens. I congratulate teacher Joanne Aaron, who has been at the forefront of this initiative and who will be introducing prep students to Japanese and the global world of language.

The Advancing Education strategy also recognises that #codingcounts. Our world is changing more rapidly than at any other time in history, with the influence of technology spreading to every aspect of our lives. Queensland is well placed to take the next leap to predict and respond to the global megatrends. This will keep us internationally competitive, influencing the way we live, the way we work and who we are. Coding and robotics are important for every student, to prepare them for the jobs of the future, where technology will be part of every workplace. It is not just about the code. Learning coding engages students in developing their skills in critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and innovation. Understanding coding is the new literacy, and a must-have for every student.

I had the privilege of witnessing students learning coding and robotics at Frenchville State School's Makerspace launch recently. Frenchville State School teachers, students and parents are all very excited to have been selected as one of only seven Makerspace trial primary schools in Queensland. A Makerspace is a physical location that brings people together with the purpose of making, tinkering, fixing and sharing. Makerspaces facilitate collaboration on personally meaningful projects by providing the tools and technologies in a central hub. The Frenchville Makerspace trial has involved the use of the latest technology equipment including robotics, coding software, apps and 3D printers. The trial has encouraged learners to use this technology innovatively to extend and deepen the curriculum, incorporating 21st century learning. When I visited the Frenchville Makerspace I was very impressed with the work the students had been doing in coding, 3D printing and robotics. I met year 3 and 4 students Daniel and Andrew, who showed me the work they had been doing with the spiro balls and their iPads. I was really impressed that they had been learning to code how to use these spiro balls.

The Palaszczuk government is advancing education by employing more teachers, supporting teachers to develop their practice and expertise, building better facilities and providing the resources our schools need to deliver an outstanding education. These are all critical to the future success of all Queenslanders. By making innovation and knowledge-based industries a key focus of this government, we are intent on delivering a new era of opportunity for Queenslanders.

Sunshine Coast, Road Infrastructure



Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (12.37 pm): Caloundra Road is currently the only entry from the Bruce Highway directly into Caloundra. It is four lanes from the highway to Bowman Road and bisects two critical roundabouts, firstly at Kawana linkway and secondly at Nicklin Way. Caloundra Road, however, risks becoming the longest car park on the Sunshine Coast as the vehicle population continues to grow and the desire to access our beaches puts more and more pressure on our road network.

Caloundra South will deliver 50,000 new homes, with large increases in vehicle usage for both domestic and industrial purposes. Current planning will mean that these vehicles will enter and exit Caloundra Road at two roundabouts. In addition, population growth in Palmview, Pelican Waters and Beerwah, Landsborough and Mooloolah will mean cars also using Caloundra Road to enter and exit Caloundra. Finally, growth north of Caloundra will push greater vehicle numbers down Nicklin Way and on to the Caloundra Road-Nicklin Way roundabout.

Though numbers using Nicklin Way will increase, the greatest vehicle growth into Caloundra will occur with cars using Caloundra Road itself. This is currently leading to traffic congestion at the two roundabouts I have mentioned and at the intersection of Caloundra Road and Sugar Bag Road at different times of the day but certainly on each day of the week including on weekends. Figures obtained from Main Roads predict very large increases in vehicle numbers on Caloundra Road between 2014 and 2031, including between Nicklin Way and West Terrace, 35,000 to 50,000; West Terrace and Park Lane, 24,000 to 43,000; and Park Lane and Bowman Road, 27,000 to 51,000. Though these figures are purely predictions, there is no doubt that car volumes can only increase.

There is no simple solution or one solution to this increasing problem. It is important to understand that this will take a number of years to address and to deal with the issues I have outlined and also cost significant dollars, yet if we do not start the problem will only grow. Mr Ron Strong is the

head petitioner looking at some of the solutions, which include bringing forward the construction of a Bells Creek arterial road that joins the Bruce Highway through Caloundra South to the Caloundra Road-Kawana Way linkway roundabout and, further, to investigate the Caloundra Road and Nicklin Way roundabout to consider slip lanes being introduced to allow greater ease of traffic around the roundabout and also to establish if traffic lights are suitable to alleviate traffic congestion. These proposals alone will not solve the problem long term, but they will start to address concerns.

Other considerations include dealing with Nicklin Way by putting on/off ramps from Nicklin Way to Queen Street, which would be four laned, and a further ramp off Nicklin Way close to Ben Bennett park. There is also a proposal linking Golden Beach through Burke Street to Pelican Waters Boulevard which, combined with the other changes to Nicklin Way I have outlined, will commence to deal with the traffic concerns.

The combination of the points I have raised goes some way to tackling traffic congestion, but we also need to look closely and soon at rail to take people between Maroochydore, Caloundra and Landsborough. Caloundra South residents will want to access the beaches of Caloundra, and those of us who know them rate them as, rightfully, the best on the coast. The pour of cars over time will move from today's crush to a flood unless we start to deal with issues urgently. Of course there will be other proposals that should be considered and I urge the people of Caloundra to contact my office with suggestions and to sign the petition I outlined earlier.

Caloundra and the Sunshine Coast are growing and their natural beauty and lifestyle are a natural attraction. What we need to do in relation to economic growth is a separate issue, but the road network for the swift and safe movement of vehicles is essential. Economic growth will never be as strong as it should be without proper roads moving people and goods around. If the government can spend a mere 18 minutes changing the voting system of this state that has been in place for a period of 25 years, surely it can spend half an hour to an hour considering the road network around Caloundra. Caloundra and the Sunshine Coast continue to add to the growth of this great economy and this great state. If 18 minutes is sufficient to overturn what has been an efficient, effective voting system in Queensland, then surely a bit more time can be directed towards Caloundra Road and the need to increase the capacity of that road and surrounding roads to cater for growth of population and vehicles. At the end of the day, the Sunshine Coast is one of the powerhouses of this state and the fact of 18 minutes to overturn that voting system may translate into probably 20 minutes—

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Infrastructure

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (12.42 pm): True to form, this lazy, confidence-busting, negative and misleading opposition is at it again, and we heard it today during the member for Nanango's contribution when she was talking about alleged failures of this government to invest in infrastructure and create jobs. What more can be said to the contrary, and I will get to that in a few moments? I wanted to highlight a fundamental flaw in what the member for Nanango said this morning. She was referring to an article in the *Brisbane Times* relating to RPS Group analysis of infrastructure spending in Queensland. I note that the member for Nanango—whether it was laziness or negativity or just being misleading—did not get through the article and see some of the conclusions that RPS Group was talking about in respect of Queensland infrastructure spending. I note in particular that the RPS Group's Regional Technical Director-Economics, Mark Wallace, who is quoted in this article—only a couple of paragraphs down—said—

It's a combination of the political climate over the past six years and how difficult it has become for governments, particularly at a state and local government level, to borrow money.

He continues—

That's a huge issue, as is the fact the federal government has basically not been in Queensland for six years.

There's been virtually no expenditure, no major infrastructure expenditure, and now we're in a situation where any major infrastructure expenditure from the federal government is tied to asset sales.

Whether or not those asset sales are good for Queensland is a bit irrelevant as part of the strategy; it's just ideological extortion that's happening at the moment.

If the member opposite is going to quote an article, she should make sure she reads the article first because she might get the proper conclusions that are being communicated in the article.

That gives me a good opportunity to talk about some of the great things that this government is doing not only in Morayfield but throughout Queensland. Last week I was honoured to be the guest speaker at the Moreton Bay Business Network meeting at Caboolture. It is always a great pleasure to

meet with members of the business network and share with them the details about how the Palaszczuk government is supporting economic opportunity and jobs in the Caboolture region and around Queensland. Members of the business network were very pleased to hear that a number of local projects funded by the Palaszczuk government were progressing very well and, in light of the positive contribution that the Palaszczuk government is making in the Caboolture region, I am very happy to outline to members opposite—who think nothing is happening in Queensland at the moment—some of those projects and how they are creating economic activity and jobs in the Caboolture region.

Firstly, the Caboolture River Bridge upgrade project is proceeding very well. This joint \$18 million funded project involves replacing the end-of-life southbound bridge on Morayfield Road. This bridge is approximately 92 years old and I am told is one of the oldest bridges in Queensland. The new bridge will be wider, higher, include a pedestrian footbridge and an increased flood immunity and construction is due to take 12 months. It is important to recognise that there is significant economic benefit associated with this bridge upgrade project. While some past premiers have measured economic activity by counting the number of cranes on the skyline, I like to reinforce the benefit to local businesses of local infrastructure projects by counting the number of chiko rolls and cans of Coke that can be purchased from local food outlets. The importance of this bridge upgrade project is that it is not just \$18 million worth of concrete and bitumen; it is also \$18 million of construction workers buying chiko rolls and cans of Coke from local food outlets.

But wait, this government is doing more for the Caboolture region in respect of that bridge upgrade project because we have also managed to secure, in conjunction with those construction works, the installation of flashing light school zone signs at Caboolture Special School, emergency vehicle priority technology to be installed at local traffic lights and traffic monitoring cameras installed at key locations. There is more happening in the Caboolture region. Other projects include the Caboolture Hospital upgrade, the Morayfield train station upgrade, the Caboolture Special School upgrade, the Caboolture Sports Football Club new playing fields project and the Burpengary State School hall project—all things in our region in Queensland creating jobs and delivering new public infrastructure.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! The time for the matters of public interest debate has expired.

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (12.47 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, if you will give me a very brief moment to reply to the member for Morayfield, I am concerned about how Treasury is going to model the chiko roll experiment, but I am certainly happy to give it some consideration.

I present a bill for an act to amend the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Land Act 1994, the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 and the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 [[1394](#)].

Tabled paper: Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [[1395](#)].

I am pleased to introduce this bill. As I have mentioned, it amends the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the Land Act 1994, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, the Gaming Machine Act 1991 and the Keno Act 1996. It will make minor consequential amendments to other legislation. Part 4B of the Major Sports Facilities Act allows the Governor in Council to declare events at major sports facilities by gazettal. These declarations protect event sponsors from unauthorised advertising by rival businesses. This is important for the organisations' hiring facilities because it protects their sponsors' interests. The existing declaration process requires eight weeks lead time, comprising a statutory 28-day notification period, a Governor in Council process and departmental processing.

This has been impractical when events are unavoidably scheduled at short notice. This bill amends the Major Sports Facilities Act to allow certain categories of events to be declared by regulation. This will streamline the declaration of events coordinated by specified national sporting bodies where matches are held at specified venues. This will result in the majority of events being declared by a

single process for events that are expected to be well promoted and anticipated by the public and local advertisers. In addition to providing more certain protection to event organisers, this should reduce the potential impact of advertising restrictions on local advertisers by nearly two-thirds. This is because the new process will apply a standard event period from 6 am to midnight on event days only for events prescribed by regulation. At present, three-day event periods are usually declared to accommodate minor rescheduling without new declarations. This results in advertising restrictions on days when events are not conducted. The existing process will be retained in the Major Sports Facilities Act to enable the declaration of other events not prescribed in the regulation.

Part 3A of the Major Sports Facilities Act was inserted by the Statutory Bodies Amendment Act 2007. That legislation aimed to return employees of statutory bodies affected by the then federal government's Work Choices legislation to the state's industrial relations system. Part 3A of the Major Sports Facilities Act was never used; however, and the Work Choices legislation was subsequently repealed. Part 3A of the act is now redundant.

Division 1 of part 3B of the Major Sports Facilities Act deals with events at Suncorp Stadium during 2011 and is also now redundant. Accordingly, this bill will remove part 3A and division 1 of part 3B of the Major Sports Facilities Act. Under section 14(b) of the Major Sports Facilities Act, a person is not qualified to be a director on the Stadiums Queensland board if the person has been convicted of an indictable offence. To support section 14(b) of the Major Sports Facilities Act, this bill will clarify the departmental chief executive's power to request criminal history checks where the relevant person has given written consent. Privacy will be protected by a new offence provision for inappropriate disclosure of information and by a requirement for criminal history information to be destroyed as soon as practicable after it is no longer required. Natural justice will be provided for by requiring the chief executive to disclose the contents of a criminal history report to the relevant person and allowing reasonable time for the person to make written representations about the report. In addition, this bill will oblige directors to notify the chief executive if they are convicted of an indictable offence during the term of their appointment. A new offence provision will apply where directors fail to comply with this requirement without a reasonable excuse.

This bill also amends chapter 1 of the Land Act to enable the state to grant tenure over non-tidal watercourses and lakes. Under the proposed amendments, non-tidal watercourse land and non-tidal lake land may be leased provided the chief executive administering the Water Act 2000 and the landowners adjoining the watercourse or lake consent to the proposal. The chief executive administering the Water Act may give consent if satisfied the rights of the state to protect and deal with the watercourse or lake are not diminished and that the lease will not interfere with the right to take or use water under the Water Act. An adjoining landowner may give consent if satisfied the lease will not interfere with their right to access or to graze stock at the watercourse or lake.

Section 93 of the Transport Infrastructure Act provides that the Minister for Main Roads may declare a toll payable for the use of certain roads. Section 93AA of the Transport Infrastructure Act has the effect that, from 31 December 2011, new tolling declarations may not be made for the Gateway and Logan Motorway facilities. An amendment to section 93AA of the act is proposed to allow a declaration to be made if the minister is satisfied that specific conditions have been met. This is to facilitate the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project, which, if approved by the government, is proposed to be funded through a new toll point at new south-facing ramps at Compton Road and changes to tolling arrangements for class 4 heavy vehicles on the Logan and Gateway motorways. Motorists will not be forced to use the new ramps, with free alternative routes continuing to be available. The price of tolls for all other motorists apart from heavy vehicles will not be changed from the existing arrangements.

I know the Queensland Trucking Association supports the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project because of the benefits and efficiencies it will deliver to its members. The overall project has wider economic benefits to our state, including additional jobs, by improving transport efficiencies and productivity in our road freight network and delivering better connectivity between transport hubs. This is especially significant when considering the movement of export goods to and from hubs such as the port of Brisbane.

This bill will amend the Gaming Machine Act to remove a taxation disincentive for clubs with multiple premises. Currently, where clubs operate multiple premises under a single gaming machine licence, the monthly metered win from all premises is aggregated before the relevant tax rate is applied. This can result in clubs paying more tax than they would if tax were applied separately to the non-aggregated gaming machine revenue of each premises. This is a significant issue for the industry as the number of club venues licensed under the Gaming Machine Act has declined from 557 in June

2009 to 457 in June 2016. Removing the disincentive for clubs with multiple premises is expected to slow the decline in club venues as it will make the adoption of smaller clubs and the creation of new facilities more appealing to larger clubs.

An amendment to the Keno Act is proposed to enable Keno (Qld) Pty Ltd to participate in a pooled jackpot arrangement currently operating in New South Wales and Victoria. Under the arrangement, a small percentage of ticket sales that would normally increment towards each jurisdiction's individual jackpot is added to a shared jackpot growth pool. The funds in the shared pool may be won by players in any of the participating jurisdictions. In addition to the foregoing, this bill makes further minor amendments, including consequential amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 and the Planning (Consequential) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2016. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (12.54 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

FARM BUSINESS DEBT MEDIATION BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. LE DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (12.55 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for mediation for farm business debts and related purposes, and to amend this act, the Biological Control Act 1987, the Biosecurity Act 2014, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 and the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016 [[1396](#)].

Tabled paper: Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016, explanatory notes [[1397](#)].

Today, I am pleased to introduce the Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016. Agriculture continues to be an essential part of the Queensland economy, with the total value of Queensland's primary industry commodities forecast to be \$17.32 billion in 2015-16, with agriculture employing approximately 109,000 people. However, Queensland's agricultural sector is vulnerable to external pressures, such as climate and market forces, global financial events and changes in domestic rural credit policies.

In response to the issues identified by the Rural Debt Banking Roundtable and the findings of the Rural Debt and Drought Taskforce chairman's report, the Queensland government announced the \$78 million Rural Assistance and Drought Package as a part of the 2016-17 budget. Of this, the \$36.044 million Rural Assistance Package is a whole-of-government response focused at reducing financial stress and improving financial performance within the rural community, particularly in relation to farm succession planning and renewal within the family farming sector. This bill delivers on key aspects of the Rural Assistance Package, including a legislated farm business debt mediation process and replacing QRAA—formerly the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority—with the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority. The bill also makes unrelated but important amendments to the Biological Control Act 1987, the Biosecurity Act 2014 and the Drugs Misuse Act 1986.

The forced sale of farm assets is always difficult, but there are times when farm families experiencing financial problems claim they have been treated unfairly by financial institutions. The Queensland government wants to ensure farm families experiencing financial difficulty are treated fairly by financial institutions when they are faced with the daunting prospect of selling property assets to repay loans. The primary objective of the bill is to provide a process for the efficient and equitable resolution of farm debt matters. Farm debt mediation is a structured negotiation process in which the

mediator, as a neutral and independent person, assists the farmer and the mortgagee in attempting to reach agreement on the present arrangements and future conduct of financial relations between them. Mediation may, for example, lead to agreement on a way for a farmer to remedy a default under the farm mortgage. Unfortunately, this will not always be possible, so mediation may also lead to agreement that the mortgage should be enforced in a particular way. Mediation is a confidential process that is quick, accessible and affordable. It is an alternative to expensive and drawn-out legal processes to resolve financial disputes. However, it does not stop farmers taking legal action to resolve these disputes where this is warranted.

The Queensland Farm Finance Strategy was developed by the Queensland Farmers' Federation and the Australian Bankers' Association in 1996 and was revised in 2008 with broad support. It contains the current voluntary farm debt mediation protocols which have been applied to many farm debt disputes in Queensland. However, concerns that farmers are not always treated fairly by mortgagees continue, so the Queensland government believes it is important to implement a legislated approach to ensure consistency in farm debt mediation and an efficient and equitable process for the benefit of both the mortgagee and farmer.

Both New South Wales in 1994 and Victoria in 2011 have legislated farm debt mediation processes. The bill I am introducing today is largely modelled on the New South Wales Farm Debt Mediation Act 1994. Most of the variations from the New South Wales Act are a result of modern drafting considerations for any Queensland legislation, particularly the application of fundamental legislative principles. Unlike the Queensland Farm Finance Strategy, the bill will apply to all providers of rural credit in respect to farm mortgages.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.



Ms DONALDSON: It is important to note that premediation aspects of the Queensland Farm Finance Strategy will remain relevant as an additional protection for Queensland's farmers. The bill would not stop financial institutions and producers from using informal negotiations to resolve problems when they arise. However, if informal negotiations failed to resolve a dispute, a mortgagee would have to offer mediation to the farmer before commencing enforcement action. If the farmer took up the option of requesting mediation before enforcement action was taken, but the mortgagee refused to participate or the mortgagee did not engage in mediation in good faith, the farmer could apply for an enforcement action suspension certificate. This would prevent the mortgagee taking the enforcement action for six months or until satisfactory mediation had occurred. Conversely, if the farmer did not request mediation, did not engage in mediation in good faith or if satisfactory mediation occurred, a mortgagee could apply for an exemption certificate which would allow them to take enforcement action. Both parties in the mediation would need to bear their own preparation and attendance costs and share the cost of the mediator equally.

One variation from the approach in New South Wales and Victoria is that the bill allows a farmer to require a mortgagee to provide copies of certain documents relating to the farm debt or mortgage. Similarly, the mortgagee can request certain information about the farmer's financial position. This exchange of information is intended to ensure a level of disclosure that will build trust between the parties and ensure their negotiations are well informed. Another variation from New South Wales is the scope of mortgagees to which the requirements apply. The scope of the bill is limited to a mortgage on farm land or a water allocation. The New South Wales act includes mortgages over farm equipment. This is not within the scope of the bill I am introducing because the existing Credit (Rural Finance) Act 1996 deals with enforcement action over farm equipment in Queensland.

The new authority that is proposed to replace QRAA will accredit mediators and make certain other administrative decisions under the proposed act. A further safeguard that is not found in the New South Wales act is that a person aggrieved by a decision made by the authority would be able to apply for internal review of the decision and, ultimately, a review of the decision by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The accreditation of mediators for up to two years will ensure mediators have an affinity with rural industries and an understanding of finance and financial management.

The new Farm Business Debt Mediation Act is proposed to commence on 1 July 2017. The bill will also amend the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994 to implement other aspects of the Rural Assistance Package. The bill will replace QRAA with the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority. QRAA, formerly the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority, was established as a statutory authority in 1994 and assumed the major activities of the former Queensland Industry Development Corporation's Government Schemes Division. QRAA is a specialist administrator of government financial assistance programs including loans, grants, rebates and subsidies.

The bill continues QRAA as the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority from 1 July 2017. The authority will have an expanded role, including undertaking policy research and providing advice regarding the financial performance of Queensland's rural and regional sector, especially primary producers, small business and other components of the state's economy. The bill will also require the new authority to partner with commercial lenders and financial advisers to deliver its functions. The bill will allow the authority to administer an expanded range of assistance schemes compared to QRAA. It will be able to build its own effectiveness by providing assistance to communities in the state where government agencies want to use its services for this. Examples of possible future assistance could include grants to community service providers, sporting, cultural and other community organisations.

The bill will also increase the efficiency of the authority's operations by allowing the board, rather than the minister, to appoint an acting chief executive officer of the authority. The bill also clarifies that the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority has the power to lend money under an approved scheme. As outlined previously, the authority will also have certain additional functions under the Farm Business Debt Mediation Act. The bill is an alternative way forward for QRAA than that proposed by the member for Mount Isa's Rural and Regional Adjustment (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill 2016.

The bill will also make unrelated amendments to the Biological Control Act 1987 to provide more appropriately for the use of viruses as control agents. Queensland's Biological Control Act 1987 mirrors the federal government's Biological Control Act 1984 to ensure a nationally consistent approach to biological control. The Biological Control Act 1984 was recently amended to clarify that viruses are included as organisms in the relevant definitions. The bill will amend Queensland's Biological Control Act 1987 to bring it back into line with the federal government act. This will provide for nationally consistent definitions that ensure that the protections from liability and injunctions provided by these acts apply to viruses and subviral agents. The amendments are due to the proposed release of a new naturally occurring strain of rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus, RHDV or calicivirus, known as K5, and of *cyprinid herpesvirus-3*, carp herpesvirus, for the control of common carp in 2017.

Viruses are known to be effective agents for biological control. However, the classification of viruses as organisms and as living entities has been a matter of ongoing scientific debate and there are possible implications in relation to the application of the Biological Control Act 1987. Most biological control agents are not a source of controversy and all biological control agents are subject to rigorous approvals and scientific testing under other legislation. Consequently, these amendments would commence on assent of the bill.

The bill also provides for amendments to the Biosecurity Act 2014. Biosecurity accreditation systems enable Queensland producers to conduct activities and access markets from which they might otherwise be excluded by law or other requirements. Biosecurity certificates issued by accredited certifiers under the Biosecurity Act 2014 are accepted by interstate quarantine authorities as assurance that their phytosanitary requirements have been met—for example, their requirements for the treatment of plants and plant products that can carry pests that are not present interstate. Similarly, biosecurity certificates can be used to give assurance where there are restrictions on movement of risk items within Queensland. Currently, biosecurity certificates can only be issued by accredited inspectors appointed under the Biosecurity Act 2014 or, alternatively, by certifiers accredited by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. To become accredited, a business or individual must demonstrate to the chief executive that they have effective procedures to meet intrastate or interstate requirements. Their accreditation is subject to conditions, including auditing requirements, amendment, suspension and cancellation on grounds specified in legislation.

The Queensland government has listened to industry. Over the past decade, the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia has developed a new approach to plant health assurance arrangements, which is a third-party accreditation scheme called BioSecure HACCP. This system has reached maturity, having being trialled over the past two years. Under BioSecure HACCP, the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia controls certification, accreditation of certifiers, auditing arrangements, training requirements, suspension, amendment and cancellation, and the development of procedures that meet government quarantine requirements. Industry led accreditation arrangements, such as BioSecure HACCP, are the future of biosecurity assurance systems by biosecurity authorities in all Australian jurisdictions. However, currently Queensland's Biosecurity Act 2014 does not provide an appropriate framework for allowing such industry led accreditation schemes to operate alongside existing accreditation systems. The bill provides for recognition of third-party accreditation systems, such as BioSecure HACCP, and for certificates issued in accordance with an approved third-party accreditation system to be a biosecurity certificate for the purposes of the Biosecurity Act 2014.

Amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 have been included in the bill to enable the supply of seed by Queensland licensed industrial cannabis producers to proponents licensed under the federal government's newly established medicinal cannabis cultivations and research scheme. Currently, part 5B of Queensland's Drugs Misuse Act 1986 allows for the processing, marketing of and trade in industrial cannabis fibre, seed and products derived from these. Industrial hemp producers cannot either directly or indirectly produce anything for a person to administer, consume or smoke. The amendments by the federal government to the Narcotic Drugs Act 1967 enable the production of medicinal cannabis under a strictly controlled national licensing system.

Earlier this year, Queensland Health, supported by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, hosted a series of public round tables across the state to discuss the federal government's medicinal cannabis scheme. Throughout those round tables, the issue of sourcing seed was consistently raised by stakeholders. As a consequence of the Queensland government's feedback to the federal government, they are now allowing seed to be sourced from licit Australian sources, including industrial cannabis growers licensed in Queensland under part 5B of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986. The Queensland industrial cannabis industry has developed valuable cannabis seed lines for which it holds plant breeder rights. The proposed amendments will enable the Queensland industrial cannabis industry to supply into the medicinal cannabis supply chain, once the federal government's scheme commences. These amendments will create new opportunities for Queenslanders. The changes will be mutually beneficial for licensed industrial hemp growers and those Queensland businesses interested in being part of the emerging medicinal cannabis industry in Australia.

The government is committed to assisting rural producers and communities across the state. With 83.92 per cent of the state drought declared, the additional funding announced in the 2016-17 budget comes at a crucial time for rural and regional Queensland. The Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016 is fundamental to the implementation of this \$36.044 million Rural Assistance Package. The Queensland government will continue its support for the agriculture sector and rural Queensland to build its future and respond to the continuing drought conditions. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. LE DONALDSON (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (2.42 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Agriculture and Environment Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUSINESS AGENCY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 24 May (see p.1941).

Second Reading

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.43 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its examination of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I note the committee tabled its report on the bill on 2 August 2016 and recommended that the bill be passed. I also thank those who made submissions to the committee and participated in public briefings. Their views and insight into the management of the public safety portfolio help ensure that we have the best governance arrangements in place in this important public safety portfolio.

This bill is one of the final steps in the Palaszczuk government's reform of the public safety portfolio and is a clear demonstration of the government's ability to respond to the needs of the community and achieve the best outcome for all Queenslanders. This bill responds to concerns raised by front-line officers, police, fire and emergency services officers, unions and other associations about the creation and subsequent performance of the Public Safety Business Agency, which was established by the former Liberal National Party government. The Palaszczuk government made an election commitment to review the Public Safety Business Agency and we delivered on that commitment. The review outlined the challenges and frustrations that staff within the agency experienced under the previous government. It found that the Public Safety Business Agency suffered from a lack of purpose and direction, and insufficient integration with the core business of the other agencies in the public safety portfolio. This bill is about revitalising and restoring public safety support services and, importantly, returning those services to their rightful place with the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. They can now effectively get on with the business of keeping Queenslanders safe.

As we well know, the Public Safety Business Agency was established by the previous government as a result of the Police and Community Safety Review undertaken by Mick Keelty in 2012-13. The Public Safety Business Agency was established in November 2013 and was formalised by the commencement of the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 in May of 2014. The Palaszczuk government made a commitment to review the agency and we met that commitment by tasking the Public Service Commission to conduct the review. The review heard from front-line workers in the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the agency itself, as well as major unions, associations and stakeholders. The review found that, while there had been modest successes, and that is acknowledged, confusion and frustration were endemic with arrangements that the Public Safety Business Agency had formed with operational agencies. The review culminated in a number of recommendations designed to return the responsibility of all operational and associated services from the Public Safety Business Agency to the respective commissioners of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

Again, the Palaszczuk government listened, evaluated and acted by endorsing key recommendations of that review. Many of those recommendations could be implemented through the normal machinery-of-government changes and the process of transitioning services from the PSBA to operational agencies is well underway. On 1 July this year, core services and functions previously undertaken by the Public Safety Business Agency will be back where they belong, with the Police Service and Fire and Emergency Services. Hundreds of police and firefighters will be returned to their departments.

Throughout this process, we remained committed to the employment security policy, so that our emergency services personnel and support staff could rest assured that there would be stability in their workplace during the transition arrangements. This transition occurred under the control and approval of an interim board of management. The interim board of management consists of the Police Commissioner, the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner and an independent member of the board, Mr Geoffrey Waite, from Queensland Treasury. The interim board has provided high-level governance to the Public Safety Business Agency and has worked with the implementation teams within each of those operational agencies to allow the transition to occur as smoothly as possible.

Some of the recommendations of the review were unable to take effect without legislative intervention. This bill makes those amendments, so that our government's reform agenda can be completed. The bill will amend the functions of the Public Safety Business Agency, formally establish the board of management, allow the responsibilities of blue card services to transfer to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and integrate the State Government Protective Security Service into the Queensland Police Service.

At this point, I want to reinforce that the reforms to the public safety portfolio are not an adverse reflection on any of our emergency service workers. Queenslanders are fortunate to have such a dedicated staff in the public safety portfolio, who every day demonstrate their professionalism and commitment to keeping communities safe, often in the most difficult of circumstances. These reforms should be seen as a correction to the flaws inherent within the Public Safety Business Agency model implemented by the previous government. The bill is one part of a process we are undertaking to remedy those flaws.

This bill will help ensure that our public safety portfolio is equipped with the most optimal organisational structures and working arrangements so that the appropriate support can be provided to our emergency services personnel as they perform their vital roles in the community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.50 pm): I rise to speak to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill on behalf of the LNP opposition and lead the debate on the review of this agency. The matters contained in this bill are primarily about the machinery of government and the organisational structures within the government. While they have an immediate impact on workers within agencies within the Public Service, there is a significant impact on front-line services and how Queenslanders are protected from harm, whether it be crime or natural disasters or other similar emergencies.

By way of background, the former LNP government commissioned a review of police and community safety led by respected former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty. In his 335-page review Mr Keelty said—

It became clear as our review continued that what is known as the police and emergency services portfolio of agencies is not operating efficiently and has some endemic challenges particularly in the areas of information and communication technology and human resources, as well as demand management and service delivery.

Mr Keelty added—

We found that, despite the obvious successes of recent years, the portfolio has been limited in its effectiveness by inefficient operating systems where salaries and rosters are sometimes managed in manual systems, cost attribution is not easily available and true measures of performance are elusive.

Within the broader portfolio of Police and Community Safety the review team has found:

- a culture of 'entitlement' amongst portfolio agencies has prospered giving unions covering the workforces of the portfolio an unsustainable and sometimes unrealistic outlook (e.g. the sustainability of specialist allowances for activities that once were specialist but today are basic qualifications);
- agencies have advanced their own positions without linking with other portfolio agencies performing similar roles (e.g. intelligent traffic analysis system, iROAM and Queensland Fire and Rescue Service's Rapid Damage Assessments);
- there have been missed opportunities to capitalise on economies of scale across the portfolio;
- the Department of Community Safety and the Queensland Police Service do not take a role in the cross portfolio executive development of staff leading to many at executive level having limited experience which is inimical to developing a strong, diverse, innovative and experienced executive team that can identify opportunities and drive change; and
- the Department of Community Safety and the Queensland Police Service have either not addressed or have been unable to advance better models for interoperability and coordination of funding and accountability for preparedness for disaster between the Department of Community Safety, local governments and volunteers.

The Keelty review made 127 recommendations, including: merging QFRS with EMQ to form Queensland Fire and Emergency Services; establishing the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management tasked with reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of disaster management in Queensland; and creating the PSBA tasked with providing the corporate and business services for the public safety portfolio. These were important reforms that needed to be pursued to ensure that our emergency response agencies were focused on delivering for Queenslanders in the most efficient and effective way possible.

The Public Safety Business Agency was formally established in May 2014 with the task of: holding all infrastructure, fleet and information and communication technology assets and managing human resourcing, financial management, legal, policy, media and strategic planning functions for the QPS, QFES and the IGEM; and performing additional functions, including the operation and management of declared public safety entities.

In 2015 the current Labor government undertook a review of the PSBA which was conducted by the Public Service Commission—another review by this do-nothing government, but we understand some of the concerns that have been raised by key stakeholders. While finding that the PSBA has achieved some successes and that the model does create many potential opportunities, the PSBA review concluded that stakeholders primarily identified concerns and frustrations with existing arrangements. It stated—

Fundamentally, it was found that the majority of the identified problems are caused by confusion over the scope, purpose and function of the PSBA. This theme holds true for employees in the partner agencies and the PSBA.

While the overall function of the PSBA, which was established by the LNP, is being retained, we understand that there have been some teething problems since it was first established in 2014. For Queensland's emergency response agencies to work as efficiently as possible and keep Queenslanders safe from harm, it is important that the employees have confidence in the structure of each organisation including Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Queensland Police Service, the Inspector-General Emergency Management and the Public Safety Business Agency.

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the new structure and ensure that it has the best model and leadership to protect property, rescue Queenslanders from harm and manage weather and other emergencies as efficiently and effectively as possible. In that respect, we will not oppose those elements of the bill that deal with the Public Service Commission's review of the Public Safety Business Agency.

There are elements of the bill that we do not support and in fact will oppose. The bill includes amendments that finalise the machinery-of-government changes that will allow blue card services to transition to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. That is in direct contrast to the recommendations of the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. Recommendation 12.17 of the report states—

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services progress and evaluate red-tape reduction reforms, including:

- transferring employment screening to the Queensland Police Service and streamlining it further;
- considering ceasing the licensing of care services; and
- streamlining the carer certification process including a review of the legislative basis for determining that carers and care service personnel do not pose a risk to children.

The commission of inquiry report notes—

Under the government's six-month action plan, the Children's Commission is streamlining the current application process. Other jurisdictions have achieved considerable reduction in costs and approvals through automated online services. The Queensland Police Service conducts criminal history screening for the public service and so has ready access to the information required. The administration of an efficient, rationalised service that builds on the child offender legislation should be established, taking into account additional information required for child protection services.

The revised system should be based on a balanced view of risk and downstream effects on community participation, with the intent being to screen out adults that have a relevant criminal or disciplinary history.

We are not convinced that the important reforms that form the basis of recommendations in the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry in 2013 should be undone and we will not be supporting these changes. We have already seen the effects of the government's stewardship of the child protection system. A recent poll showed that 30 per cent of Queenslanders thought the system was in crisis and a further 50 per cent said it was under pressure. Under Labor and Minister Shannon Fentiman our child protection system is quickly slipping back to the dark old days under Peter Beattie and Anna Bligh and we will not support any changes that are in direct contrast to recommendations of the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry.

I want to thank the members of the parliamentary committee who considered this bill and acknowledge the work of our hardworking police, fire and emergency services workers, including the thousands of volunteers in the SES and Rural Fire Brigade. We note the consultation outlined in the explanatory notes, including within government agencies and with relevant unions and employee associations. As I outlined earlier, we will not be opposing the organisational structure changes of the PSBA but will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the organisation over time.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (2.59 pm): I rise this afternoon to speak in support of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I am a bit confused because the report that was agreed to by all committee members recommended that the bill be passed in its entirety. It is amazing to come in here this afternoon and hear otherwise. Obviously there is a bit of a disconnect between the shadow minister and the members of the committee, because the non-government members were completely on board with the report and completely on board with the bill. I am surprised like you, Deputy Speaker Elmes, to hear the news that has come to light.

In fact, the committee only heard from two submitters, demonstrating that Queenslanders were comfortable with what the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing in reversing the mistakes of the previous LNP government and correcting a fundamental flaw with respect to what occurred under their stewardship of the PSBA Act. The PSBA, the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services provided an oral briefing to the committee on 15 June 2016. Once again, in respect of that briefing and the two submitters, the committee was comfortable with the content of the bill.

In terms of the objects of the bill, the bill proposes to amend the functions of the PSBA, establish the PSBA board of management, change the role of the chief executive officer and the chief operating officer, finalise the machinery-of-government changes that will allow blue card services to transition to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and allow for the comprehensive integration of the State Government Protective Security Service into the QPS. On introducing this bill, the minister indicated—

It is about undoing the inefficiencies created by the current PSBA model and ... about returning control of relevant resources and processes to the Police Commissioner and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner.

We know, and we have heard from previous speakers, of the reviews that both the previous government and this government have gone through with respect to reaching a conclusion over recent years. One of those reviews was the Public Service Commission review in 2015. The government engaged the PSC to conduct the PSBA review, which was overseen by a cross-agency steering committee. The review included a significant stakeholder engagement process to hear the key challenges facing the staff of the PSBA and the partner agencies. The report stated—

This included holding employee workshops, inviting confidential individual submissions, engaging with unions and employee associations, and hearing from a variety of other stakeholders with an interest or involvement in the PSBA.

In total, over 600 employees participated in workshops around the state, and more than 60 submissions were received, which provided valuable intelligence to the review.

While finding that the PSBA had achieved some successes and that the model does create many potential opportunities, the PSBA review concluded that stakeholders primarily identified concerns and frustrations with existing arrangements. The report stated—

Fundamentally, it was found that the majority of the identified problems are caused by confusion over the scope, purpose and function of the PSBA. This theme holds true for employees in the partner agencies and the PSBA.

There is a lack of clarity of:

- what the role of the PSBA is and what it is trying to achieve
- what services the PSBA delivers and what services are the responsibility of the partner agencies or others
- what the service expectations are for both providers and clients
- who does what and who is ultimately responsible, and
- where accountabilities lie.

That concurs with the submission from the United Firefighters' Union of Australia, Union of Employees, Queensland. The only other submission was from the Police Commissioned Officers' Union. In the UFUQ's submission—a very professional, proactive and competent union—they indicate—

Following the rushed and problematic implementation by the previous state government of the PSBA, along with other decisions of the previous state government that had a direct negative effect on our members ...

This bill will reverse those issues that were clearly identified in the UFUQ's submission. They went on further to indicate in their submission—

The UFUQ does not see any value in continuing with PSBA.

It is our view that the structure complicates the work of the fire service for no objective benefit.

The essential rationale for implementing PSBA in the first place, was a policy of outsourcing.

There are now even more unnecessary layers of communication and decision making than previously. This added complexity confuses communication channels and clouds accountability at all levels of the organisation.

In conclusion, this bill unshackles those firefighters and police officers—those good men and women—and returns them to front-line services where Queenslanders need them the most. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Before calling the member for Capalaba, there are quite a number of conversations going on in the chamber. If you feel the need to have a conversation, the place for it is outside. I call the member for Capalaba.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.05 pm): Thank you for your assistance, Deputy Speaker. I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, the secretariat and particularly the chair of the committee, the member for Ferny Grove, for the work that they have put into this report.

Since its inception by the previous government, the Public Safety Business Agency has been an important part of the public safety portfolio. It has, however, been surrounded by concerns and criticisms about its effectiveness and suitability. A subsequent review of the PSBA, chaired by the Public Service Commission, has given validity to some of these concerns. The need for this bill has been outlined through the *Review of the Public Safety Business Agency* report, which was tabled by the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services on 17 February 2016. This

review concluded that, although the PSBA had achieved some successes and the model does create many potential opportunities, stakeholders primarily identified concerns and frustrations with existing arrangements. The review stated—

Fundamentally, it was found that the majority of the identified problems are caused by confusion over the scope, purpose and function of the PSBA. This theme holds true for employees in the partner agencies and the PSBA.

This bill, in conjunction with other measures in this government's reform agenda, will address this deficiency. This bill will amend the functions of the PSBA, establish the PSBA board of management, change the role of the PSBA CEO to be the PSBA chief operating officer, finalise the machinery-of-government changes that will allow blue card services to transition to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General—and on that point I was surprised to hear that the opposition is against this part of the bill, seeing as the member for Ferny Grove stated that they had agreed to it during the review stage—and allow for the comprehensive integration of the SGS into the QPS.

The Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services has addressed the aspects of this bill that deal with the governance of the PSBA and the formation of the PSBA board. I fully support and endorse the comments that he has made. I will take this opportunity to address the amendments in this bill that allow blue card services to be transferred from the PSBA to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

The transfer of blue card services to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General is initiated through a minor technical amendment to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 that removes references to the PSBA in that act. This removes a legislative impediment that would otherwise prevent administrative arrangements from bringing that transfer into effect. Administrative arrangements are currently scheduled to transfer the responsibility of blue card services to the Department of Justice and the Attorney-General on 1 October 2016.

The advantages for this transition were outlined in the review that was conducted into the PSBA. In that review, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General was considered to be best placed for the responsibility of blue card services, as existing systems and processes for licensing are already in place and allowing the PSBA to continue to administer blue card services may be detrimental to its dedicated focus of providing corporate support.

This bill will also allow the management and administration of State Government Protective Security Service staff to become the responsibility of the QPS. This will allow the objectives and advantages outlined in the PSBA review to be achieved. These advantages include the inherent value of the QPS maintaining overall responsibility for public safety in Queensland and the ability to easily coordinate response and deployment in times of emergency; the potential ability to utilise the SGS as part of the QPS employee life cycle, including as a platform for interested recruits who do not yet meet the entrance requirements for the QPS, and providing a broader range of options to transition sworn officers; and the ability to access improved training and support for SGS officers, as the QPS already delivers these services to staff. All of these advantages are significant and deserving of my support. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.11 pm): I rise to add my contribution to the debate of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This bill was introduced on 24 May 2016 by the Hon. Bill Byrne, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services. It was subsequently referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its deliberations and examination with a requirement to report back to the parliament on 2 August 2016. As a member of this hardworking committee and secretariat, I wish to acknowledge the other committee members and our staff who so ably assist us throughout the numerous committees that this committee undertakes.

The bill primarily aims to amend the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 to fully implement the government endorsed recommendations of the Public Service Commission's 2015 review of the PSBA. While many of the changes required to implement these recommendations could be done administratively, there are still legislative amendments included in this bill as follows: to amend the functions of the PSBA; to establish the PSBA board of management; to change the role of PSBA chief executive officer to PSBA chief operating officer; to finalise the machinery-of-government changes that will allow blue card services to transition to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General; and to allow for the comprehensive integration of the State Government Protective Security Service into the Queensland Police Service.

Legislative reform is required to facilitate machinery-of-government changes in order to implement recommendations from the PSBA review. The original PSBA Bill, established in May 2014, was borne as a result of the 2013 review into police and community safety headed by former Australian

federal police commissioner Mick Keelty. The Keelty report, *Sustaining the unsustainable*, made 127 recommendations which saw the merger of Queensland Fire and Rescue Services with Emergency Management Queensland as well as a stand-alone office for emergency management named IGEM and a raft of corporate and business services. The PSBA is responsible for holding all infrastructure, fleet and information and communication technology assets, and managing human resourcing, financial management, legal, policy, media and strategic planning functions for the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Inspector-General Emergency Management. The PSBA Act also allows for the agency to perform additional functions such as operation and management of declared public safety agencies and currently administers the State Government Protective Security Service, all Queensland government air services and blue card services.

During the committee's scrutiny of this bill, identified stakeholders and the general public were invited to make written submissions to be received by the committee secretariat by 24 June this year. Only two submissions in total were received by this date and they were from the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers' Union of Employees and from the United Firefighters Union of Queensland. Oral briefings were provided by the QPS and QFES on 15 June.

The committee reviewed the policy outcomes forecast to be achieved by this legislation. We also considered the bill's regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and to the institution of parliament in accordance with section 4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1991. Taking into account these considerations, the committee agreed that the bill be passed, hence the recommendation in report No. 33 of the 55th Parliament of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee dated August 2016.

The minister stated that the reason for this bill is to undo the inefficiencies created by the current PSBA model and return control of relevant resources and processes to the Police Commissioner and the fire and emergency services commissioner. I make note of comments in the committee report on page 3 that there have been a number of reviews and legislative initiatives in the public safety portfolio in recent years. I also make note of findings by the Public Service Commission which was tasked in 2015 by the Palaszczuk government to undertake this latest review, but it is the timing of this review that raises questions.

Reviews, in general, are regarded as an important part of governance—a means of tracking the progress of actions and overall effectiveness of the legislation. Many a piece of new legislation or amendments to existing bills specify a reporting time as a necessary provision to ensure the legislation is working in the manner it was intended and delivering on its policy objectives. One has to wonder why the rush to change this legislation. Only a year after its introduction Labor commissioned a review, but it started about 70 or 80 reviews. They did not have any policy, so in order to keep themselves busy they set about reviewing and undoing almost everything the LNP government implemented. It was obvious the PSBA Bill would suffer the same fate when the former minister for police, the honourable member for Bundamba, said that she would ask the new Queensland Public Service commissioner to review the organisation which she described as a 'child of Campbell Newman'.

In 2015 the Public Service Commission was directed by this government to conduct the PSBA review to review the scope, function and structure of the PSBA. This review was undertaken over six months and included employee workshops and engaging with unions and employee associations. On 17 February this year the PSBA review report was tabled. It found that the PSBA had achieved some successes and that the model does create many potential opportunities. However, a number of concerns were identified by stakeholders with regard to the scope, purpose and function of the PSBA. One of the provisions in this bill is the establishment of the PSBA board of management. An interim board was formed and held its first meeting on 16 May.

Page 7 of the committee's report states there was extensive engagement and consultation with employees within the Public Service and that there is an intention to continue this during the implementation process. I would hope that there would be ongoing dialogue and consultation as to the effectiveness of these new amendments which will redefine the structure and purposes of the PSBA. Consultation is to be commended. It is just a pity that Labor never extends it to the private sector workers or our state's farmers. It is a pity that it was not extended to the racing industry when all three codes were held to ransom over a live-baiting disgrace in the greyhound industry. They want their codes to be separated. They want to be heard, not ignored.

The 2015 PSBA review made eight recommendations. Amongst them was the transferral of a number of functions and services back to respective agencies. Meanwhile, the role of the PSBA would be to maintain responsibility for asset management and maintenance and perform a strategic air fleet

management function. As has been indicated by the shadow minister, the LNP do not agree with recommendation No. 8, which would see the transfer of blue card services to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General as they undo a recommendation of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry 2013. In fact, chapter 12.17 of the Carmody report was not brought to light during the deliberations on this bill. This particular recommendation is that the blue card services stay within the Queensland Police Service. If honourable members wish to look up pages 444 to 446 of this report, they will see Mr Carmody there outlines his reasoning.

I was, however, pleased to see that there was an undertaking that workers' entitlements would not be lost when they transfer back to agencies. The QPS made the comment that in general there is a far more positive feeling about this move than negative. They continue, 'There will always be the odd individual who is disgruntled about change and the circumstances.' I think it is fair to say that, generally speaking, people do not actively seek change. In fact, many resist it for the status quo, preferring the known to the unknown. This is especially true for changes that affect people financially, socially and morally. As politicians, and therefore law-makers, we have an obligation to the people of Queensland as we consider new legislation or amendments to that which already exists for the impact they will have upon them.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This bill amends a wide range of legislation including the Disaster Management Regulation 2014, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Regulation 2016, the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014, the Public Service Act 2008, the State Buildings Protective Security Act 1983, the State Buildings Protective Security Regulation 2008 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000.

As the minister outlined in his first reading speech, our government made an election commitment to review the Public Safety Business Agency, otherwise known as the PSBA, which was a creation of the Campbell Newman LNP government. It was established in haste and only served to act as a repository for outsourcing and a vehicle for privatisation. It led to a lack of morale amongst many sectors of the public safety portfolio. It led to police, fire and emergency services officers being transferred from their rightful department and deployed to work in a silo called the Public Safety Business Agency. I am pleased to stand here today to support those police, fire and emergency services officers who were denied a say in their future by the Campbell Newman government.

The PSBA held all the infrastructure, fleet, information and communication technology assets and managed human resourcing, financial management, legal, policy, media and strategic planning for the Queensland Police Service. That is just the police. The creation of the PSBA also had an impact on Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Inspector-General of Emergency Management.

I am pleased to support the review of the PSBA tabled in February 2016. That review found that all was not right with the agency. While there may have been some successes, the overall effect of the Public Safety Business Agency was one of frustration and confusion. As has been said about the PSBA review, fundamentally it was found the majority of identified problems are caused by confusion over scope, purpose and function of the PSBA. This theme holds true for employees in partner agencies and the PSBA.

The report found a lack of clarity around the role of the Public Safety Business Agency and what it was trying to achieve. This then led to an absence of a clearly articulated and communicated vision and a lack of visible leadership in the regions. The Palaszczuk government is a government for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live in this great state. I am pleased to stand up for the public safety officers across the state from Cairns to Coolangatta and everywhere in between. I support those public safety officers in doing what they do best: keeping Queenslanders safe.

I note the review tabled in February 2016 recommended the creation of the PSBA board of management to oversee the activity of the PSBA and undertake a portfolio-wide planning and strategy and approve the role of the board of management chair to rotate between the QPS Commissioner, the QFES Commissioner and the external member. It was also recommended giving support to the effective operation of the PSBA and the partner agencies by mandating the development of service-level agreements between agencies. Another recommendation was to approve the role of the PSBA to maintain responsibility for asset management and maintenance and perform a strategic air fleet management function under the guidance of PSBA management.

It is recommended the PSBA board consist of three members: the Police Commissioner, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner and an independent external member appointed by the minister. As well, the chair of the board of management will alternate between the two

commissioners. There are a number of advantages to this approach. It means ensuring the chair will be a standing member of the Public Safety Business Agency board of management, a better appreciation of the priorities of issues for consideration by the board of management and ensuring the role of the chair is continually filled, for example, through absences caused by recreational leave, sickness et cetera.

This bill makes sense. It will lead to a better, more efficient public safety portfolio. Importantly, those officers who were deployed to work in the Public Safety Business Agency are back where they belong, whether that is in the Queensland Police Service, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services or the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The LNP were in government for three years and what a mess they made of so many things. Thank goodness this government came in to correct all those messes that the previous government made in Queensland.

This is just another example of the damage that the previous government caused to Queensland. If only they had listened to the member for Rockhampton, the current portfolio minister, when he spoke to the PSBA Bill in 2014. He stated—

Unfortunately, the true ramifications of this bill will only become evident over the medium term, when all the damage has been done. It will be difficult—very difficult—for a future government to repair the damage that is likely to occur. I do not have any confidence that this government—

the previous government—

understands the risks or ramifications or has given any real consideration to the eventual implications.

The member for Rockhampton went on—

... we want to let every Queensland Police Service officer, firefighter and emergency service worker and volunteer know that we respect their service, respect the culture that they have developed individually that will be trampled on by this bill and stand ready to pick up the pieces and repair the damage that is likely to be done when the LNP implements this legislation.

That legislation was the PSBA Bill in 2014. If only the previous government had listened to the member for Rockhampton. If only they had also listened to key stakeholders. We see that of the two submissions that were received in respect of the 2014 PSBA Bill one was from the Queensland Police Union. What did they say? They said—

In general terms the QPU is not supportive of the Bill before the House.

What did the other submission, which was from the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers' Union, say? They stated—

The first and most important issue relates to serious concerns the QPCOUE has with the proposed amendment to the ... Act ... We believe that this will erode the current safeguards in place and we support the assertion that this amendment would not give the appropriate due regard to the institution of Parliament.

They go on in that submission to express further concerns. If only the previous government had properly consulted we would not have to fix this mess that we are fixing today. As is always the case with Labor governments, we come in to provide good government for the people of Queensland and we make sure that the legislation not only reflects a proper consultation process and is in the best interests of Queensland but is also good legislation.

When the PSBA Bill 2014 was enacted it was at a point in time when police and fire and emergency services officers' morale hit rock bottom. Those officers who were transferred to the PSBA were taken from their respective service and sent to work in a silo. In light of that and the concerns that were mentioned by the member for Rockhampton in 2014, we went to the 2015 election and made a commitment to conduct an official review of the Public Safety Business Agency. We met this commitment, and the Public Service Commission was tasked to conduct a review overseen by a cross-agency steering committee. Just as we said we would at the 2015 election, we conducted that review. As the minister has noted in his contribution to this debate, while the review found that the PSBA had some moderate successes, these were outweighed by concerns and frustrations within the existing arrangements.

I note that the review concluded that there were some serious problems with the PSBA in that there was a lack of 'clearly articulated and communicated vision of the agency'; there was a lack of a 'clearly defined identity as a support agency'; there was a lack of 'jointly developed approach to service

and supported service culture'; there was a 'lack of effective change management during the implementation of the PSBA'; and there was a lack of 'visible leadership across the PSBA, particularly in regional areas'. The review concluded that—

In the absence of these fundamental building blocks, employees have been attempting to do the best they can in the circumstances to deliver services.

The PSBA review process involved undertaking extensive engagement and consultation with employees within the public safety portfolio, including their unions and external stakeholders. I understand that the consultation continued with these stakeholders during the implementation process. I am very, very proud to be part of a government that consults, that listens and that acts in the best interests of Queenslanders. As I said in my opening remarks, if only the LNP when in government had consulted before establishing the Public Safety Business Agency, I doubt that it would have even got off the ground. This bill has been examined very thoroughly by the committee, and I acknowledge the committee's hard work in that respect. I also acknowledge the hard work of the chair and all committee members in respect of this review process. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.31 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 and report No. 33 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, of which I am a member. At the outset I think it is important to point out that the Police and Community Safety Review that was conducted back in January 2013 was conducted by quite an eminent Australian: Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty. The review examined two entities, the QPS and the department of community safety, that being the Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Corrective Services, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and Emergency Management Queensland. There were 127 recommendations, 87 of which applied directly to QPS and the department of community safety. The then government endorsed the recommendation that various things were to occur, including the merging of QFRS and EMQ to form Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, among other things. The PSBA was initially created through an administrative arrangement back in November 2013, and the 2014 act formally established the PSBA on 21 May 2014. That implemented those aforementioned recommendations, and I think it is important for us to also realise that the PSBA established its strategic plan 2014-18 at the time of that act being established.

I have gone through that little bit of background and talked about the dates because they are incredibly relevant. We had something that was in place for a matter of months and, as was pointed out by the member for Morayfield, the now government said that it was going to implement a review of the PSBA if it were to win office. That is precisely what you have done, and that is fine. It is the desire of the government to go down that road and they decided to do it, but they decided to do it within months of the act being established. There was no consideration given to giving it some time to see how it would work. There were 87 recommendations, for goodness sake, in relation to these two organisations. There was no consideration given to saying, 'Is there some sort of internal conflict going on here?'

We have established already from the member for Morayfield's contribution that the unions were not for the PSBA. The unions were against it, so was there some skulduggery going on? Was there some funny business going on within the services that was causing the problems that occurred which have been alluded to by various people, or was it that the majority of the changes that were made were successful and there were a few minor things that needed to be changed? The bottom line is that in 2015 the government engaged the Public Service Commission to conduct the PSBA review, which was overseen by a cross-agency steering committee. That is absolutely okay; that is exactly where we wanted to go. It is sad that it was six or eight months after the PSBA was put in place instead of giving it until towards the end of the 2014-18 strategic plan in 2018 to have a look at. Why do it when it has only been around for five minutes and it has not had a chance to do any of the finetuning necessary for it to get up and achieve its goals? We certainly have not given it time, and at what cost has this review been undertaken? Are we undoing things because Campbell Newman brought them in and we are de-Newmanising the legislation in this state? That is absolutely foolish, and that brings me to my main point.

One of the members opposite—I think it was the member for Capalaba—commented that in the report we supported the passing of the bill. I make the point that we listened to the evidence, as did those members opposite. I will remind them of this as we go on in our roles as committee members. We listened to the evidence, and in the broadest terms we felt that, as a committee with the evidence that had been presented to us, we would let the bill go through as a recommendation from the committee. That is not to say that the opposition is not going to disagree with aspects of the bill. At the

end of the day that is what it is about, but do you see the fine difference between what we do and what those opposite do? We do not go running back to the shadow minister saying, 'What do you want us to do, Mr Shadow Minister? Do you want us to do this? Do you want us to do that?' We do not do that: we look at the evidence. Those opposite are quite different, and I have experienced this in both the Finance and Administration Committee and also the now legal affairs committee. They go running back to their union masters and their ministerial masters saying, 'What do you want us to do? How do you want us to handle this? How do you want us to go with this?'

A case in point is the North Stradbroke Island sandmining bill. Some of their members were so embarrassed that they did not even speak to the North Stradbroke Island bill because they knew the right thing for North Stradbroke Island was to keep sandmining there until 2035, but they did not have the gumption to stand up to this government, to stand up to the minister, and say, 'No, we are going to make a recommendation that sandmining should stay there.' That is the classic example. That is not what we do on this side of the House.

Mr BYRNE: I rise to a point of order. I would ask that the debate be constrained within the long title of the bill. That would be very helpful to proceedings.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Coomera, I will bring you back to the bill.

Mr CRANDON: That is a wonderful segue into exactly what I was going to do, and that is come back to the bill. Thanks, Bill. I am just using one of the glaring examples—the sandmining bill—to come back to this particular bill and what we have done.

I make the point that we consult widely with the community, as the committees consult widely with the community. The important difference is that we actually listen to the contribution from those we consult through the committee and those we consult more broadly. Some of those people that we consult, of course, are our colleagues. I will go back to my colleagues and say, 'Can you give me some background on this? Can you give me some idea of why we are, six or eight months down the road, wanting to completely change something without giving it a fair run, without giving it an opportunity to be finetuned?' They will give me that advice. At the end of the day, though, what we on this side of the House bring to our committee role—listen up, folks on the other side—is a sense of, 'This is the committee. The committee needs to do the right thing and make appropriate recommendations based on the evidence.' In terms of that glaring example of sandmining on Stradbroke Island that I used before, based on the evidence they could not possibly have accepted the government's will, and that is to move it forward.

I repeat that we on this side of the House are not about listening to our masters, whether they be union masters or ministerial masters—old Bill out there with his gun: bang, bang! We are not about that. In our committee role we are about listening to the evidence and developing and providing a report to this House to provide it some guidance as to where it should go with a particular bill.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (3.42 pm): In the last couple of minutes I have been trying to think how I could weave sandmining into my speech today, but I am afraid—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Bulimba, take your seat, please. I call the member for Bulimba.

Ms FARMER: I am afraid I am going to have to seek advice from the member for Coomera about how I can get sandmining into my next speech, however obscurely it may be connected to the next bill we will be debating.

I rise today to speak in support of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. If you asked the average Queenslanders whether they thought it was important to look after our emergency services workers, there would be no question at all about their response. They are quite easily the most respected workers in our community. I do not think there would be much argument with that. If we asked those same average Queenslanders whether they thought it was important that we help our emergency services workers to do their jobs in the most effective ways possible and in a way that they would be proud of, their answer would also be a no-brainer.

Our emergency services personnel are always there for us. They are always keeping an eye out for us. They do not make a song and dance about it. When disaster strikes or there is some catastrophe, we turn to those same workers and they help us return our communities to normalcy. That is why this bill is so important. The men and women in our emergency services have a difficult enough job as it is without it being compounded through any problems with bureaucracy and with the agencies that are supposed to support them.

A review of the Public Safety Business Agency found that the model for that agency, as was established under Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls, caused a lot of concern and a lot of frustration to our precious emergency services workers, including the fact that the PSBA in its current form was actually taking important emergency services personnel away from the jobs they were trained to do—from jobs that they should be doing and jobs that we need them to do.

I was very pleased to see that the review of the PSBA was undertaken with what looks like extremely extensive engagement and consultation with employees within the public safety portfolio, with unions and with external stakeholders. It made a number of recommendations designed to improve the arrangements between the PSBA and the operational agencies. I am pleased to say that the Palaszczuk government has embraced those recommendations and incorporated those into its reform of the public safety portfolio.

From reading the report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee it seems to me that the recommendations have been very positively received. The Queensland Police Service states—

Certainly from my sense of the negotiations that we have entered into, with the various work units within the PSBA transitioning back to the organisation generally, people are very welcoming of this as a very positive move.

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services states—

... for the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services collectively and the units that are affected by these particular changes I think the general attitude is incredibly positive.

The review will see a number of services and functions, such as recruitment, education and training, operational functions, legal and media services, transferred back to the respective operational agencies. Similarly, staff who were seconded to the PSBA, including police officers and firefighters, have been transferred back to the operational agencies, where they belong. Some of the more corporate functions will continue to be delivered by the PSBA.

Some of these reform measures could be achieved administratively. For example, important services such as those I have just mentioned could be transferred from the PSBA to the Queensland Police Service and QFES without the need of any legislative amendment. However, this bill is necessary to bring into effect the remaining measures of the government's reform agenda, which include structural changes to the PSBA that are required to ensure the agency operates as efficiently as possible with other stakeholders within the public safety portfolio.

The bill also formally establishes the PSBA board of management, which is tasked with providing the strategic direction for the agency. As the members of the board include the Commissioner of the QFES and the Police Commissioner, this board is well placed to guide the PSBA within the public safety portfolio into the future. It will be a re-energised PSBA that is best positioned to effectively deliver support services to the operational agencies in the public safety portfolio. I applaud the Palaszczuk government's reform agenda, and I note that the bill has received some bipartisan support through the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which recommended that this bill be passed.

As the minister noted in his introductory speech and way back when the PSBA was first introduced, the agency and the way it was set up was clearly part of the broader agenda of Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls to outsource and privatise. It did not work, and we have had to come in and fix it all up, as we have had to do with quite a number of things the LNP mucked up when they were in government.

I note the comments from the member for Coomera, who had to find some way of explaining why the LNP members on the committee were so supportive of the recommendations to do this now. He made a valiant effort—and good on him for making such a valiant effort—but I am very pleased that the LNP members of the committee saw the overwhelming sense in these recommendations and listened to what the stakeholders had to say. It was face-saving at its best, but it is quite clear that our precious emergency services personnel did not like this. They could not get their jobs done.

I thank all of the members of this very busy committee for their detailed consideration of the bill. I could not speak on a bill about public safety without also giving a shout-out to Senior Sergeant Barry Bullion and the officers of the Morningside Police Station and also the officers of the Cannon Hill Fire Station. Their dedication to and selfless work for our local community is absolutely outstanding. I know that they are much loved. If I did not know that well enough already, I would have only had to watch them in action at the two road safety events I hosted last week with my colleagues Terri Butler, the federal member for Griffith, and Shayne Sutton, the councillor for Morningside.

Seeing people absolutely flocking to them, young and old, just reinforced my perception of them. I cannot thank them enough for their presence at those events but, more importantly, for every single thing they do in my local community. If passing this bill helps to lighten their load a little—helps them to do the job they are so proud to do—then that is enough for me. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.49 pm): I, too, pay tribute to my local Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and Emergency Management Queensland. They do a fantastic job in regional Queensland, especially in remote areas where they are community leaders.

I rise to speak briefly to one aspect of this bill—that part pertaining to the transfer of blue card services from the Public Safety Business Agency back to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. This is of particular interest to many of my constituents who live with their children remotely or very remotely and who rely on live-in assistants in order to allow them to both care for and educate their children while still operating their businesses on their property.

While I have nothing but praise for our wonderful School of Distance Education and the job it does in delivering education to the children of outback Queensland, there is no doubt that their parents and carers have a formal involvement over and above that required by urban Queensland parents. These same parents are also working in a part of Queensland where their own work responsibilities are extensive and demanding for both mum and dad. To cope, many property owners rely on the assistance of nannies or tutors to ensure their children are safe and are continuing to progress with their school work while mum and dad are out on the property working day in, day out. Far from being unusual, this is a practice with a long history behind it—going right back to the beginning of the sheep and beef industries in Queensland. For children to be adequately supervised is a necessity.

The introduction of blue card screening extended an extra layer of protection for these families because when a child carer is employed they are literally joining the family. However, for many years hiring of these workers has been disrupted by unreasonable delays in the processing of blue cards. Mum and dad may have found a French university graduate who is happy to take on the tutor's role or even teach French as a part of their backpacking adventure in Australia, but when the person's blue card is not processed promptly the solution evaporates. This is what has been happening for years. Equally, we have situations where local graduates in early childhood education or child carers are eager to return to the bush and have been offered jobs in centres in their own home towns but have been unable to obtain blue cards in time for the start of the school year, and in a couple of cases for the start of term 2. The frustration is increased because these graduates have usually held blue cards for the purpose of student work, but those blue cards are automatically cancelled when they graduate and they have to reapply.

It is obvious that there is always going to be a heavy workload for blue card administrators from December to the start of the school year and if screening is to return to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General I plead with it to be aware of that fact—that is, that it is a lot of red tape at the moment and blue cards are not getting to those people in time for them to start the school year at the end of January. It is not acceptable for desperate applicants, employers and parents to be told, 'We're having a Christmas shutdown,' and then be told, 'Well, the office has to reopen but now we have a dreadful backlog.' As a person from the land, I say, 'Surprise, surprise!' When the work is on, it is on and you have to be there.

As I said, I have no complaints with the aims and purposes of blue card screening—like most parents, I welcome it—but if it is not adequately funded and given staff sufficient to process applications, and to do so as promptly in peak times as during the rest of the year, then the Attorney-General will fail the scheme. I respectfully urge the Attorney-General to take these issues on board as the legislation places the responsibility for its success back into her portfolio. This is incredibly important for people in rural and regional remote areas. When there are backlogs in getting blue cards, people are not able to be ready for employment in regional towns when the works starts and they cannot continue to wait until the blue card is processed because there is no-one to replace those people. I ask that the application, the screening and the processing of blue cards before the start of the school term is prioritised so that these people can educate our kids in the bush, because it is desperately needed.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.54 pm): Today I rise to speak to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. It is often said that an army marches on its feet. The supply lines are critical and back-end support makes the front line function. This bill provides that support. It buttresses the individual courage and dedication of our police officers, firefighters and volunteers. This legislation represents the next step in the evolution of the Public Safety Business Agency, the

Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. It is a reform that was conceived on the front line for the benefit of the front line and, by extension, a benefit to the people of Queensland.

Mr Deputy Speaker Furner, let me give you a brief history of the legislation, even though you are probably very well aware of it. The former government undertook a wide-ranging review of the then department of community safety service and Queensland's police and emergency services agencies. This review made a number of recommendations. The then government adopted them in its own way. I note that even Mr Keelty had severe reservations about their implementation and these reservations were shared by front-line officers, senior officers and support staff around the state. During the 2015 election campaign our government made an undertaking for an official review of the PSBA. Following the election, this commitment was met through the Public Service Commission conducting a review overseen by a cross-agency steering committee which involved extensive consultation. On 17 February 2016 the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services tabled the *Review of the Public Safety Business Agency* report and then the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 was introduced and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

I want to take a moment to thank the secretariat for its professionalism and the chair, Mr Mark Furner, the member for Ferny Grove, and other committee members for their work on this important issue. The committee invited submissions and two were received—one from the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers' Union of Employees and one from the United Firefighters' Union of Queensland. The committee also received briefings on the bill from the PSBA, the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. I thank those who provided written submissions and those who provided information to assist the committee during the review. Our committee, including government and non-government members, recommended that the bill be passed, and that was the one recommendation, which was a sensible response to a responsible bill. However, it seems that the non-government members have been overruled and their sensible approach to this bill has been ignored. Today we bring this process to fruition because we are a sensible government.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of the public servants who toiled within the PSBA in recent years. This bill is no reflection on them or their efforts. This bill also represents an opportunity. The Queensland Police Service is a large organisation at a unique point in its history. We are on the cusp of a new and exciting policing era. Community demand and expectations are high and growing. The mandate for police involvement in new areas like disaster management is also increasing. Technology and broader economic conditions are transformative. The service needs structures that support this change. The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is similarly changing, with an ambitious cultural change agenda and an increasing role in hazard mitigation. I support any initiative that supports our hardworking police, fire and emergency services and therefore support the bill. I commend the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.58 pm): I would like to speak briefly to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I note that the committee in its report recommended that the bill be passed.

I would like to give a bit of background to the bill. I think we can all agree in this House that the police, emergency services and the fire service do a wonderful job in providing services to keep the community safe and in giving people reassurance not only when disasters occur but also on other occasions. Having those services managed properly and running efficiently and effectively is very important for all of us.

In 2013 Mick Keelty wrote a report titled *Sustaining the unsustainable* in which he made 127 recommendations, including merging the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service with Emergency Services Queensland to form Queensland Fire and Emergency Services; establishing the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management, which was tasked with reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of disaster management in Queensland; and creating the PSBA, which was tasked with providing the corporate and business services for public safety.

The PSBA was formally established in May 2014. Its key task was to try to keep people on the front line and take some of the corporate services under its wing. It was to hold infrastructure, fleet and information and communication technology assets and manage the human resourcing, financial management, legal policy, media and strategic planning functions for the QPS, the QFES and the IGEM. It was a good concept, but I think everybody would agree—and as the report has

recommended—it needed a review. That is not to say that the PSBA was not performing some very good functions and taking some stress and pressure away from front-line staff so that those people could do the main core of their job whilst leaving some of corporate functions to be done by others who have specialist skills in those areas.

The review of the PSBA found that, although the PSBA had achieved some successes and that the model creates potential opportunities, stakeholders primarily identified concerns and frustrations with some of the existing arrangements. Any sensible parliament needs to look at those recommendations, take them on board and come up with solutions. As I said, I think we are all looking for well-run, efficient and effective emergency services and the provision of safety for our communities.

We have arrived at a wait-and-see and watch position—to continue to monitor the effectiveness of any structural changes and ensure that the PSBA has the best model and leadership to protect property, rescue Queenslanders from harm and manage weather events and other emergencies as efficiently and effectively as possible as they arise. We all agree in this House that those are good endeavours. The government has made some changes to the structure of the PSBA. It has the ability to do that. We will see how those changes work. That is not to say that we will not be back in this place one day reviewing the PSBA and trying to work out where best to draw the line between the corporate functions that are required for our emergency services and others to do their jobs well and providing front-line services.

I will conclude my comments by saying that in no way am I reflecting on the wonderful job that emergency services do for us in Queensland. We can all be rightly proud of our police, fire and emergency services and anybody else who is involved in disaster management. As members would be aware, in 2011 a big flood came through Toowoomba. Who would have thought that it was possible to have a flood on top of a mountain where people live, but it happened and there were some tragic consequences. Out of that disaster were some lessons for us in emergency planning. All of the emergency services in Toowoomba have taken those on board. They have worked very hard to make sure that, if such a disaster were to happen again, not only have the infrastructure changes that were required been made but also the management practice changes that were required have been made to make sure that the same tragic circumstances do not arise again. From an emergency services and disaster management point of view, the range always has the potential to have a ferocious bushfire come up the escarpment. I know that many people involved in emergency services in Toowoomba and the council are involved in making sure that, if that occurs, there is a good plan to keep the community safe.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.05 pm): I rise to speak to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. As the shadow minister for child safety, I rise to speak in particular about the amendments contained within this bill that are contrary to the recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry in relation to blue cards.

As members are aware, in 2013 the then LNP government commissioned the commission of inquiry, which was chaired by the Hon. Tim Carmody QC, as a far-reaching inquiry into the child protection system in Queensland. Out of the Carmody inquiry came recommendations to improve a system which for too long had been underperforming. We knew that we needed large-scale reform to keep our children safe, and by the time the LNP had left office our child protection system was finally showing signs of improvement.

As part of its terms of reference, the commission examined the oversight functions of the child protection system and recommended a number of changes to improve the efficiency of that system, including changes to the administration of blue cards. Blue cards are fundamentally important to our child protection system. They form our key prevention and monitoring mechanism for people working with children and young people in Queensland. They ensure that those working with children and young people in our state are appropriately qualified and authorised to do so, minimising the risk of harm to children and young people by contributing to the creation of safe and supportive environments.

The Carmody inquiry identified a number of areas in which the administration of the blue card system could be improved. The Carmody inquiry's final report said that Queensland's working with children criminal history check—or blue card system—was repeatedly described as a potential barrier to the recruitment of carers, particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The report said that there appeared to be a widespread belief that quite minor offences will deny potential carers from getting a blue card. It said that this belief, along with the requirement for all adults in a household to hold a blue card, dissuaded some potential carers from seeking approval.

According to the report, the department of child safety commented that a lack of personal identification documentation is also a problem in remote communities because, in the absence of such documentation, applicants were required to complete a lengthy and legalistic additional form that can prove to be onerous and complex. The report also noted that problems include insufficient information about blue cards and, for those in remote locations, a lack of support to apply and changes in the composition of large households could cause lengthy delays in obtaining blue cards. As a result, potential carers in those communities felt discouraged. The Carmody inquiry said that the blue card system needed to be simplified and made more efficient.

On 21 May 2014, under the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014, our government formally established the Public Safety Business Agency. The PSBA Act also authorised the PSBA to perform additional functions, including the operation and management of declared public safety entities. That includes the state government's protective security service and the Queensland government air service. Importantly, for Child Safety in particular, the Public Safety Business Agency became the lead agency for blue card applications and related processes. That provided greater efficiency and improved a process that for too long had been a hindrance to carers and those seeking to work with children and young people.

Although the opposition will not oppose this legislation in its entirety, it will oppose changes that refer the blue card services to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General from the Queensland Police Service as that would undo a recommendation of the Carmody inquiry. We on this side of the House recognise the importance of the Carmody inquiry to child safety in this state. I want to ensure that the implementation of the inquiry's recommendations is not undone under this government.

We recognise the importance of reviewing and improving our child safety system so that no child is forgotten and so that every child is kept safe from harm. We recognise that the blue card system is an important pillar of the child safety system which means carers and those who work with children and young people are properly accredited to do so. There is no doubt that the blue card system needs improvement to streamline efficiency, but transferring its oversight to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and ignoring a recommendation of the Carmody inquiry in the process is not the way to do it. It is for these reasons that the opposition holds serious concerns for blue card provisions in this bill and this will be demonstrated when the bill is considered in detail.

I would also like to take the opportunity to send a get well message to my senior sergeant, Mark Anderson, from the Mudgeeraba police who spent the last four days in hospital and in ICU. Get well soon, Mark, and thank you for the amazing job that you do keeping us safe in the electorate of Mudgeeraba. I would also like to thank Senior Sergeant Peter Gordon from Nerang police for the great job you and your team did in apprehending a dangerous criminal in the Numinbah Valley this past weekend. Thank you to Senior Sergeant Andy Frick from Robina police and to your team as well for all that you do to keep us safe.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.10 pm): I rise today to make a contribution to the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I start by acknowledging you and your role as chair, Deputy Speaker. Your committee certainly spoke to the right people in making these recommendations as part of the report. I congratulate you on the work that yourself, your committee and your secretariat have done. I say that as someone who has worked in emergency services in QAS for a significant period of time and closely with Fire, EMQ, police staff and having forged relationships over that period of time. The Keelty review recommendations affected a lot of people on the front-line. I will come to the PSBA, but in the Ambulance Service alone the effects were enormous as we lost a lot of staff under the former Newman government, particularly front-office staff, those people who connected the stations to the people who dropped in for first aid courses and things like that. All those recommendation that were made actually resulted in jobs lost in the agency that I was connected with. I know the effects of the Keelty review well because I was able to give some feedback at the time, also working then with the department of community services and with the helicopter service in Townsville which is now Queensland Government Air.

Not all of the Keelty recommendations were bad. I acknowledge putting Ambulance under Health was a good thing. With the interactions between those organisations that was the right direction, but when you lose jobs it affects the agency. PSBA was a basket case. A corporate management group was created and made organisationally responsible for police, fire and emergency services. Out went EMQ, there were restructures and people were seconded to PSBA. It was heavily burdened with things such as procurement administration and media—things that were not required. We wonder why we needed to have a review to get it right. Again I congratulate you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your work in that space.

During the review workers who were seconded to PSBA were consulted. They found concerns within the organisational role and function of the PSBA. This bill will reform the public safety portfolio and ensure that it is managed as effectively as possible and that those seconded to PSBA can go back to their operational agencies where they belong. With this bill passing we will ensure that the PSBA continues to operate but with a more clearly defined role, more targeted scope and clearer governance arrangements.

The Palaszczuk government acknowledges the outstanding work that emergency services workers perform daily across our broad Queensland communities. This is no better exemplified than in those particular and challenging times of natural disasters. Our government is prepared to introduce the measures that are necessary to ensure that these workers can continue to provide services to a world-class standard. I note that when you consulted, Mr Deputy Speaker, you spoke to the right people. Earlier we heard from the member for Coomera. It was terrible that you consulted with those nasty unions! You actually spoke to the workers' representatives from the United Firefighters Union and the Queensland Police Union. Why would a responsible government not want to talk to the workers, their advocates and their representatives? I congratulate you on talking to the unions that many of the members pay into. That is part of their role.

This bill will reconfigure the structure of the Public Safety Business Agency through establishing the PSBA board of management. The board will provide leadership and strategic oversight to the PSBA and will consist of the QPS commissioner, the QFES commissioner and an independent external member appointed by the minister. The benefit of the amendment is clear: the heads of the operational agencies will have a stake in support services that will be provided to them by the PSBA. They will have a clear voice in the decisions that will affect them. Additionally, the fire and police commissioner are perfectly positioned to have visibility of the issues that affect the public safety portfolio and can work cooperatively as members of the board to resolve them.

Additionally, this bill will amend the functions of the PSBA itself to ensure that this agency can remain focused on its primary task of providing corporate services—not organisational management, corporate services. We have great organisations out there. Sometimes government just needs to get out of the way and let them get on with their daily jobs and provide that corporate function in the background to those operational agencies. I endorse the renewed commitment that the PSBA is making to support its partner agencies. I am advised that other administrative measures have already been undertaken to achieve the government's reforms of the public safety portfolio. This includes the interim PSBA board of management that has been working with implementation teams, with the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the PSBA to ensure that this transition occurs as smoothly as possible. These measures include the return of many services and functions previously undertaken by the PSBA back to their respective operational and organisational agencies.

I am confident that these measures, in concert with this bill and the recommendations, will result in a more streamlined, efficient and effective emergency services. I have no hesitation in commending this bill to the House.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.17 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate in what goes close to being a uniform position of most members of the House on most aspects. I thank the members of the opposition for their commentary and I want to reflect on some of that. I was unaware, having read the committee report, that the opposition had any concerns about this bill or about the mechanisms that it underwrites. It is not beyond the realms of normality for those concerns to be raised either through the committee or indirectly in other ways so as to have them addressed prior to a bill that is fundamentally supported coming before the House. I am somewhat disappointed that that was not able to be achieved, but the very nature of the commentary that has been given by the opposition about the blue card needs to be specifically addressed.

The member for Everton first raised concerns about blue card services transferring to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. That is the first I have heard of those concerns. The Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening Act)—as amended under those opposite, I might add—contains a provision which states that blue card services must be administered by the PSBA. I assume it is clause 56 or thereabouts that those opposite are going to oppose. The Clerk did not know five minutes ago what clause was actually being opposed. Without that clause the PSBA will continue to administer blue card services. All of the commentary that has been given here has been about PSBA being administered under the Queensland Police Service. I can assure members that, by opposing clause 56, blue cards will not be administered by the Queensland Police Service; it will remain in PSBA.

An honourable member: Well, move amendments.

Mr BYRNE: That is what they are opposing. They support retaining blue card services in the PSBA, which is a totally unsuitable location. Again, that would impact on the core business of providing corporate support to front-line officers in the public safety portfolio. Let us follow that through: if there was a genuine desire to see this worked through in some fashion, they would not simply oppose it; there would be a notice to the Clerk, amendments would be tabled and they would be talking about amending the bill in order to see the sort of arrangement that they espouse put forward, but no. I can only think that the opposition is simply too lazy to do that work or is ill-prepared and looking for a reason to have a blue over something. By opposing this element of the bill, they mean to retain blue card services in the PSBA, which everybody recognises is not a satisfactory location for blue card services. The PSBA review recognised that the PSBA is not an appropriate place for blue card services to be administered. In fact, on page 56 and 57 of that report, it is noted that the PSBA was not an appropriate place for blue card services to be administered. It was the Liberal National Party that put it there through the creation of its own arrangements.

The PSBA review examined where blue card services could be administered, which included the Department of Justice and Attorney-General; the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services; and, as the member for Everton discussed, the Queensland Police Service. The PSBA review made two conclusions in that respect: it is a matter for government to ultimately decide where blue card services are administered and, importantly, that the most appropriate place for the administration of blue card services is the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The review highlighted that this arrangement would utilise the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's existing systems and the process that they use for other areas of licensing—that seems self-evident to most normal people—including the Office of Fair Trading and the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation.

The PSBA review also highlighted that closer connections between blue card services and the Office of the Public Guardian, which sits within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, may result from this arrangement, which is a good thing. Those are all positives for the administration of blue card services and will result in far better administration than is currently occurring in the department, where blue card services just do not fit. The key aim of this bill is to support the QPS to focus on front-line services. Transferring blue card services to the QPS would place on it a significant burden that is not a front-line focused requirement. As this is again a machinery-of-government issue, the government believes that blue card services can be administered correctly, efficiently and appropriately by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

At the end of the day, if members opposite oppose the relevant clause, which I think is clause 56, we may be stuck with blue card services sitting in an agency where we all acknowledge it does not fit. If the future of a national approach to working-with-children checks is established and recommends a different approach to blue card services, clause 56 will allow that to occur. The bottom line is that DJAG is experienced in licensing and regulation through the Office of Fair Trading and the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. The key aim of the PSBA Bill is to support the QPS to focus on front-line services. Transferring blue card services to the QPS would create a significant administrative burden on police. The rationale in supporting the need for this bill is simple and rests with the fundamental commitment that the government made to the community.

I can remember when nine of us sat on the other side of this chamber, talking about this bill. Everything that I predicted and said on the record in the last parliament has come to fruition through the creation of the PSBA. The Palaszczuk government always will support our emergency services personnel so that they can continue to perform their essential work for Queenslanders. Our emergency services personnel deserve that support. They do a wonderful job, sometimes under the most trying of conditions. They do not deserve to be hampered by inefficient managerial structures and arrangements that result in making the job harder.

This bill responds to widespread concerns raised by front-line officers, police, fire and emergency services officers, unions and other associations about the creation and subsequent performance, more importantly, of the PSBA, which was established in haste by the former government. The previous government built a bureaucratic monolith for the purposes of outsourcing. I have said that previously and I restate it. When I came to this ministry after 12 months or so in other portfolio areas, the first question I asked was, 'How many new bureaucratic senior positions of AO8 level and above were created in the PSBA?' That was a reasonable question to ask about the apparently great and efficient machine that was created and called the PSBA. The answer was, 'We think it's somewhere around 40.'

The previous government created the PSBA which was supposed to generate greater efficiencies, but then they created 40 new positions of AO8 level and above simply for the exercise of machinery-of-government changes. I might add, that was right up to SES 2 and 3 levels, meaning very substantial employee expenses for no dividend whatsoever other than to fill up the top end of the bureaucracy.

The Labor government made an election commitment to review the Public Safety Business Agency and we strenuously opposed key elements of it while in opposition. We lived up to and delivered on what we said we would do. That review outlined the challenges and frustrations that staff within the agencies experienced under the former government. The agencies suffered from a lack of purpose and direction and insufficient integration with the core business of other agencies in the public sector portfolio.

In previous parliaments I have made crystal clear my thoughts on the Keelty review that led to the formation of the PSBA under the former government. It is interesting to note that some of the members here—and I think the member for Coomera in particular—talked about Mr Keelty being an eminent Australian. I think that is in the eye of the beholder. All you need do is google 'Keelty criticism' and you will be overwhelmed with the number of people who do not share that view. The fact is that when the PSBA was created it effectively delivered a train wreck for those support elements and many other important operational elements of the emergency services and the Police Service. At the time the Keelty review was published I commented that about one-third of it made sense to me, about one-third of it was pure commentary and speculation, and about one-third of it was absolute abject nonsense.

After all of that work and I think a considerable amount of money that changed hands to prepare the report, I am probably the only member of this House who has read the report from cover to cover on numerous occasions; I can guarantee that members opposite have not. It was simply a cut-and-paste and you can see that there were different authors for different sections, because they could not even get the language or definitions consistent.

Even more embarrassingly, sections had been deliberately cut and pasted from the Defence Reform Program. The Defence Reform Program was clearly the model used to create the PSBA. The report even contains phrases such as 'defence support'. They did a cut-and-paste from the parent document, which was plagiarised essentially—I suspect some of the co-authors had Defence experience at Canberra—and we ended up with the final report, which is a massive document, sections of which quoted 'defence support'. The entire ideology came straight of the Defence Reform Program. That program continues to roll out in Australia and is a disgrace in terms of cost-benefit analysis, as anyone who knows anything about it will say. I have opposed it since day one. Therefore, despite all the nonsense that we have heard today about the Keelty review and the Keelty report, I can guarantee that no-one opposite has actually read it in detail, has any idea or had any idea at the time, or actually understood what the implications would be. All I can say is: I told you so.

When we were in opposition, the one unifying force in all of the uniforms from top to bottom, in all of the services—whether it be Fire and Emergency Services, Emergency Management or the Queensland Police Service—was a complete and utter rejection of the implications of the PSBA. When I was in opposition and subsequently every single person I spoke to, from top to bottom, was highly critical of the PSBA for reasons that should have been self-evident to anybody who understood what was going on.

Those on the other side do not even know what the implications of opposing a particular clause in this bill are. They do not know that it is not going to mean that that responsibility goes to the Police Service. It is going to stay in the PSBA, which everybody recognises is completely unsuitable. They did not even have the courtesy to tell the Clerk of the Parliament what clauses they would be opposing. This is complete and utter amateur hour from those opposite. It is the way they ran government for three years. It is amateur hour.

If the opposition want to make a direct contribution to this debate and they believe in what they are advocating for where is the amendment? There is no amendment. There are no comments. They did not even have the courtesy to put any of this in the committee report. We have a committee report. There was nothing on this in that. They supported it with no problem whatsoever. They would have spoken to stakeholders in the background who would have said that they want this to happen.

They went through the process and then come in here to debate the bill. They cannot tell the Clerk what clause they are opposing. They do not even know what the implications are of opposing the clause. They expect to stand up in here and fly the flag of the opposition and say that they are attuned to what is going on.

All we have seen is amateur hour, again. There is a lack of attention to detail. There is a lack of appreciation of what the bill is actually about. They have frankly made fools of themselves this afternoon. That is something they did not need to do. They could have presented themselves in a far more professional and coherent fashion than we have seen today.

The former government's agenda in terms of creating the PSBA was to drive outsourcing and privatisation—a la the Defence Reform Program. There was no other rationale to support this move. They smashed everything together so they could get this out to the private sector as soon as they possibly could. That is what it was all about.

We have repeatedly heard concerns about this from front-line workers, unions, senior officers and stakeholders. Every single person who has been spoken to about this is highly critical of the opposition's approach. The opposition could not come in here and oppose this bill because there is not a single person or stakeholder out there who would back them in—nobody. It is very generous of the opposition to come in and say that they will support this bill. I defy them to do otherwise.

The bill is about revitalising and restoring public safety support services and importantly returning those services to where they should have always been and where they belong—that is, in the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. I told them that over and over again when there were nine of us in opposition. They did not take the slightest notice because they did not know what they were doing. They had no idea what they were doing.

Mr Ryan: Still don't.

Mr BYRNE: They still do not. They still cannot debate a bill. What we are doing here is what should have always been done as a result of the review. As was said in the Public Service Commission report and other commentary, there are elements of the PSBA that are worthwhile. One-third of what Keelty said made sense to me. That is the part that we are supporting. That is the part we are creating with the PSBA—and so it should always have been from the very start because there are certain opportunities within such arrangements and such considerations. As was the case with everything the previous government did, it was over-the-top on steroids in terms of the bill they put before the House.

We have come to this point. The result was that we had the Keelty review. Lots of money went out on that. They plagiarised bits and pieces from other reviews, notably the Defence Reform Program. We have seen the sort of carnage that came from that. The Public Safety Business Agency was established, as has been pointed out by other speakers, in November 2013 and it was formalised by the commencement of the agency act in May 2014.

Again, for the record, I did not support the original bill or the Public Safety Business Agency model. The Keelty review provided no sound reasoning or rationale to support that model. The same applies to that as applies to the opposition's commentary about the blue card. There was no argument put by those opposite as to why the blue card responsibility should not go to the Attorney-General's department. There was no contest to the recommendations provided other than a pre-existing set of recommendations that were taken into consideration by the Public Service Commission. The credibility of that line of argument was seriously depleted.

In my speech to the House on the original Liberal National Party bill I spoke about this. One of my colleagues has referred to what I said in that speech. I stand today validated in terms of what I was saying in opposition. Unlike anyone else, I have lived through a process in the defence department and from a distance still observe that process destroying things. Those points that I made then remain validated and consistent to this point.

That is why I am so proud to stand here today honouring a commitment we made from opposition. The set of arrangements that the bill proposes are supported top to bottom by every single person that I have spoken to in either the Police Service or Fire and Emergency Services. There is uniform and universal support for the arrangements that we are bringing in, and so there should be because what was done in the first place was bad.

This is about returning control of the relevant resources and processes to the likes of the Queensland Police Commissioner and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner. One thing that has not been reflected upon and one thing that I recall very clearly from my time in opposition was that while Keelty was doing his thing the Queensland police commissioner at the time put forward a proposal to the then government—I do not know what was in the proposal but we knew there was one—about what should occur with these sorts of services. One day I would love to see what that proposal was. The notion that Keelty was widely regarded and that the previous government took any notice of its principal advisors on these matters is simply false. They never took any notice of anybody when they were bringing these sorts of measures into Queensland. That is one of their failings.

I am convinced that the bill, in conjunction with other administrative measures used in this government's reform of the public safety portfolio, will establish the best outcomes for all agencies within this portfolio and allow our emergency services to focus on their paramount task of keeping our community safe. I will summarise with some final observations. This bill should be supported 100 per cent. There has not been a single point of debate put forward today that counters that position—nothing. There is simply a desire by the opposition to oppose something—that is, to have some sort of argument, conflict or friction on a Tuesday afternoon. It is an ill-considered approach. It is one that is not informed by the evidence and by the material that has been put forward.

I think that it is an indictment on the opposition that they have chosen this matter to try to exploit when the matter has already been properly tested through the Public Service Commission review. I am very proud to be part of a Labor government undertaking this reform. It is something that I have been committed to since day one and something that I am very proud to be in the House presenting.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 55, as read, agreed to.

Clause 56—

 **Mr MANDER** (4.39 pm): We will be voting against this clause. The minister can posture all he likes, but it was very evident that a recommendation by Justice Tim Carmody in the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry was that blue card processing should go to the Queensland Police Service and that it should go to the Queensland Police Service for a reason—that is, to streamline the process so that blue cards can be processed far more quickly than they are at the moment. The delays in processing blue cards are totally unacceptable. They stop people from getting employment and they stop people from being involved in volunteer work far longer than necessary. Page 444 of the child protection commission report says—

The Queensland Police Service conducts criminal history screening for the public service and so has ready access to the information required.

This is the agency that does the bulk of the work. Why do we have to go through one department to another department and then back to another department to process blue cards? Because that is how Labor do things. They complicate things. They delay things. In the meantime innocent citizens of Queensland who want to get work are delayed because of this process.

It is disappointing because we have had bipartisan support for the child protection commission's recommendations. We have agreed on everything but, Minister, you should just admit that it is an oversight. You missed it. Your department missed it. You did not see it. It is an oversight. You have a chance to amend it. We will oppose it because it is simply a policy that will not work. It will delay things. It needs to go to the Police Service, as Commissioner Carmody says. That is why we will oppose the clause.

Mr BYRNE: As I alluded to, we have had a committee look at this bill. There was bipartisan support and a report provided. One would assume that there was no statement of reservation or any other critique provided—nothing at all. What was the tactic? This is the kill shot—to come into the clauses, is it? What do we find then? The clause that they are opposing goes against the entire purpose of what the member is trying to say. If his proposal gets up then it stays in the PSBA, which everybody knows is not the right place for it. I do not know how members of the opposition can sign up to this contract which says, 'We speak this clause,' because it leaves blue cards in the PSBA, which is the last place that anyone wants them.

There is a Public Service Commission review that post-dates Carmody. There were many opportunities for members opposite to move amendments. Where is the amendment, if this is so important? They could not even tell the Clerk of the Parliament what clause they were opposing. The Clerk did not know what clause they were opposing. I do not think the member knew. He stands up grandstanding—no substance, no rational argument, no amendments moved. The member has obviously been set up by the opposition leader's staff because once again he has thrown himself on the barbed wire for the cause and he does not even know why. It is an absolute embarrassment for the opposition to be sitting in here opposing this clause without doing any work to substantiate it or having a decent debate about substance. It is a disgrace.

Division: Question put—That clause 56 stand part of the bill.

AYES, 46:

ALP, 42—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczyk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

NOES, 42:

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 56, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 57 and 58, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.50 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION (NATIONAL INJURY INSURANCE SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 14 June (see p. 2263).

Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016 represents the next stage in a process of significant social reform for Queensland. This reform commenced with the establishment by the Palaszczyk government of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland for motor vehicle accidents on 1 July 2016. The bill continues this reform by implementing the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workers who are catastrophically injured in workplace accidents connected with Queensland. It will form yet another part of Labor's long and proud tradition of progressive social reform in support of those who need it most.

The National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents is a companion scheme to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It will have a significant positive impact on the lives of Queenslanders who sustain life-changing injuries as a result of their work. The bill implements the National Injury Insurance Scheme by introducing compensation payments for lifetime treatment, care and support for serious personal injuries into Queensland's workers compensation scheme. By

extending existing compensation entitlements, these amendments provide ongoing support for those workers who sustain the most serious injuries at work and ensure improved rehabilitation, health and lifestyle outcomes. Further, this meets the commitment made by the then government in 2013 through a national heads of agreement with the Commonwealth to implement from 1 July 2016 a lifetime care and support scheme for workplace accidents that meets the agreed national minimum benchmarks.

Queensland's workers compensation scheme is the best performing scheme in Australia. The scheme already provides no-fault statutory compensation benefits for workers who sustain a work related injury including for those who are catastrophically injured. Queensland is the only jurisdiction with a centrally funded, short-tail workers compensation scheme. This means that no-fault statutory benefits are currently provided to workers who have serious personal injuries for a maximum period of between two and five years. If a worker's injury is stable and stationary and is assessed for the degree of permanent impairment, the worker can accept an offer of lump sum compensation and will then have no further entitlement to compensation.

The short-tail nature of the scheme's statutory benefits is balanced by providing injured workers with unlimited access to lump sum common law damages if they can establish their employer was at fault in causing their injury. The damages may include loss of future earnings, pain and suffering, and future care and support to fund the worker's ongoing care and support needs. Extending statutory benefits to provide lifetime support for serious personal injuries will enable greater certainty and stability in the provision of treatment, care and support to those workers to assist them to maximise their health, work and community participation goals in the face of what is a life-threatening event. It is estimated that providing this additional care and support to the small number of workers impacted by catastrophic workplace accidents will have a minimum impact on overall scheme costs and the average premium rate.

In developing the bill, the government was guided by the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee's report on its inquiry into a suitable model for the National Injury Insurance Scheme for motor vehicle accidents which recommended that the scheme serve as a platform for other National Injury Insurance Scheme arrangements in Queensland. Consequently, the bill proposes arrangements for treatment, care and support payments within Queensland's workers compensation scheme which align with the arrangements under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland for motor vehicle accidents established under the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016.

To implement the National Injury Insurance Scheme for serious personal injuries resulting from workplace accidents connected with Queensland, the bill inserts a new chapter 4A, which establishes an additional no-fault compensation entitlement to ensure that workers who sustain a serious personal injury receive the necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support. There is no change to the existing process for applying for compensation and injured workers can apply for statutory compensation benefits on the basis that they are a worker who has a work related injury. Where a worker has an accepted statutory claim, the insurer may decide, or the worker may request, to have the worker's injury assessed to decide whether the worker has a serious personal injury. Serious personal injuries include a serious permanent spinal cord injury, a traumatic brain injury, high level or multiple limb amputations, severe burns or permanent traumatic blindness. Serious permanent brachial plexus injuries which result in the shoulder, arm and hand being paralysed with a loss of function and sensation are also included for consistency of coverage with the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland in recognition that the functional impact of such an injury is similar to the loss of a limb.

The scope of coverage for entitlement to treatment, care and support payments excludes journey claims, ordinary recess claims, injuries caused by serious and wilful misconduct and people covered under the WorkCover Queensland insurance policy who are not workers. This aligns with the national minimum benchmarks for workplace accidents. This also reflects arrangements across various workers compensation jurisdictions which may restrict access to compensation entitlements depending on the status of the claimant and the circumstances in which the injury occurred.

Claimants excluded from entitlement to treatment, care and support payments will still have access to their existing compensation and damages entitlements. Those seriously injured in a motor vehicle accident may apply for lifetime care and support from the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland. Claimants may also have entitlements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme after the workers compensation claim ends. Because they are not covered by the minimum benchmarks, the Queensland government would not be liable under the heads of agreement to cover the costs if a claimant enters the National Disability Insurance Scheme in the future.

If the worker's serious personal injury meets the eligibility criteria, the insurer must decide that the worker is entitled to treatment, care and support payments. This entitlement also extends to any other work related injury that was caused by the same work event that caused a serious personal injury. This is consistent with the approach taken for the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland and ensures consistent, coordinated delivery of treatment, care and support services for all injuries caused by the work event. Also consistent with the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, in the first instance the insurer may assess a worker as being entitled to treatment, care and support payments for an interim period of up to two years initially or for their lifetime. Allowing this entitlement for an interim period will provide immediate benefit to those workers whose serious personal injuries may change over time and will require review during this period to determine if the injury will continue to meet the eligibility criteria in the long term. If it is deemed that the worker does not have a lifetime entitlement to treatment, care and support payments by the end of the interim period, they revert to existing compensation and common law damages.

Workers assessed as having a lifetime entitlement will have treatment, care and support provided for their lifetime unless they opt out of these payments as part of a common law claim. Consistent with the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee's recommendation in its report into a suitable model for the National Injury Insurance Scheme for motor vehicle accidents, the design of the scheme provides for the maximum level of choice, flexibility and independence for seriously injured workers about the care and support they receive. In particular, needs assessments, service planning and payment options for workers are designed to maximise an injured worker's choice, flexibility and independence. In preparing an individualised support plan the insurer must consult with the worker and any other appropriate person about their treatment, care and support needs, their abilities and limitations and their individual goals. The worker and insurer may also enter into a funding arrangement that covers particular expenses for a set period and allows a worker to self-direct these funds to the treatment, care and support services they desire.

The bill also retains an injured worker's common law rights to claim damages for treatment, care and support if they can establish their employer was at fault in causing their injury. Like the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, this model preserves an injured worker's freedom of choice and self-determination. Seriously injured workers whose employer is not at fault in relation to the injury will continue to receive lifetime treatment, care and support payments. Workers may also choose to continue to receive lifetime treatment, care and support payments and seek damages for the other non-treatment care and support heads of damage.

Where seriously injured workers claim damages for their injury, they will be able to elect to opt out of receiving lifetime treatment, care and support payments and accept a lump sum award of damages for treatment, care and support. In line with their eligibility period, workers will continue to receive treatment, care and support payments while their damages claims are being finalised. Where the worker decides to accept a lump sum of treatment, care and support damages, this head of damage cannot be reduced for contributory negligence. This will ensure that the damages lump sum is adequate to meet the worker's future treatment, care and support needs and will minimise any adverse impact on a worker's capacity to fund their future needs by a reduction for contributory negligence of the other heads of damage.

Stakeholders have raised the risks and challenges inherent in workers managing large lump sum payments to ensure they continue to meet the recipient's need. In recognition of these concerns, and consistent with the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, the worker's election to opt out will be subject to meeting certain safeguards. These safeguards include that the worker's damages claim is not subject to contributory negligence of 50 per cent or more and the court has not prevented them from being awarded a lump sum payment for treatment, care and support. The purpose of these safeguards is to minimise risks in relation to a worker making a reasonable and informed decision about seeking damages and optimally managing the damages lump sum to fund their future treatment, care and support needs. These provisions also support the policy objective of providing no-fault treatment, care and support in particular by providing that there is no ability to opt out of statutory payments if the reduction for the worker's contributory negligence is 50 per cent or more. A worker's inability to seek treatment, care and support damages has no impact on their ability to pursue the claim for the other heads of damage.

To mitigate the low risk that a worker will exhaust a damages lump sum prematurely, the bill enables a worker to apply to an insurer to receive additional treatment, care and support payments if the damages lump sum they accepted turns out to be insufficient to meet their necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support needs. This will reduce the likelihood of these workers seeking

to enter the National Disability Insurance Scheme and shifting this cost to the Queensland government. This also ensures that the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents in Queensland meets the national minimum benchmarks.

Consistent with the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, the bill provides that a worker must wait at least five years after accepting a treatment, care and support damages lump sum before applying for additional statutory payments. The bill also allows for regulations to prescribe more detail around these requirements. These will be determined in consultation with the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland and scheme stakeholders.

Consistent with the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016, workers compensation insurers—including WorkCover Queensland and self-insured employers—are able to engage the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland, established for motor vehicle accidents, to perform some or all of their functions in relation to treatment, care and support arrangements. This will be achieved through a contractual arrangement between the relevant insurer and the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland. Workers compensation insurers will continue to fund treatment, care and support payments and contribute to the agency's operating costs. This approach will ensure consistent standards of high-quality care and support for all seriously injured Queenslanders by leveraging the expertise that will be established within the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland.

The existing cost-effective and efficient dispute resolution processes and mechanisms within the Queensland workers compensation scheme will be used for disputes about treatment, care and support, including the Medical Assessment Tribunal, to resolve medical disputes, internal review by insurers, review rights to the Workers' Compensation Regulator and appeal rights to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. These mechanisms have well-established legislative and administrative frameworks and have developed a body of expertise in determining workers compensation claims matters. Adapting these dispute resolution processes for treatment, care and support related matters will further ensure that all workers compensation applicants are treated consistently regardless of the nature of their injury, and seriously injured workers will have the same dispute resolution mechanisms for all aspects of their workers compensation claim.

The additional cost to Queensland's workers compensation scheme of incorporating treatment, care and support payments for serious personal injuries is estimated to be a maximum of \$16.4 million per year and will be met through employer premiums. While this equates to a nominal \$0.01 increase in the average premium rate, no impact on the current rate of \$1.20 per \$100 of wages paid is expected in the short to medium term.

As well as implementing the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents, this bill will provide self-insurers with greater flexibility for managing claims liabilities, including additional liabilities which may arise due to providing lifetime treatment, care and support payments for serious personal injury. The bill provides for an alternative form of self-insurance security in the form of an unconditional financial guarantee issued by general insurers. The bill also removes the current minimum value of the guarantee of \$5 million while maintaining the requirement that the guarantee be set at 150 per cent of the self-insurer's estimated claims liability.

This bill also amends the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 to restore the original policy intent and provide certainty for insurers, employers, workers and the courts after recent court decisions have interpreted various provisions in ways that could adversely affect the operation of the scheme. Firstly, the bill responds to the *Byrne v People Resourcing (Qld) Pty Ltd & Anor* [2014] QSC 269 case. The *Byrne* case had the effect of validating the use of hold harmless clauses while indemnifying the employer for the cost of these claims. This judgement also found that WorkCover Queensland must indemnify a third-party liability holder against an employer's policy regardless of how the liability is assumed. Prior to the *Byrne* decision, where a worker was injured and both the worker's employer and the principal contractor or host employer were negligent, then WorkCover paid damages on behalf of the employer and the principal contractor or host employer paid their share of damages for negligence. The employer's direct damages were recorded against the employer's claims history and were used to determine their premium rate. A principal contractor or host employer's damages were paid either by them or their public liability insurer.

Principal contractors or host employers sought to circumvent their liability through the use of hold harmless clauses in contracts in which they transfer any liability for injury costs to the employer. Under these clauses the employer agrees to pay work related injury costs of the principal contractor or host employer. Following the *Byrne* decision, if a hold harmless clause is in place then the employer is liable

to pay the full amount of the damages and WorkCover must pay that amount on behalf of the employer. This was irrespective of whether the principal contractor or host employer has a contract of insurance with WorkCover Queensland.

Small to medium sized contractors and labour hire employers typically have limited negotiating power when dealing with large contractors. This judgement encourages the use of hold harmless clauses by principal contractors and host employers. This is undesirable as it allows negligent principal contractors or host employers to avoid liability, which encourages further negligence and unsafe work practices and makes WorkCover Queensland jointly and severally liable for all damages, despite there being a negligent principal contractor or host employer.

The bill proposes to reverse the judgement by preventing the contractual transfer of liability for injury costs from principal contractors or host employers to employers with a workers compensation insurance policy such as subcontractors or labour hire employers. It also clarifies that an insurer will not be liable to indemnify an employer for a liability to pay damages incurred by a third-party contractor under a contractual arrangement.

Reversing the Byrne decision will ensure that small and medium sized contractors and labour hire employers have a level playing field when tendering for work and entering into contracts with principal contractors and host employers. Further, it will ensure that principal contractors and host employers keep work health and safety front and centre when scheduling their work and managing the workplace.

Secondly, the bill provides that where the Workers' Compensation Regulator commences certain prosecutions, including for fraud related offences against the act, it is the Workers' Compensation Regulator's knowledge of the commission of the offence that is relevant to the time frame for the commencement of the proceedings. The bill will clarify that insurers must immediately refer such matters as soon as they have a reasonable belief that fraud has occurred.

Thirdly, the bill provides for an alternative indexation method for statutory compensation and common law damages entitlements. Since 1996 Queensland ordinary time earnings, QOTE, have been used for the purposes of indexing a number of statutory workers compensation payments, both weekly and annual. On every occasion since 1996 QOTE has increased and the relevant workers compensation payments have been increased accordingly. However, this year, for the first time, QOTE has fallen, from \$1,456.90 to \$1,446.70—a drop of 0.7 per cent. Under the current act there is no discretion available to prevent a drop in payments. It was never envisaged that these payments would be reduced in that way. The link with QOTE was intended as a beneficial measure, to ensure workers compensation payments stayed in touch with increases in average earnings. To address this issue the bill provides that if QOTE does reduce then that will effectively be deemed a zero per cent increase in QOTE for that financial year and payments linked to QOTE will remain as they are. When QOTE increases in future years, those increases will be offset against the reductions that were not passed on when QOTE fell. This will mean that the correlation with QOTE continues over time. This is consistent with the approach used in both Victoria and New South Wales, and I think it will serve Queensland well.

I thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its report tabled on 19 August 2016 regarding the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016. I also thank those who made submissions to the committee about the bill and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. The committee made three recommendations, each of which the government is happy to support.

First, the committee recommended that Queensland Treasury consult with affected stakeholders, in particular insurers, employers, unions and disability service providers and representative groups, on the drafting of the regulations to prescribe the assessment criteria for re-entry into the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents after an injured person has received common law damages. The government supports this recommendation. The development of re-entry criteria to be included in the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulations 2014 will occur in consultation with the NIIS Queensland agency to ensure consistency across the workplace accidents and motor vehicle accidents schemes as well as with key stakeholders.

Second, the committee recommends that a parliamentary portfolio committee be given ongoing oversight responsibility for the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents, including to review and report to parliament on the scheme's operations on an annual basis for the first five years after the scheme is established. Again, the government supports this recommendation. To ensure consistency across all national injury insurance schemes, it is proposed that the annual review and

report on the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents be undertaken at the same time and by the same committee that is referred to by the Treasurer under section 138 of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016 in respect of motor vehicle accidents.

In response to the third recommendation, the government supports the further investigation of options for third-party liability indemnity. In fact, this recommendation is in line with steps I have already taken to get my department to work together with WorkCover, in consultation with key stakeholders, including the Master Builders Association, to develop an insurance product that provides appropriate coverage for these circumstances. There will be broad consultation with relevant stakeholders during the investigation of options for third-party contributor indemnity for common law damages claims. I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 17—Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016, government response [1398].

This is a landmark reform. By implementing the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents in Queensland, this bill continues to build on the Palaszczuk government's significant reforms, providing greater support and opportunities for the most vulnerable members of our community when they need it most. We will be failing the most vulnerable Queenslanders if we do not throw our wholehearted support behind this scheme and make it a reality. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.17 pm): The bill before the House, as presented by the minister who just spoke, represents the further implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, NIIS, that commenced under a deal signed by the former LNP government. In this respect it deals with catastrophic injuries to workers at work and how they will be covered and receive the necessary and reasonable treatment and care, regardless of fault.

By way of background, in 2011 the Productivity Commission recommended the introduction of a national injury insurance scheme to sit alongside the National Disability Insurance Scheme. By its broad definition, the NIIS is intended to establish no-fault lifetime care and support arrangements for people who sustain serious personal injuries across four main areas: motor vehicle accidents, which was dealt with by the House in the past few months; workplace accidents, being dealt with in this bill; medical treatment injury; and general accidents at home or in the community.

I will make some general comments with respect to the NIIS and the implementation of the NDIS. As I said, the motor vehicle accident arrangement has already been passed by the House. I highlight some of the comments the shadow Treasurer made in his contribution to the House on the NIIS with respect to element 1. He outlined the concerns we had at the time and continue to have. At the time the shadow Treasurer, the member for Indooroopilly, said—

From the outset, I would like to place on record the LNP's support for the National Injury Insurance Scheme. It was an LNP government that signed the intergovernmental agreement in relation to the launch of the NDIS. It was the LNP which funded the \$868 million to help roll out the NDIS here in Queensland. It was the LNP government that signed the heads of agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth on the NDIS, and it was the LNP government that agreed in principle to the national benchmarks for a National Injury Insurance Scheme.

As we said at the time—

However, we do not believe the government has adopted the best model for the NIIS here in Queensland.

As we indicated at the time—

The government's preferred model is more expensive, does not satisfy certain loopholes in relation to lump sums and minimum national benchmarks, and ignores the advice of the vast majority of people who presented to the various committees throughout the inquiry process.

There were two options—option A and option B. Through the NIIS inquiry process, option A, a lifetime care and support scheme, came at a cost of \$60 per vehicle and option B, the hybrid scheme, came at a cost of \$76 per vehicle. We note the concerns raised at the time that all stakeholders and groups opposed those particular elements of option B, which was the hybrid scheme which the government eventually endorsed. There were only two groups that endorsed the government's option B. As I said, all the disability support advocate groups and social services groups opposed the government's option B proposal. They all wanted option A, but there were two groups in Queensland that did support the government's hybrid scheme—Maurice Blackburn Lawyers and the Australian Lawyers Alliance.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Beaudesert. As I said, all stakeholders including all the social services and the disability groups opposed option B, which was the government's preferred option. Two stakeholders—independent stakeholders, I could suggest cheekily

to the parliament, Maurice Blackburn and Australian Lawyers Alliance that represent the plaintiff lawyers across the state—preferred option B because of course it allowed all the common law claims and all the benefits that come with being a plaintiff lawyer.

If we look at the options at the time, option A, which was preferred by the LNP, was also preferred by Spinal Life Australia, Queensland Advocacy Inc., Headway Gold Coast, the Centre for National Research on Disability and Rehabilitation, Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance, the Insurance Council of Australia, the RACQ, Suncorp, QBE, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service. As Russell Nelson of Headway Gold Coast put it—

Certainly 75 per cent of initial views were that we should go option A. However, the government has chosen option B.

As I said, Australian Lawyers Alliance advocated quite strongly for option B.

As I indicated before, the bill has four broad policy objectives which amend the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act: firstly, to ensure that workers who suffer serious personal injuries as a result of workplace accidents in Queensland receive the necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support payments regardless of fault, and of course we are entirely satisfied and happy with that occurrence; and, secondly, to provide self-insurers with greater flexibility in choice, which the LNP supports. With regard to the third item, in light of the court judgement in *Byrne and People Resourcing (Qld) Pty Ltd*, commonly referred to now as the *Byrne* judgement, and *Simon Blackwood against Colin Hinder* relating to reverse contractual arrangements between the principal contractors and subcontractors with respect to fault, we do have concerns and issues with that which I will get into in a moment. The fourth element to the bill is to prevent financial hardship for injured workers by providing for an alternative indexation method for statutory compensation and common law damages entitlements, and we have no concerns about the fourth element.

The committee that reviewed the bill, the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee, could not agree that the bill be passed but made three recommendations. Both government and non-government members made statements of reservation. I commend the work of the non-government members on the committee through their thorough examination and understanding of the bill, particularly the deputy chair, the member for Broadwater, who I suspect will be speaking shortly on this bill.

All committee members on the non-government side should be commended for their interpretation of the bill, their understanding of the issues at hand and their statement of reservation because there are serious concerns—more serious after I just heard the minister speak—with respect to one particular issue which I will get into a little further. Members in this House should be even more concerned and should read the statement of reservation from the LNP members before they vote on this bill today. As I said, it was a good statement of reservation and I quote parts of it because it succinctly outlines the concerns the LNP has particular to one element of this bill. We will not be supporting the changes that reverse the *Byrne* judgement of 2014 in contractual arrangements between principal contractors and subcontractors with respect to fault. The committee statement of reservation says that it will be not only opposing it but also voting against it in the provisions of the bill.

With respect to the NIIS model, as outlined by non-government members on the committee, the LNP does not support the adoption of the hybrid model which has been adopted by this government. As I indicated before, the Australian Lawyers Alliance does get very excited by a hybrid model because its members make more money out of these arrangements. During the initial inquiry on the NIIS bill and with reference to which model would be the best and subsequent inquiry into the bill, as I said, stakeholders and disability support service providers highlighted their very significant concerns about the hybrid model, which allowed lump sum payments as opposed to the lifetime care and support model, and the impact this could have on catastrophically injured Queenslanders.

Before I get to the issue of the *Byrne* judgement, I want to highlight a couple of statistics, because this minister responsible for the workers compensation rehabilitation legislation claims the high moral ground for the Labor Party dealing with workers in this state, but the LNP made many reforms with respect to workers compensation. We invested substantially more money in things like workplace health and safety, particularly with respect to victims of asbestos. We gave money to the organisations that advocate on behalf of asbestos victims. We also engaged and put on the agenda the quad bike safety reviews that were happening and the serious issues with quad bikes. I remember going out to Roma and inspecting some of the new inventions with quad bike vehicles to ensure that we could keep Queenslanders safe, particularly those in rural and regional Queensland working on farms because the number of quad bike fatalities is far too great in this state.

Mr Krause: Presumptive legislation.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Beaudesert about the presumptive legislation with respect to firefighters and rural firefighters in this state. With the LNP in government, Queensland workplaces became safer. Despite our changes, the Labor Party and this minister claim—this minister was not here in the last government; she spent a little time in the wilderness tracking for a period of time, but she is back—now that—

Mr Rickuss: She had a bit of a sabbatical.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. The Minister for Employment claims that the Labor Party is the best friend of workers in this state. However, she needs to look at the statistics. I note that the departmental officials sitting over there will be able to get these statistics, bearing in mind they were the ones who prepared this document titled 'If you're a worker in Queensland we've got you covered'. That was the LNP document dealing with the Queensland workers compensation scheme. That document states—

The strong focus on safety has seen Queensland record an 18.9 per cent reduction in incidents of serious work related injuries over the most recent five-year reporting period.

There has been nearly a 20 per cent reduction in serious work related injuries for three out of five years under the LNP government. It continues—

Queensland is the second most improved jurisdiction for serious injury rates in Australia, with high-risk industries seeing significant improvements. Priority industry sectors have seen reductions in the serious injury rate of 21.7 per cent for the agriculture sector, 25.2 per cent for the construction sector, 29.6 per cent for manufacturing—

so nearly a 30 per cent reduction in serious injury rates in the manufacturing sector under the LNP government—

and 22.9 per cent in the transport sector.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: For the members of the Labor Party who may not understand workers compensation law and who may not understand the serious injury rates when we are talking about fatalities, it is really childish for them to be interjecting on such an important matter and making categorically stupid interjections on a matter that is quite serious.

Ms Grace: I didn't even hear what he said.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the minister. If he did not hear what I said then he ought not—

Ms Grace: You didn't hear what he said.

Mr BLEIJIE:—interject on matters that he does not know anything about. We are talking about serious workplace injuries. We are talking about fatalities in the agriculture sector and the manufacturing sector—the employment sector. As I said, the LNP took a very serious approach to workplace health and safety. In the LNP's time in government, we saw the largest reduction in the number of serious workplace incidents across the state.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The minister can interject, the minister can claim all she wants, but the statistics are there. The minister has to have the former minister for IR sitting beside her, helping her out on IR matters. It is her first IR bill, so the member for Woodridge has to sit there and help her out. Of course, he was the IR minister who gave us the highest workers compensation rates in Australia. He was the IR minister and the justice minister who gave us the highest SPER debts in Australia. The member for Woodridge should be ashamed of his record as IR minister. The member for Woodridge could not deal—

Ms Grace: Not as ashamed as you have been.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am proud of the fact that we have the lowest workers compensation premiums in the country. I am proud that we did it in three years. I am proud of the fact that we have had nearly a 30 per cent reduction in workplace incidents, particularly in the manufacturing sector, and a 21.7 per cent reduction in the agricultural sector. As I said, those statistics were prepared by the department. I am sure the minister, in her reply, will be able to back those figures, because those statistics are from a document prepared by the department of industrial relations when the LNP was in government. I now table that document. The minister may care to have a look at that.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, titled, 'If you're a worker in Queensland we've got you covered' [[1399](#)].

Another document, titled 'If you're an employer in Queensland we've got you covered' refers to the changes to workers compensation. This bill that is being debated today will have an impact on workers compensation premiums in the state. This document states that, as a result of the changes, the average premium rate paid by employers for the 2014 period has now been reduced to \$1.20 per \$100 of wages and that this represents a 17 per cent reduction for employers and will give Queensland the lowest average premium rate in Australia.

The lowest average premium rate in Australia was achieved under an LNP government, not a Labor government. As the government changes those policies, as it lets unions back on to worksites, as ministers do not intervene in matters of public importance—particularly with respect to the financial affairs of the state and taking an economic interest particularly in the Commonwealth Games construction site—when all of those matters are taken into account, that puts extreme pressure on our workers compensation scheme in Queensland.

This bill, particularly with regard to one amendment, which I will talk about, will also have a dramatic increase on the workers compensation scheme in Queensland. The Byrne amendment has been highlighted by the parliamentary committee and, as I said, by the member for Broadwater in her statement of reservation. Clause 5 of the bill deals with the Byrne amendment. In a nutshell, it has been the long-held view in Queensland law—and everyone in the industry knew this was the case—that a principal contractor could, by contract, negotiate with subcontractors in terms of workers compensation and if an employee had an issue then the subcontractor would have the workers compensation policy and the payment to the worker would be paid from the workers compensation policy. That determination of Byrne was challenged. The Supreme Court held that the long-held view in the industry was correct—that a principal contractor can negotiate with a subcontractor, for example, and they will have no fault with respect to the law.

The minister has now introduced legislation to reverse that. It has been long-held law in Queensland. It is everyone's interpretation of the law. All the principal contractors knew it.

Ms Grace: Maybe under you.

Mr BLEIJIE: It was not under us. We did not make changes to it. It has always been the view. The Supreme Court then confirmed that view. Now, the government has come in with this amendment to change the meaning. It is particularly concerning that in the explanatory notes, where it refers to all the consultation that the minister had, the Housing Industry Association of Queensland is mentioned. There were industry round tables set up with the HIA. However, in the committee hearings, both the HIA and Master Builders Queensland said that this element of the bill took them completely by surprise. They did not know about it. The minister consulted with the industry through a round table, but Master Builders Queensland and the Housing Industry Association of Queensland were not consulted with respect to this particular amendment, which impacts greatly on their members. It can have the reverse effect to what the minister is trying to achieve.

The minister says that this amendment is all about the workers. As I said, it has been a long-held view that the principal contractors will not be held liable if they have entered into a binding contract with subcontractors or anyone else. That has been the long-held view. If the minister takes out this provision, principal contractors do not have WorkCover compensation policies. We will have the situation in which the bill will pass and there will be principal contractors without insurance policies, so the workers will not be covered as much as they are covered under the current situation.

It is particularly concerning that in the last five minutes of her presentation to the House the minister noted the committee's recommendation. Even the committee had reservations with respect to this particular amendment. The committee could not reach agreement that the bill be passed. The government put in a statement of reservation saying, 'We think that the Byrne amendment in the bill should be passed. However, we really need to consult with industry third parties, WorkCover and the building industry.' The minister has just confirmed that she is going to have that consultation. Why did the minister not consult with the building industry before the bill was introduced?

Ms Grace: It has already happened. You're misleading the House.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the minister. She says that it has already happened and I am misleading the House. Were Master Builders Queensland and the Housing Industry Association misleading the parliamentary committee when they said that the first they heard of it was when the bill was introduced into parliament? Who is misleading? Is it the minister misleading the parliament or is it the Housing Industry Association, or is it Master Builders Queensland?

I take that interjection where the minister said that I was misleading the House. She said that the consultation has already happened, yet 10 minutes ago the minister stood in here and said, 'We will have consultation pursuant to the committee recommendation.' I am confused. Who has been told what? Who has been consulted? Who knows what? What is going on? This bill overrides the Byrne decision in the Supreme Court. The minister has just acknowledged that she will consult with industry now, but then through an interjection she says that it has already happened. In her reply, the minister has to be clear with the House. Did the consultation occur with respect to the Byrne amendment? I take that little smile as a no and as a gotcha. Was the Housing Industry Association specifically consulted on this amendment? Was Master Builders Queensland specifically consulted on this amendment? The committee report states—

The Explanatory Notes state a Stakeholder Reference Group ... was established. The ... HIA was listed as a member of the SRG. At a public hearing on July 18, when asked about consultation, HIA Executive Director Warwick Temby confirmed that the SRG was not consulted on the Byrne issue.

He stated—

There was consultation on the NIIS aspects of the bill, but absolutely none on the Byrne issue.

I repeat—

There was consultation on the NIIS aspects of the bill, but absolutely none on the Byrne issue.

The report states further—

In their submission and at the same hearing, Corlia Roos, of Master Builders' Queensland (MBQ) indicated the first MBQ had heard about the proposed changes was upon the introduction of the bill.

She stated—

We have not been consulted on the bill, on the drafting of the wording or on the bill itself, until it was posted on the parliamentary website.

We have the industry group saying that it was not consulted. We have the parliamentary committee saying that there should be further consultation. We have the non-government members on the committee saying that this clause should not go ahead until that consultation has occurred. We then had 10 minutes ago the minister standing in this place saying that she will consult and then in an interjection saying that consultation has already happened.

The minister has to end the confusion. She has all the answers to this question. She can tell us all who was consulted and on what provisions of this bill they were consulted. If it is the case that these groups were consulted, the minister can take particular actions with respect to misrepresentation to parliamentary committees.

I quoted directly from these particular organisations that said that they were not consulted on the Byrne amendment itself. It also has to be noted that, when pushed in the departmental briefing on the extent of its consultation, representatives from Queensland Treasury indicated that they did not give consideration to whether MBQ should be included in the consultation on the draft bill. The departmental officials cited discussions had pre 2010 which included Master Builders Queensland. We have a bill introduced in 2016 and the department says there were some discussions held pre 2010 which included Master Builders. I suspect the discussions in 2010 did not involve the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016.

It also shows a blatant disregard on behalf of the government, a snubbing of a major stakeholder and demonstrates the continued arrogance of this government. Further, department officials indicated, when pressed by members on the committee about this particular issue and lack of consultation, that they did not want a room full of people to work through some of these issues. A flippant response, I suggest, which smacks of arrogance if ever I have seen it. We believe that this bill and significantly reversing the Byrne judgement hurts those who this government claims to represent the most—workers. It has been standard industry practice for a number of years that principal contractors would include clauses that this bill seeks to nullify, known as the harmless clauses. The effect of these clauses is to ensure who is responsible for an injured worker on a construction site and how they are to be insured. The Byrne judgement validated this longstanding industry practice and the validity of those clauses. As I said, the Master Builders have expressed significant concern with respect to this element of the bill, and I quote—

Again, I wish to point out that, at the root of this issue, is the fact that principal contractors and host employers, including group training organisations that employ apprentices specifically, are all excluded from WorkCover coverage. Hence we now have this very complex situation where, if an injured worker of a subcontractor on a site makes a common law damages claim against both his own employer and a principal contractor, that claim, as far as the principal contractor is concerned, sits outside of the principal contractor's, or host employer's, WorkCover policy.

We are actually damaging the worker, particularly those on work sites, with these amendments. We should not be passing legislation or particular clauses of legislation where the minister says, 'Let's just pass it today and we will worry about it later.' Has the minister not heard of unintended consequences? Has the minister not heard of rushing legislation without any consultation? These industry groups and stakeholders, having now consulted through the committee process, being engaged by the committee not the minister, have major concerns in relation to this particular reform. The minister simply flippantly says, 'We will worry about it after the bill passes.' 'Let's get the bill passed,' she said, 'and then we'll talk to industry and stakeholders.' That is not how to approach this particular issue.

This is a significant issue because if one looks in the explanatory notes with respect to how much this will cost, it is indicated that it will not cost the government anything. With an anti-business, anti-jobs government, who does it always cost? Let me quote page 4 of the explanatory notes where it says—

The legislative amendment to reverse the effect of the *Byrne* decision and prohibit the contractual transfer of liability from principals to contractors will save WorkCover Queensland an estimated \$40 million per annum.

If it is saving WorkCover Queensland that means it is costing businesses \$40 million. As if the Labor government are going to save a government agency \$40 million and not pass it on to someone! If you have an anti-business, socialist government in Queensland where is the fee going to be passed on? It will be passed on to businesses that can least afford it. We currently have a situation that is fair and reasonable. Contractors can negotiate and enter into discussion with respect to those particular provisions. We will be opposing clause 5 of the bill which reverses the *Byrne* amendment. We do not think it is fair. We do not think it is good practice to pass a provision in this bill that I do not think the minister really even understands. She does not understand the unintended consequences of this amendment.

I will put it as simply as I can: the minister has introduced a bill into this House which contains a small provision of only a paragraph or two, but sometimes those paragraphs, as small as they are, have severe unintended consequences—or is it an intended consequence? Perhaps the government knew exactly what it was doing and this is an intended consequence of its legislative amendment. The minister introduces this bill and puts on page 7 of the explanatory notes that they are going to amend the meaning of damages to the effect of reversing the *Byrne* decision. Then it is confirmed through the committee process that no consultation occurred on that particular part of the bill. Then the minister says in parliament that she will consult after the bill goes through, but then says that consultation on those provisions has already occurred. There is so much confusion around that. I put it to members that that is because the minister does not understand this portfolio responsibility and how it operates. I can understand the minister may know the industrial relations framework from a union perspective, being a union heavyweight herself.

Ms Grace: You bet, and I'm proud of it.

Mr BLEIJIE: I know you are proud of it. That is why I said it. I take the interjection of your motivation for these types of bills. I submit to the House that the Minister for Employment does not quite get the business side of these legislative amendments, does not quite get the unintended consequences, but certainly understands the union imperative for these provisions. She certainly understands where her bread is buttered in terms of the union movement in Queensland.

We have a situation where the minister has not got a clue of the unintended consequences, we have a situation where she is receiving advice from the member for Woodridge who did not understand industrial relations policy and gave Queensland one of the highest rates of workers compensation fees and taxes. He was very proud of that. As I said, we have a minister who does not quite get it. I thank the non-government members of the committee and look forward to the debate ensuing. We will be opposing clause 5 of this bill for the reasons, firstly, that it is not good policy and, secondly, we think the provisions should be deferred until proper consultation has occurred with industry about the unintended consequences. I want to know from the minister who she specifically consulted about the *Byrne* amendment. She confirmed in an interjection that consultation did take place.

Ms Grace: No, I did not confirm it.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes, you did. Hansard took the interjection. It is all on record. I made a particular allegation that the minister has not consulted with respect to the *Byrne* amendment. The minister interjected. All of that happened. If the minister does not want me to take interjections she ought not open her mouth and give the interjection in the first place. We know how interjections can sometimes get you into trouble. Sometimes it is best just to sit there and not say anything. It is all on the parliamentary record. I can imagine down on level A of the old building the ministerial advisers will be

coming up with the excuse of why the minister said that, why she did not say that. They will be shaking their heads and preparing her little speech and giving everyone a great explanation as to why she said what she said in the parliament.

I look forward to that because it does need an explanation. I do not care what sort of explanation it is; I just want any form of explanation as to what she said. It is pretty clear. It is pretty easy. On this side of the House we want to know why the industry, Master Builders and the HIA were not consulted on the Byrne amendment, what are the unintended consequences of the Byrne amendment and why are they going to consult with industry after they pass the legislation. I would have thought one would consult prior to the amendments taking place rather than pass legislation and then consult with the industry after it. It is too late to consult with the industry after the fact. Why bother standing in this place wasting everyone's time saying, 'I am going to have these discussions with the industry,' when the bill is being debated now? Why even bother having the amendment?

When this minister consults with industry—well, I doubt she does consult with industry. I can assure the House that, if members look at her ministerial diary, they will see a lot of meetings with unions but not too many with business groups. We know what the CCIQ thinks of the Treasurer.

Mr Costigan: Not much.

Mr BLEIJIE: Not much; I take the interjection from the honourable member for Whitsunday. We know what the CCIQ thinks of the Treasurer. I do not think I have seen a time in Queensland when the major small business group in Queensland has all but given a vote of no confidence in the state's Treasurer. It does not give you too much confidence for businesses in this state going forward, when at this juncture the man responsible for the state's finances, for giving businesses a leg up in this state and for making sure that investors and so forth come to Queensland, does not have the confidence of the business community. That is telling. Knowing the CCIQ and other groups as I do and knowing how they operate, I know that it would have taken a long time for them to decide to make those public statements. Like all organisations, they understand that they have to work with governments of all political persuasions; they have to work with everyone. Therefore, for the CCIQ to publicly condemn the Treasurer is quite telling of this government in general.

As I said earlier, when we come to consider the particular provisions in detail I will talk more about the Byrne amendment. We want to know about the \$40 million that WorkCover will be saved. Where will that money go? Who will be required to pay that \$40 million? Is that going to be put on industry now? I ask the minister, once this amendment goes through, what has industry been told will be the liabilities of principal contributors? How will one principal contractor take out insurance, considering that, until this amendment goes through, they do not have to do that? After this bill goes through, I would love to be a fly on the wall when the minister sits down with the major principal contractors, the HIA and the Master Builders, possibly next week—we do not know when it will be, but she has said she will consult with them—and says, 'Look, fellows and women, we have passed this amendment. It will cost'—

Mr Cripps: You should ask to go along.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. I would love to invite. This is a consultative government. Members will remember that they said they were going to be a consultative government. In fact, when the minister introduced this bill I recall that she saw me in the hallway on level 5. She pulled me aside and said, 'Whatever you need to know about the bill, let me know and we will assist.' I take up that invitation, although I did not want to know too much about the bill because I understand it more than the minister. However, I would love to be in the meeting that the minister will have for further consultation. Just for humour, I want to tag along and hear the explanation.

If we role played this, this is how it would unfold: the minister would have the big round table with the stakeholders, the HIA and the Master Builders. They would be very courteous and pleasant. The water and the cups of tea would be out. The minister would engage in discussions, saying, 'We passed this bill last week.' The Master Builders and the HIA would say, 'Yes, Minister. We see you passed the bill. We did have concerns that we weren't consulted. We note that you said we were consulted, but we weren't consulted. It is going to cost our industry approximately \$40 million. Minister, how do we explain to our members about this provision?' The minister would reply, 'It's okay. We are consulting on this particular provision now. Before any issues or unintended consequences come about, we will consult.' Then the Master Builders and the HIA would assume that, based on their feedback, the minister will come in here and amend this provision. I cannot see that happening.

As my good friends the members for Whitsunday and Hervey Bay would know, they have tag-along tours on Fraser Island and up in the Whitsundays. I want to join the tag-along tour, with the HIA and the Master Builders, to Minister Grace's office. I want to hear the Minister for

Employment explain to those in the industry how they are now going to cover the cost of the \$40 million changes to workers compensation because of an amendment moved in this House on which they had no consultation.

Let us be serious: consulting after the event is too late. This minister is paying lip service to the industry. The minister knows that she and her department did not consult with the industry. The minister knows she should have consulted with the industry. The minister knows it is all too late now. The minister knows that they are locked into this provision. The minister knows that her preselection is reliant on the support of the union movement in Queensland. Interestingly, if anyone wants to look at the influence of the union movement in Queensland, they ought to look at the recent ECQ returns for the Australian Labor Party's Queensland division. They will find hundreds of thousands, indeed, millions of dollars from the Queensland union movement to the Queensland Labor Party. That is not exerting influence; that is owning and buying the influence of the Labor Party. There were also a couple of donations from Maurice Blackburn Lawyers. No doubt they have no interest in the common-law provisions of this particular bill, either.

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order. I know that the member for Kawana cannot hold a policy debate for any more than one minute, but can I claim relevance and bring him back to the main substance of the bill?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): There is no point of order. You may continue, member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: There might not be a point of order, but I take the interjection anyway. The minister claims that plaintiff lawyers have nothing to do with the workers compensation bill before the House. If I asked the shadow Attorney-General whether lawyers have anything to do with workers compensation law in the state of Queensland, I suspect the answer would be quite a lot, considering they made submissions to the parliamentary committee inquiry on these particular provisions of the bill.

The Byrne amendment is bad policy. It is bad policy to say that you are going to consult after the fact. As I said, the LNP does support the NIIS. We were the ones who signed the contract. We were the ones who handed over \$800 million and signed the agreements for the NDIS and the NIIS. We understand that. However, in terms of the implementation of the plans and the policy, there is a fundamental difference between how the Labor Party wants to implement that policy and how the LNP wants to do it.

As I have said, the HIA is concerned about these particular provisions. As part of the inquiry process, on 7 July the HIA's Warwick Temby wrote to the research director to express concerns about these particular provisions. He stated—

... the approach taken in the Bill ignores the fundamental principal behind workers compensation being a no fault insurance scheme, by laying part or all of the responsibility and cost of a workplace injury onto a business via a recovery action by the workers compensation insurer, typically against the business' public liability insurance.

They appreciated the opportunity to comment on the bill, although only through the committee process and not through the minister. They did not comment on the NIIS, but they did say that they have concerns with the provisions of the bill that 'will void contractual indemnities provided between businesses about the liability for injury claims'. I look forward to returning after dinner to continue the debate.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Newlands Coalmine, Fatality

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (5.57 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. It is with deep sadness that I must inform the House that this morning a miner died at the Newlands coalmine, located 140 kilometres north-west of Mackay. I extend my deepest sympathies to the mine worker's family, friends and colleagues at this most difficult and trying time.

I have been advised that the mine operator, Glencore, has ceased operations and is undertaking appropriate action to secure the site and support the workforce. Mines inspectors from my Department of Natural Resources and Mines are on site and will investigate and report to the Coroner. As I said, his family has my heartfelt sympathy.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.58 pm): I advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, to vary the committee responsible for the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 from the Finance and Administration Committee to the Transportation and Utilities Committee, to report by 10 October 2016; and the Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016 from the Agriculture and Environment Committee to the Finance and Administration Committee, to report by 28 November 2016.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Correction to *Notice Paper*

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I advise that today's *Notice Paper* incorrectly records a notice of motion for the House to take note of report No. 24 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee tabled on 26 August 2016. This report is on the committee's inquiry on the Abortion Law Reform (Woman's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill and the concurrent inquiry referred by the House on 26 May 2016. In accordance with sessional order 2(1), the time allocated for debate of committee reports does not include a committee report on a bill tabled pursuant to part 5 of the standing orders. The inclusion of this report for debate was an administrative error. I have asked the Clerk to delete the entry and republish today's *Notice Paper*.

MOTION

Carmichael Mine

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes the Federal Court has dismissed an Australian Conservation Foundation case against Adani's \$16 billion Carmichael mine;
2. supports the development of Adani's Carmichael mine and other new thermal coal mines in Queensland; and
3. calls on the Palaszczuk government to prioritise its commitment to Land Court reform to expedite the consideration of resource projects in Queensland.

Before I speak to the motion, I wish to associate myself with the ministerial statement made just a few moments ago by the Minister for Mines.

Yesterday the Federal Court dismissed yet another legal challenge to the approval of Adani's Carmichael coalmine project in the Galilee Basin in Central Queensland. The Federal Court decision dispensed with another manufactured case by a green activist group—on this occasion the Australian Conservation Foundation—which cumulatively has been a gross abuse of our legal system.

This decision takes to more than 10 the number of appeals and judicial processes brought on by green activist groups in opposition to Adani's Carmichael coalmine project, the proponents of which have had to navigate multiple approval processes at several levels of government, in addition to community consultation that has spanned over six years. This has been a relentless, ideologically driven campaign.

In fact, the 'lawfare' waged against Adani's Carmichael coalmine project has been one of the most coordinated, sophisticated and well-funded campaigns ever run by a collective of green activist groups against an economic development project in Queensland. However, what is certain is that that is a template on which we can expect future campaigns by the green activists to prevent future job creation opportunities to be based.

While yesterday's ruling was in the Federal Court, it was not so long ago that Adani's Carmichael coalmine project was subject to the same frivolous and vexatious objections from green activist groups in Queensland's courts after they had been subject to a full and rigorous approvals process, intentionally delaying progress, investment, the issuing and awarding of tender contracts, delivery of critical infrastructure and the creation of jobs. These critical years have been ones in which Central and North Queensland have been crying out for that investment, those contracts, those jobs and those

opportunities. We have had very lacklustre, half-hearted, lukewarm support for Adani's Carmichael coalmine project from the Palaszczuk government over the last 18 months. In fact, Labor has focused on making it harder for resource projects to get approved.

In the wake of a project potentially worth \$16 billion to Queensland's economy jumping another green activist legal hurdle yesterday, there was dead silence from the Palaszczuk government—not a single word from anyone welcoming the Federal Court's decision. The LNP welcomes the Federal Court's decision. We welcome this critical step towards those jobs, that investment and those opportunities for Queensland.

Over the last 18 months the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has dithered, the Deputy Premier has equivocated and the Minister for Environment has taken cover behind his bureaucrats. Labor shuns the investment in the resources sector in Queensland because it is compromised by its dependence on the Greens to cling to office. Greens preferences are Labor's life support system.

The Palaszczuk government has deliberately increased the potential exposure of resource sector project proponents to additional 'lawfare' actions in Queensland by paving the way for objections by unrelated third parties in the ordinary notification and objection process and proposals that go through the full Coordinator-General's assessment process. This means more protracted, expensive court proceedings in Queensland courts.

This has negatively impacted on Queensland's reputation as a jurisdiction in which to invest in the resources sector. It means more uncertainty, less investment, fewer jobs and lost opportunities, particularly in regional Queensland where we need them most. With our resource sector competing globally for investment with other resource jurisdictions, this cost of doing business in Queensland is one that we cannot afford.

We have a politically impotent mines minister who, while imposing more red tape and regulation on Queensland's resources sector, has repeatedly committed himself to pursuing Land Court reform, to increase its capacity to deal with matters relating to resource projects. However, in the last state budget we found that in fact the minister is not responsible for the budget allocation relating to this reform initiative.

The resources to improve the capacity of the Land Court are squirreled away in the Attorney-General's portfolio and will have to compete with other workforce management priorities within the Queensland judicial system. At the same time that this minister is exposing the resources sector to more opportunities for 'lawfare' there is no guarantee that he can deliver on the Land Court reform that he has committed to. It is time to get real. This government has to start facilitating sensible investment in the Queensland resources sector.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion that has been moved. Before I commence my contribution, I extend my condolences to the family, friends and work mates of the coalminer who died in North Queensland today.

This government is committed to strong and sustainable regional communities and that means jobs and business opportunities. We have an economic strategy to achieve that and the first element of that is backing our traditional powerhouse industries of resources and agriculture because they will continue to underpin this state's economy.

The resources sector is a massive contributor to the economy and the communities of North Queensland. According to the Queensland Resources Council, the industry directly provides \$590 million in wages to more than 5½ thousand full-time employees. The industry spends \$942 million on goods and services and community contributions, supporting almost 4½ thousand local businesses. Most importantly, the industry in the north contributes \$200 million in royalties to the state. That is not including the flow-on benefits—that is, an extra 15,000 employees supported indirectly.

I am very happy to support this motion because North Queensland supports the resources sector, it supports thermal coalmining and it supports the Carmichael coal and rail project.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Whitsunday, you will have an opportunity to participate in the debate. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will also have an opportunity to participate in the debate.

Mrs O'ROURKE: There are those who might ask how a government that has a strong commitment to climate change action can continue to support thermal coalmining. There is no doubt that Queensland's and the world's future hinges on moving away from fossil fuels, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating a low carbon economy.

The International Energy Agency forecasts that global demand for thermal coal will increase on average 25 million tonnes a year out to 2040. Gas demand will rise and eventually renewables will overtake coal as the largest source of electricity in the early 2030s. This means Queensland has a market into the future for its coal, which generates critical jobs and business opportunities—including in North Queensland.

Importantly, our high-quality thermal coal offers a lower carbon emissions pathway in a world where coal continues to be used. That is coal from Collinsville, Burton, Moorvale, Callide, Blackwater, Isaac Plains, Curragh and potentially the coal from the Carmichael coal and rail project.

Not only do we support the Carmichael project and the coal industry, we are actively supporting innovation to help these and other Queensland miners stay competitive in the global marketplace. That is why our \$405 million Advance Queensland strategy is a massive investment in innovation to keep our traditional industries, including mining, strong and competitive. That is why we invested \$6 million over four years to support a \$20 million national growth centre for the mining equipment, technology and services sector at QUT.

We invested because we want to see our resources sector continue to compete globally with the world-leading technology and techniques that our METS sector provides. Let me make this clear: we support the sustainable development of the coal industry and the Galilee Basin. We can do that because, unlike those opposite, we are able to manage economic development sustainably. There are green shoots appearing in the resources sector at the same time as we are protecting the Great Barrier Reef. That is the Great Barrier Reef that supports 69,000 jobs and is worth close to \$6 billion to the Queensland economy. The Abbot Point coal port is ready to be expanded for increased exports from the Galilee but with no sea dumping of capital dredge material and protection for the nationally significant Caley Valley Wetlands. Balance can be achieved and North Queensland will be the beneficiary.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the motion. Like the previous speakers—the shadow minister and other speakers—I, too, join with members in expressing my sorrow and, indeed, my sympathy following the news today out of Glenden, that great mining town in the Bowen Basin where today we have lost a coalminer. He was 55 years of age I understand. I am sure I speak for all members in the House here tonight in saying that our thoughts and prayers are with the family and loved ones of the deceased. This is no doubt going to be felt not only in Glenden, which is a close-knit community west of Mackay—the city I represent—but, indeed, right across the Bowen Basin from Moura in the south to Collinsville in the north and, of course, in our coastal community where many of our mineworkers commute from in the discharge of their duties.

We have just heard the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland rattling off how the Palaszczuk Labor government claims to support the coalmining industry. I just wonder how many coalmining communities has the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland been to? When was she last in Collinsville, Moranbah, Glenden, Dysart, Tieri, Emerald, Blackwater and Moura? When was the minister last in those communities, listening to the people in those communities? When was the minister last there? Those people in those communities and, indeed, those on the coast are passionate about the coalmining sector. There are a lot of people in regional Queensland hurting right now. They are looking to the Palaszczuk Labor government to see the development of the Galilee Basin and the Carmichael mine. It is a \$16 billion project. We keep talking about it but nothing happens.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: I take the interjection from my good friend the shadow minister for tourism, sport and racing, the member for Beaudesert: we are not seeing much. This was first talked about, I think, in November 2010 when a story first appeared in the *Australian Financial Review* about this big mine in the Galilee Basin, the yet to be developed Galilee Basin. People on the coast and in the coalfields are fed up with court battle after court battle. There was certainly a great result this week. I welcome the Federal Court decision to reject the legal challenge by the Australian Conservation Foundation to stop the Carmichael project. It is a smackdown not only for the Australian Conservation Foundation but also for their mates in the Capricorn Conservation Council, the North Queensland Conservation Council, and the Mackay Conservation Group and Dr Patricia Julien—doctor who?

Fair-minded, decent people including blue collar conservatives, people in the coalmining industry, are now perhaps better informed than ever about members opposite and the fact that we have a government elected here on the back of Green preferences. If the Greens had their way, they would block coalmining. They would block any development of coalmines. There would be no thermal coal expansion to take millions, if not billions, of people from the subcontinent in Asia out of poverty.

An opposition member: The lights would go out.

Mr COSTIGAN: The lights would go out. We flick the switch, Mr Speaker, in your office, my office, our homes, our factories—all over the place. We take it for granted. As for the price—

An opposition member: And air conditioning.

Mr COSTIGAN: And air conditioning. I think the price is another issue altogether. In terms of having access, we take it for granted, don't we? What about those poor people who would like to have power? What about those people who would like to have a light, who would like something to cook with, who would like to have a hot shower? When it comes to the Greens, people in regional Queensland, in communities that I represent, have had enough. That includes people who historically vote for the Australian Labor Party. People who have been traditional Labor supporters are coming up to me saying, 'Our mob has lost their way.' I say, 'Hear, hear!' for sure. It was interesting to hear my good friend, my fellow North Queenslander, the shadow minister, in his contribution to the debate tonight describe the response from the Palaszczuk Labor government in the wake of the Federal Court decision yesterday: the silence was deafening.

I am proud to stand up for the coalmining sector. There is no doubt that the world is changing but coal will always be in our energy mix. That is the data that is coming out of the United States and around the world. There is no doubt that there are great opportunities for the state of Queensland, particularly regional Queensland and my home town of Mackay and across the Mackay-Whitsunday region and further afield. There is no doubt that people in our communities are looking to the Minister for State Development to press the go button on those secondary approvals for railway, airfield, water and power. They want to see action. They were very patient and now their patience has worn thin. I support the motion tonight because I am proud to stand up for the coalmining sector.

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (6.14 pm): I start by joining with other members of this House in offering my condolences to the family and friends of the man who sadly died today at Glencore's Newlands open-cut mine operation near Glenden. I am sure the thoughts of all members of this House are with his family and friends right now.

I rise to speak in support of the motion. Let us be clear: the Palaszczuk government is a strong advocate for the responsible and sustainable development of our mining sector and has considered applications relating to the Carmichael mine in an open, transparent, efficient manner and in accordance with law. On 3 April this year it was the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines who announced the approval of the mining leases for this game-changing project for the north, not the member for Hinchinbrook. Interestingly, when the member for Hinchinbrook was the relevant minister, the applications for these mining leases just sat in his department. For a then government which claims to be so pro-Adani, there was a distinct lack of approvals being granted by those opposite. The question must be asked: did the member for Hinchinbrook as minister do anything to advance the approval of the mining leases?

On this side of the House we have been responsible in the way we have dealt with the Carmichael mine project. It was the Palaszczuk government that reached an agreement to have dredge spoil dumped on land at T2 and not on the Caley Valley Wetlands as proposed by those opposite.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I wish to hear the member's contribution.

Mr RYAN: It was the Palaszczuk government that restored balanced community objection rights after they were ripped away by the previous LNP government. Yesterday, the Federal Court dismissed the Australian Conservation Foundation's application for judicial review of the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment's approval for the project. I note that this matter was considered by the Federal Court. It considered a federal government's decision made by the federal LNP government. This is the second time the Federal Court was asked to adjudicate on this matter. The first time the Commonwealth LNP minister, an LNP mate of those opposite, decided to withdraw his decision as he made a mistake. This decision, which is still subject to appeal, and another which will be heard in the Federal Court are the responsibility of the federal LNP government.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Hinchinbrook, you have had your chance.

Mr RYAN: Have we heard a single word from the member for Hinchinbrook or from his federal LNP mates on this issue? Has he asked them to reform the Federal Court? Has he asked them to remove the right of community groups to appeal those decisions? No, not a word. He is doing the same as he did when the coal price went through the floor—he is doing nothing.

In the state courts, there are three court actions currently being considered. There is a judicial review of the environmental authority for the mine, a judicial review of the environmental authority for the T0 at Abbot Point and a judicial review against the decision to grant the mining leases. Let's be frank: all three of these judicial reviews would have occurred under the LNP's framework—all three. In terms of expediting this project, those opposite were impotent. I know that the minister and the Attorney-General are working to review current Land Court arrangements and automatic referrals to deliver efficiencies. I also welcome the comments of the new President of the Land Court, Ms Fleur Kingham, who has indicated that the court will undertake a strategic assessment of its functions and processes to develop a progressive pathway forward.

The work by the Land Court and their staff is much valued by this government and we will ensure that we will work with the court to deliver reforms that benefit Queensland as a whole. The Palaszczuk government will consult widely in making sure the changes will work in the best interests of the parties and the court.

I support the motion but, before resuming my seat, can I remind the House that the award-winning Banksia Beach State School big band will be performing in the Speaker's Hall at the conclusion of this debate, and I encourage all members to attend.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.20 pm): I, too, would like to join with the shadow minister and the Minister for Mines in passing on my condolences and those of the opposition in relation to the dreadful tragedy that has occurred today in Central Queensland.

I will move on now to the motion moved in this House by my good friend the member for Hinchinbrook. First of all, I need to touch on just a couple of comments that were made by the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. She made some statements that I do not believe can go unaddressed. Whilst I appreciate she was reading the notes she had before her, I do not think she realised what she was saying. It shows that she has a complete lack of understanding on this issue. She stood in the House and said something like she supports it and the Palaszczuk government are doing everything they can towards supporting this very important Adani mine in the Galilee Basin. This is a minister who sits around the cabinet table. She is obviously on the same side of the cabinet table as Minister Lynham and maybe the Minister for Police over there; he seems to be quite supportive of it as well. Of course, there is that deep division amongst that cabinet because there are those who strongly support the Greens to secure those votes that they need—and, of course, that is the member for South Brisbane and the member for Mount Coot-tha. This minister made those statements and she does not even realise that it was her government—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am sorry, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. There is too much discussion across the chamber. We will wait, members.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: She sits around that cabinet table but it was actually her government that dumped our good plan in relation to the Galilee Basin development strategy, a strategy that would have facilitated the future development of the Galilee Basin and grown the Queensland economy. However, that is something that those opposite do not seem to care about. They do not care about the jobs in Queensland—full stop—let alone the jobs in North Queensland. They certainly do not understand how much this project would do for the economy and the mums and dads all over Queensland.

I do need to touch on something that the member for Morayfield got completely wrong. I do note that he was there diligently reading his notes. He probably did not do his fact checks. It is in relation to the dumping of the dredge spoil. It was actually the Bligh Labor government that—

Opposition members: And Kate Jones.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—sorry, and Kate Jones. That is a good point. Thank you. I will take that interjection. She was the environment minister who allowed a proposal to dump 35 million cubic metres offshore. It was Kate Jones, the member for Ashgrove, when she was the minister for environment who put that proposal forward. Who was in government at that stage? It was the Bligh Labor government.

Guess who looked at that proposal and said, 'We do not support that'? It was the now shadow minister when he was the minister for mines and those on this side of the House. When we were in government we reduced that down to how much? It was only three million cubic metres. The difference in that was 32 million cubic metres.

Those opposite choose not to listen when the facts are on the table because they know full well who the environmental crusaders of Queensland are. That is the LNP. It is us who understand that good people—mums and dads—need jobs. That is why we support—strongly support—good development all over Queensland. That takes me to why we are pleading with those opposite to do something about groups such as the Environmental Defenders Office to whom those opposite give all the money. They are the ones who in this year's budget have funded the reason why we cannot get this lifesaving project up for people—mums and dads—who need this all across Queensland. I support the motion before the House.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. I thank the environmental crusader, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The resources sector, including our internationally competitive coal industry, has historically been the workhorse of this state and will continue to be a significant contributor for decades to come. This government has a plan for Queensland's economy to be Australia's strongest and most diverse, and the resources sector is part of that plan. This government has given tangible and continuing practical support to the resources sector as a whole including thermal coal because we support this industry.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: Let me tell the member for Southern Downs what we have done. Earlier this year I announced a 50 per cent expenditure concession for mineral and coal explorers over the next two years. At close of business yesterday my department of natural resources had 350 applications and had approved concessions of more than \$30 million. We have done that because we know if there is no exploration, there is no future mining, unlike those opposite and in particular the member for Hinchinbrook. On his watch, exploration expenditure declined by 70 per cent. As I said before, he sat around and did nothing.

In November last year we joined with the industry to form the North-West Minerals Province Taskforce, which will soon deliver its recommendations. I personally worked very hard to ensure the northern gas pipeline from the Northern Territory came to Queensland. We have developed and released the state's first annual exploration plan. We have, as the member for Morayfield mentioned, provided extra funds to the Land Court and appointed a new Land Court president. Most significantly, we have progressed Adani's Carmichael coal and rail project. In fact, since early 2015, 22 key Commonwealth, state and local government approvals have been made on the projects and 29 key milestones have been reached. The most important point is that we granted those leases, not the member for Hinchinbrook opposite. We granted those leases.

I note that the motion calls for support for other thermal coalmine projects. The member for Hinchinbrook should make sure that he has the support of all his own members over there regarding thermal coalmine projects because it is my understanding that a member opposite opposes a thermal coalmine. Let's hear of the support of the member for Nanango for development of a thermal coalmine in her own electorate. Let's hear her support for that. What is the support there? The *South Burnett Times* reports that she does not support a thermal coalmine. What is it, Deputy Leader of the Opposition? Will we see the member and her constituents use the objection rights that we placed back in the legislation to oppose this mine? Will we see that?

I note the member for Southern Downs calls the member for Hinchinbrook her good friend, yet he stripped away the objection rights from her community. He will stop farmers from objecting, but he has done nothing for the JRs in relation to Carmichael coal. Those JRs would have still continued under his legislation. He just attacked farmers and landholders who had their rights to object stripped away.

The member for Hinchinbrook was the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines for three years. At least one of the Carmichael Coal Mine and Rail Project lease applications was with him at that time. In that time did he ever say, 'Let's hurry this up. Let's wipe away the paperwork. Let's approve it'? No, he did not do that because the EIS was not done because you have to follow due process. You have to get it right, and that is what this government is doing; this government is getting it right. That is why this government continues to work hard to support the resources sector, including thermal coalmining, for the jobs and the business opportunities it continues to generate in the bush and in the cities. It generates business opportunities right across the state, including in my own electorate of Stafford.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106.

Sitting suspended from 6.35 pm to 7.35 pm.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION (NATIONAL INJURY INSURANCE SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3160, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (7.35 pm), continuing: Prior to being rudely interrupted by the dinner break I was talking about the LNP's support for the majority elements of the bill and highlighting some of the major issues behind the bill; however, the dinner break did give me an opportunity to say hello to the former member for Brisbane Central, Mr Cavallucci, who was in the parliamentary precinct tonight. Hasn't Brisbane Central gone downhill since Mr Cavallucci hasn't been in that seat?

An honourable member: He'll be back!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the honourable member. He will be back and we will once again have great representation for the people of Brisbane Central, particularly with respect to employment and all sorts of issues that currently face the electors of Brisbane Central.

Ms Grace: You are the reason why he is not here!

Mr BLEIJIE: Annastacia Palaszczuk will be the reason you are not here after the election and Jackie Trad will be the reason you are not here after the election; I guarantee you that. I guarantee that the member for Mulgrave will be the reason you are not in government after the next election—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Order! We have all had a bit too much sugar at the dinner break, have we?

Mr BLEIJIE: As I was saying, the LNP always oppose retrospective provisions.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I would take your interjection but I frankly do not know who you are, so I cannot take your interjection, I am sorry. So insignificant is your contribution to this place that I do not know who you are. I am sorry, but I cannot take your interjection. I would love to, and members on this side of the House—

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you to rule on the issue of relevance. That is also unparliamentary speech and the member should withdraw on the basis that it is unparliamentary. Can we bring the member back to the essence of the bill?

Mr WATTS: I rise to a point of order. If a member interjects and the interjection is taken, surely that will then be relevant. If not, the member should not be interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: The LNP will oppose retrospectivity. As I indicated with respect to clause 5 of the bill dealing with the \$40 million which will go from WorkCover to the private sector, not only do the explanatory notes indicate that the government will be reversing the decision in *Byrne*; they are going to make it retrospective. The explanatory notes state—

The Bill provides that the amendments to reverse the effect of the decision in *Byrne v People Resourcing (Qld)* ... will apply to a claim for damages started before the commencement of the amendment provisions ...

We have the absurd situation of the minister saying that she will now consult, based on the committee's recommendation 3. The minister said—it will be in *Hansard*—that she accepts committee recommendation 3 and she will go and consult with the industry. That provision is retrospective. As soon as this bill receives royal assent and the act commences, these provisions will not only start; they will apply retrospectively. Proceedings that have commenced but have not been finalised will be subject to the provisions of this legislation. Then the minister says that she is going to consult and try to sort it out later. It is too late. The provisions will have already started. Not only will they have started; they will be retrospective.

These retrospective provisions are repugnant. The LNP has always opposed retrospective provisions. We opposed them last week in relation to other legislation—the vegetation management bill, for instance—and we will always oppose them. Those in the Labor Party say that they are against retrospectivity; they just happen to include it in nearly every bill they introduce to this House. That is a problem.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I understand about retrospectivity, Minister. Ordinarily in our system of government the provisions of an act commence when a bill gets royal assent. Then the new laws apply. Retrospectivity is when the laws apply retrospectively—that is, before the act commences. It is unfair, because the law of the land is the law of the day and retrospectivity changes that.

People in particular situations, particularly principal contractors, are not required to have this level of insurance at the moment. They are not required because the Supreme Court has confirmed that they are not required to have it, but this bill says that not only should they have it but also they ought to have had it back then. It is not fair, and the minister should delete this particular provision of the legislation. We will be opposing clause 5. I indicated before the dinner break the reasons we will oppose it. It is not only because of its retrospective nature but also because it is so uncertain. It is uncertain for industry. It is uncertain whether the \$40 million will be passed on to industry. It is uncertain what industry consultation has occurred with respect to principal contractors and the level of cover they ought to have after this bill goes through. Nothing has been sent to the industry to indicate how these changes will impact on them.

The minister keeps talking under her breath, interjecting and so on like she has all the answers to all the problems in the world that relate to this particular bill. The minister has confirmed that she will further consult with people. If she had all of the answers she would have got it right in the first place, rather than having to go and consult with people after the event. That is the issue. That is the issue that all members in this House are entitled to speak about.

We understand that from time to time bills need to be amended. When I was a minister I amended bills and former ministers from this side of the House also amended bills, but the minister should at least be up-front about it and say that she got it wrong and is taking the opportunity to change it.

I urge all honourable members, particularly those on the crossbenches, to oppose clause 5 to delay this particular provision until such time as the industry has had proper consultation. They can properly assess how it will impact on their business. No doubt all members opposite, like lemmings going over a cliff, will vote in support of the minister's amendment tonight, not realising and understanding what they are voting for. The speaking points told them what to say and to vote for it, so they will go ahead and do it, like lemmings over the cliff. We expect that. I do hope those on the crossbenches—

Mrs LAUGA: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find it personally offensive that the member for—where is—

A government member: Kawana.

Mrs LAUGA: Kawana. That is right; I forgot. I find it personally offensive that the member for Kawana is alleging that we are lemmings. I assume this is unparliamentary. I take offence and I want him to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I never referred to the member, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Member for Kawana, you have been asked to withdraw.

Miss BARTON: On the point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The standing orders of this House state that if a member finds something personally offensive and asks for it to be withdrawn it is courtesy that it is done; however, no personal reflection was made. If one wishes to make a reference to a collective, that is not a personal reflection that can be withdrawn.

Mrs LAUGA: On the point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Kawana referred to 'all you lemmings over there'.

Miss Barton: It is collective, not individual.

Mrs LAUGA: I take that as a personal reflection and I consider it unparliamentary.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Keppel. We have had rulings on this before. There has not been any particular reference. I am happy for the member for Kawana to continue. I will caution you, member for Kawana, that that was pretty close.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The incompetence of all members opposite in the Labor Party in dealing with these issues knows no bounds. They do not understand the elements of this legislation. They do not understand the negative impact the legislation they will pass tonight will have on businesses in their electorates.

I was recently in the electorate with the honourable members for Albert and Gaven at a business forum. We talked at that business forum about all sorts of things including workers compensation and the changes the LNP government made. It was a very good audience—independent business operators and small business owners who were very appreciative of the fact that the LNP stood up for them in government.

Ms Grace: These are the ones you are hurting: small business.

Mr BLEIJIE: If ever there was an interjection I should take, it is that one. It has been alleged by the minister that the LNP is hurting small business in this state. Last week the CCIQ said that this is the most anti-business government it has ever seen. It said that it has no confidence in the Treasurer of the state of Queensland. This bill is brought forward by the Minister for Employment, who is under the proviso of the Treasurer of the state, and the peak small business group essentially said that it has no confidence in the Labor government of Queensland. The minister has the hide to allege tonight that the LNP is not business friendly! Do I have to table the CCIQ press releases or the transcript of the interview of the CCIQ's Chief Executive Officer, Nick Behrens, by Steve Austin from the ABC? He basically said that the CCIQ has no confidence in the Treasurer of Queensland. I have never seen—

Mr Costigan: Unprecedented.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. It is unprecedented from a small business group. The Minister for Employment has the hide to say that the LNP is the anti-business party in this state! That is a complete joke and a complete misrepresentation. I tell the minister one thing: the CCIQ is not out there saying that Scott Emerson is the most incompetent shadow Treasurer it has ever seen. It is not out there saying that the LNP is anti business. The CCIQ is not out there saying that shadow ministers are anti business. It is saying that the Labor government is anti business—not friends of the business community. The minister may put her hands on her head. I would be so ashamed that I would put my head in my hands if the business community was saying that stuff about me. I would take cover. I would try to get under the table as well. That is not a record I would be happy to have. That is not a record I would want if I were the treasurer of this state or the minister for employment. I would not want the peak business group saying that it had lost confidence in me as treasurer. If the business community has lost confidence in the Treasurer, it has lost confidence in the government of the day.

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the member for Kawana has had enough leeway. Can we please bring him back to the essence of the bill? What we have heard over the last few minutes is nothing short of a diatribe. I ask that you rule that he come back to the essence of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I have been listening with much interest. I think at times you have been straying a bit too far. I advise you to stay on track with the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, and I appreciate that, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr RYAN: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek your ruling on the practice of this House when points of order are made and whether the member with the call has to resume his seat while those points of order are made. I have noted on a number of occasions that the member for Kawana has remained on his feet during the making of the point of order and I seek your ruling for purposes of future practice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Member for Morayfield, it is generally the practice for a member to resume their seat. However, it is normally up to the chair to direct them to do so if he or she chooses. Were there any other points of order? If not, I call the member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: As I was saying, the bill does have an impact on the business community because the principal contractors will be paying the insurance that WorkCover is currently paying, so it is quite relevant to the bill with respect to the retrospective provisions for the business community. The Minister for Employment may make points of order with respect to what the business community has to do with workers compensation, but those in the business community pay the workers compensation based on the number of employees they have. It is pretty relevant for a business community to have some input into workers compensation regulation and policy in this state because it is funded by the business community. If you do not have the business community, you do not have them paying the workers compensation tax and you do not have the employees—the workers—covered for workers

compensation. There is a pretty good link between the business community and workers compensation policy in this state. The minister talks about diatribe. If members want that, wait a couple of hours for the minister to get up and respond and then they will hear it all.

I made the point earlier that the LNP were the ones that signed up to the NDIS. We signed up to the NIIS. We committed over \$800 million to make sure the NDIS and the NIIS are happening and we signed the contracts to get this going in the state of Queensland. We did that under the great work of my parliamentary colleague the member for Aspley when she was the minister and now we are holding the government to account with the member for Mudgeeraba in that shadow ministry. I congratulate them because if not for particularly the member for Aspley's tireless work in government we would not have the NDIS and the NIIS as we do now. I congratulate them for that.

Throughout the process, as I said, we support predominantly the majority of the bill dealing with the NIIS because it was LNP policy to implement it. We do have a differing view of how it shall be implemented. The government has taken a particularly different view, as was outlined by our shadow Treasurer when the motor accident legislation went through the House and it is still relevant to this particular debate with respect to catastrophic injuries at work. However, we do not support clause 5 of the bill which deals with the retrospective nature of the principal contractors. It has been well known throughout the law in Queensland that that was the law. It was confirmed by the Supreme Court of Queensland and that is all being undone and overturned because of this Labor government and this minister. I would urge all honourable members to oppose that particular provision but support the rest of the bill.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.53 pm): This evening I rise to speak in support of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016 as chair of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee, whose responsibility it was to examine the bill in detail. Firstly I want to acknowledge the many groups and organisations that made submissions and those who spoke to the committee at the various public hearings over the duration of the inquiry. I also want to thank members from both sides of the House who are members of the committee and the secretariat staff for their involvement in the examination of the bill.

This bill has been introduced to implement a workable and sustainable system for compensation payments for lifetime treatment, care and support into Queensland's workers compensation scheme and to implement the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workers who are catastrophically injured in workplace accidents connected with Queensland. In 2013 the Newman-Nicholls government signed a national heads of agreement with the Commonwealth which committed Queensland to either implement a lifetime care and support scheme for workplace accidents to meet the national minimum benchmarks or be 100 per cent responsible for the costs of people who sustain catastrophic injuries from 1 July this year.

On 21 March this year the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee tabled in the Legislative Assembly its report on its inquiry into a sustainable model for the implementation of NIIS for motor vehicle accidents. The committee recommended that the government consider the National Injury Insurance Scheme for motor vehicle accidents serving as a platform for other proposed National Injury Insurance Scheme arrangements in Queensland.

Consistent with the committee's recommendation, this bill proposes arrangements for treatment, care and support payments within Queensland's workers compensation scheme which align with the arrangements under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland for motor vehicle accidents, established under the NIIS (Queensland) Act 2016. These arrangements involve extending existing no-fault statutory compensation entitlements for injured workers who sustain serious personal injuries on or after 1 July this year while retaining common law rights to claim damages for treatment, care and support of injured workers who can establish their employer was at fault in causing their injury.

I do not doubt for one moment that there is not a person in this room who does not support the long-term care and treatment of workers catastrophically injured while performing their job. There is not one person in this room today who does not want to see workers go to work in the morning and return home safely at night to their families after doing a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Members on both sides of the chamber no doubt will be questioning, then, the role of workers compensation when injury happens at work.

The workers compensation scheme provides that workers who are injured in workplace accidents are entitled to statutory compensation, which includes weekly income replacement benefits while the worker is unable to work as well as cover for medical, rehabilitation and other expenses. Under the workers compensation scheme, entitlements or benefits cease when incapacity due to work related injury stops or the period for benefits paid to an injured worker reaches the maximum time of five years

or weekly benefits reach the maximum amount of \$314,920. In addition, if a worker suffers a permanent impairment from the injury and their employer was at fault, they may be entitled to a lump sum payment under common law. Other benefits and compensation under the scheme cease once a lump sum payment is made.

The construct of this bill affords the individual person an option: their ability to exercise their right to pursue a common law claim for catastrophic injuries to access a lump sum payment. What this lump sum payment does is respect the dignity and rights of a responsible and capable person to manage their own lifetime care and support. A lump sum payment affords the individual to make a decision for them and by them on their care and support in exactly the same way that the NDIS will do. The ability for an individual to choose to pursue their common law right to claim a lump sum compensation payout under this bill is dependent on a number of filters that would preclude the individual from advancing through the legal system. These filters include initially obtaining legal advice of their possible lump sum payment. Secondly, it would be dependent on the level of contributory negligence to allow them to proceed. Finally, a court would need to determine that the individual was capable of managing a lump sum payment before progressing to a settlement judgement.

Perhaps the most significant point of contention during the inquiry into the bill was the Byrne judgement amendments. The Byrne judgement validates the use of hold harmless clauses in contracts which transfer a third party's—typically a principal contractor or host employer—liability for their negligence in injuring a worker to the worker's employer, usually a subcontractor. The Byrne judgement also provided that WorkCover as the employer's insurer was liable for this additional cost, so WorkCover also becomes liable while not being contributed to by the host employer. It is a bit like putting in an insurance claim but never paying a premium.

This bill reverses the effect of the Byrne judgement by prohibiting the contractual transfer of liability for injury cost from a third party—again, the principal contractors or the host employers—to employers with a workers compensation insurance policy, for example subcontractors. The bill also provides that WorkCover is not liable to indemnify an employer for a liability to pay damages incurred by a third-party contractor under a contractual arrangement.

The QNU, United Voice, the QCA, the ALA and the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland—or, as we have heard from the member for Kawana, the CCIQ—supported the amendments. The CCIQ supported these amendments. Submitters considered that the amendments would encourage employers to maintain health and safety standards and a more secure compensation agreement for workers and restore the policy intention that an insurer is liable to indemnify an employer only for its legal liability to pay damages to the worker.

Submitters also considered that the amendments would encourage employers to maintain health and safety standards and a more secure compensation scheme for the workers and restore the policy intention that an insurer is only liable to indemnify an employer for its legal liability to pay damages to the worker. They also considered that the amendments are a positive step towards clarifying that negligent employers who follow unsafe work practices will be unable to transfer liability to another related party. They are not able to dodge a bullet.

Submitters also said that the amendments will raise an estimated \$40 million in savings for WorkCover, thereby increasing the capacity of WorkCover to maintain competitive workers compensation insurance premiums. However, Master Builders Queensland considered—

... the proposed amendments do not resolve the underlying issue of uninsured or underinsured Principal Contractors and subcontractors but in actual fact may exacerbate the problem.

Other submitters expressed the following views about the amendments: the approach of voiding contractual indemnities is neither an appropriate nor a reasonable policy response to situations where more than one business entity has a level of responsibility over the occurrence of a workplace injury—a particularly common arrangement in the construction and transport industries—and that the amendments discriminate against principal contractors and host employers. However, the department advised the committee—

... the Byrne decision has the effect of encouraging the use of hold harmless clauses which allows third party contributors to avoid liability, encouraging further negligence; and makes WorkCover Queensland jointly and severally liable for all damages despite there being fully solvent third parties to join the claim.

In fact, these principal contractors are passing on the responsibility to those small business mum-and-dad contractors who work hard every single day. The department also went on to say—

As WorkCover is unable to recover the cost from the negligent principal contractor or host employer this cost is allocated to the premium of the employer and potentially across all other WorkCover premium paying employers.

Mr Power: They hate small business.

Mr STEWART: I take that interjection. In terms of this bill, they certainly hate the small business owners who work in this particular area.

As businesses and industries compete in local and global markets, our workforce is ever changing, with workforces becoming more and more flexible to meet these demands. According to Independent Contractors Australia, in 2013 around 17.2 per cent of the Australian workforce were contractors. I imagine that since that time the percentage would have increased.

Although I appreciate and acknowledge the views of the building and construction industry, as well as the concerns of the Queensland Trucking Association, this bill will affect every workforce that employs contractors—not just in those industries but across the broader context. This bill will impact upon those workers not only now but also in the future. It is essential that we protect our workers by ensuring that principal contractors or host employers maintain a safe work environment and by ensuring that in the event a worker sustains a catastrophic injury in their workplace they can rest assured that their treatment, lifetime care and support needs will be assured. For those reasons, I commend this bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (8.03 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill. At the outset, I acknowledge the other members of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee and the secretariat for the work that they did, in particular Karl Holden, who is not ordinarily a member of the secretariat team but who was a great servant of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee in terms of this bill.

I follow on from what the shadow minister said and reaffirm the opposition's support for the concept of the National Injury Insurance Scheme. All members of the committee were of the view that extending the National Injury Insurance Scheme to those who are catastrophically injured at work is a good thing. We might have some differences of opinion about the right kind of model. That is the reality of six people trying to agree.

Stakeholders and those who are at the coalface had indicated that they were very concerned about sum dissipation. It was thought only appropriate by the non-government members that we should mention it in our statement of reservation. However, the concept of the National Injury Insurance Scheme is one that we support. As was highlighted by the member for Kawana, it was the LNP in government that agreed to the National Injury Insurance Scheme and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We want to make sure that those who are catastrophically injured and who are going to be in need of lifetime care, treatment and support are able to be properly cared for.

A couple of issues were raised in the statement of reservation by the non-government members of the committee and they have been touched on by the shadow minister. In my contribution I intend to touch on the consultation—or, really, the lack thereof—on clause 5 and the Byrne amendments. I think it was very telling that the government members of the committee agreed to committee comment that condemned the lack of consultation on this issue. The non-government members acknowledged that there was an industry round table set up and that there was consultation with respect to the expansion of the NIIS to those who are catastrophically injured at work. However, it is incredibly disappointing that on the Byrne provisions, and in particular clause 5, there was absolutely no consultation done with any of the industry stakeholders. In particular, the committee heard Warwick Temby from the Housing Industry Association—he was a member of the stakeholder reference group—particularly highlight that they did not have an opportunity to even discuss the changes in the Byrne amendment. I quote from the public hearing that was held in this very chamber on 18 July—

There was consultation on the NIIS aspects of the bill, but absolutely none on the Byrne issue.

Not only was the Housing Industry Association not consulted, even though they were a member of the stakeholder reference group that was set up to be consulted with on the bill, but also Master Builders Queensland, which is another very important stakeholder in this area, was not consulted. Corlia Roos of Master Builders said—

We have not been consulted on the bill, on the drafting of the wording or on the bill itself, until it was posted on the parliamentary website.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Miss BARTON: I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. It is bad form. As he is being an aficionado of sport, I am sure that he knows all about form—good and bad.

We have seen a complete lack of consultation with the important industry stakeholders on this bill. It is continued hypocrisy from this government, because time and time again members of this government stand up to say that they are going to be a consultative government. If that is not hyperbole then I do not what is, because it is true, rank hypocrisy for them to stand up in this House and say that they are a consultative government yet refuse to consult with the people who are impacted by the clause. I note that, in acknowledging recommendation 3, the government has said that it will now consult. It seems a bit of a waste of time after the fact, but I suppose at least the government has acknowledged that it has some work to do. We have seen a really simple solution not taken up.

In speaking to both WorkCover and industry stakeholders such as Master Builders and the Housing Industry Association, we discovered that they would be perfectly happy to be a participant of WorkCover. They would have no issue removing hold harmless clauses from the contract between principal contractors and subcontractors if they were allowed to participate in the WorkCover scheme. Ultimately, every member of this House wants workers who are catastrophically injured at work to be assured of lifetime care, treatment and support.

This is not about big business, medium business or small business; this is about the workers who are going to be unfortunately catastrophically injured at work and who will be in need of lifetime care, treatment and support. It is disappointing that we have a government that is refusing to work with the opposition and industry stakeholders to find a way to effectively plug the hole, fill the gap, to make sure that those catastrophically injured workers are assured of coverage. The situation that we have now, if this bill passes in its current form tonight without amendment, is that hold harmless clauses, which have been used in practice for many years and which have been held valid by the Supreme Court in the Byrne decision—valid contractual clauses that have been entered into with offer, acceptance and consideration—will be retrospectively deemed to be invalid.

What happens in that gap between the hold harmless clause having been entered into and the ability for someone to get insurance? Whilst we might be able to retrospectively change the law, we cannot retrospectively enter into an insurance contract. What happens if a contract was entered into three years ago and someone in between then and now, or in between then and an opportunity for the principal contractor to get insurance, is paralysed from the neck down and there is no insurance? That is what we are talking about. It is those people who will be left without the proper coverage. It is really disappointing that the Labor Party, whose members stand up in this House and across Queensland and say that they stand up for workers in this state, could be doing something really simple but it is not doing it. Tonight there is an opportunity for the government to move an amendment to withdraw clause 5 and go back to the table and work with industry stakeholders and WorkCover Queensland to find the appropriate measure to ensure that all injured workers in Queensland are covered. That is what this is about.

The reason principal contractors have hold harmless clauses is that they are not able to enter into the WorkCover scheme, something that was acknowledged by Tony Hawkins from WorkCover Queensland. In this chamber when we held a public hearing with WorkCover Queensland, Tony Hawkins acknowledged that this was something that they had been looking at. They acknowledged that it was an issue. I am sure that my friends and colleagues the members for Buderim and Albert would agree with me. On that day Mr Hawkins acknowledged that it was a very significant issue and something that he had been looking to do. Obviously there is a reason that the government has not been prepared to look at a simple solution that will ensure adequate coverage for injured workers in Queensland. That is really disappointing.

There were a number of concerns raised by Master Builders in particular. Master Builders acknowledged that they have their own insurance arm and they could absolutely, if they wanted to, have said nothing on this issue and realised that there was an opportunity for their private insurance arm, but they are an advocacy group for their industry. They acknowledge that there is a gap that needs to be filled. Tonight there is an opportunity for this government to fill that gap and to plug that hole to ensure that those workers in Queensland who are catastrophically injured are assured of receiving the appropriate lifetime care and coverage that they need. What we do know is that principal contractors, if they were given an opportunity to enter into the WorkCover scheme—something we know they are not able to do because WorkCover Queensland themselves acknowledged it—there would be no need for hold harmless clauses.

We talk about the hypocrisy of this government when it comes to consultation, but let us also reflect on the hypocrisy of this government when it comes to retrospective legislation. I have lost track of how many times members of the Labor Party in the public domain and in the parliamentary chamber have said that they abhor retrospectivity, yet how many times have we seen the Labor Party introduce

retrospective legislation in this state? Time and time again! Like the hypocrisy when it comes to consultation, clearly this government are hypocrites when it comes to retrospective legislation in this state. Ultimately the losers in all of this are those who are in desperate need of lifetime care and support after they are catastrophically injured at work.

I find it confusing that the government would, in recommendation 3, acknowledge that it needs to do more work yet would allow the bill to pass with clause 5. Once you pull the genie out of the bottle I am not sure how you can put it back in. The moment one says that hold harmless clauses are not valid, overturning what was a lawful judgement of the Supreme Court—an independent Supreme Court in this state—the genie cannot be put back in the bottle. Unfortunately, one never knows what might happen to one person in between the genie being pulled out of the bottle and this minister trying to put it back in. As I said, the people who are most at risk are Queensland workers who may be catastrophically injured at work, and that is really disappointing.

Even the government members of the committee acknowledge that the Byrne decision was a significant one for stakeholders. What I did not understand was why an organisation like the Australian Lawyers Alliance would have no issue with retrospectivity, would have no issue with the government coming in and superseding a perfectly valid judgement of the Supreme Court but then suggest, 'Oh, there wouldn't be too many contracts that would have these hold harmless contracts, I wouldn't have thought.' That is what they said to the committee. I asked Master Builders whether or not it was standard industry practice and they said absolutely it was, which is why it is really disappointing that this government has failed to consult with them.

When non-government members pushed the departmental officials on why there was a lack of consultation we were told that there were some pre-2010 discussions. There have been two elections since then. In those six or seven years since those discussions have happened there have probably been a few changes of personnel in the department and probably in the industry stakeholder groups as well. It is really disappointing that this government, which claims to be consultative and wants to work with Queenslanders, is refusing to consult on an issue as basic and as simple as making sure that Queensland workers are adequately protected.

We tried to negotiate with the government members on the committee. We said that we would love to support this bill because we appreciate the importance of the National Injury Insurance Scheme and we want to make sure that catastrophically injured workers are truly covered, but while this invidious clause 5 remains we cannot support this bill because it pulls a genie out of the bottle and it means that the people who are most at risk are catastrophically injured Queenslanders who are in desperate need of lifetime care and support.

As I say, that is what this is about. It is not about big business, medium business or small business; it is about making sure that those who are injured at work and who are in need of lifetime care, treatment and support are assured of getting it. That is why it is disappointing that this minister is refusing to engage with stakeholders and is refusing to talk to people like Master Builders and the Housing Industry Association and other representatives of principal contractors in this state.

Mrs Stuckey: They are not unions.

Miss BARTON: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. Maybe it is because they are not unions. If we are going to force principal contractors to take out private insurance in a limited market, a real concern is what happens if they cannot afford the excess? What happens if they skip a premium payment? What happens to the injured worker then? That is really disappointing. Because of this government's reluctance to work with business and this government's reluctance to do the right thing, the only people who are at risk are injured Queenslanders. It is just disgraceful. We hear the hyperbole all the time from the Labor Party about how they are the ones who truly care about the workers. If they did then they would do the right thing when it came to this bill: they would ensure that principal contractors are able to enter into the WorkCover scheme as they are willing and able to do so if changes are made. The reason they have hold harmless clauses in contracts is that the government does not allow principal contractors to enter into the WorkCover scheme.

There is a simple way to fix this, but the arrogance of this government means that they are not prepared to consult with anyone outside of the union movement, they are not prepared to back down when they are wrong and all we see is hypocrisy and hyperbole. It is a shame that the people who will be at risk are not the members of the Labor Party or their union donors but the people at the coalface. It is the workers who are going to be at risk of catastrophic injury. It is really disappointing that in this parliament we cannot work together because the government is not prepared to come to the table on

what is a very simple and basic thing, to make it right and proper. They do not consult, they are not prepared to do what is right and the only people who are at risk are Queensland workers, and that is really disappointing.

Mr SAUNDERS (Maryborough—ALP) (8.20 pm): Apparently, leopards do change their spots. I was under the impression that leopards do not change their spots, but now we see that those opposite are very concerned for workers. They did not show that three years ago. I listened to the member for Kawana talk about how they looked after small business. It is obvious that the member for Kawana was in this House during their reign, because he certainly was not in small business, which had it very tough under their three years of rule. I was in small business at that time, so I know all about it and the workers compensation bill. I have employed a lot of people—

Mrs Stuckey interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection.

Miss Barton: How much did your premiums come down by? How much less red tape was there?

Mr SAUNDERS: I do not know where to start. I have employed a lot of people over the years. I think the cost of insurance is about \$1.20 per \$100. I have employed a lot of people in my time and paid a lot of money towards workers compensation premiums. I believe, and I always have believed, that Queensland's workers compensation scheme is probably the best in the country. When I talk to other people I know in business from around the country, they always say that Queensland has the best workers compensation scheme.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I thank the member for Gympie. It is unusual to hear the former leader of the LNP talking about how good they were for people and how they looked after workers. As I said, I have been around politics for a long time and I have never seen leopards change their spots. Tonight, we have watched history being made in this House. We have seen nature changed, as they have decided that they are now going to look after the workers. There is a blue moon and I am astounded. In fact, I am lost for words.

Tonight I have listened to the opposition talk about consultation. I was on the committee and I have consulted a lot. I have talked to people in my electorate. We had some great discussions on the committee. I thought that, as a government and as a committee, we consulted with a lot of people. Apparently, we did not consult with the LNP donors. They talk about Labor and the unions. We did not consult their donors. I apologise for that, because I can tell the House that their donors are really going to look after the workers! They are going to put the workers first! You can just see it: 'Vote here, give the money to the LNP and we will make sure that the workers arrive home every afternoon after work'. I am sure that will happen.

One thing that I love about the opposition is that they call us union thugs and they carry on, but I am proud to say that I knock around with people who care about workers' rights, who care that people get the right pay, work under the right conditions and have workers compensation. I am proud to say that the people I knock around with are union thugs, because I would not want to hang around with people or take donations from people who put their feet on the back of workers' necks, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

An opposition member: Oh, that hurt!

Mr SAUNDERS: I must be touching a nerve, because I have never seen the opposition so animated. They have come out of their slumber. They are awake and they are animated. I am proud to say that I support the minister's bill. We heard from the member for Broadwater. On my understanding of the bill—and the minister may correct me—the workers are covered.

Ms Grace: Absolutely, 100 per cent.

Mr SAUNDERS: I thank the minister for saying that they are covered. I was shocked and perplexed to hear the opposition say that the workers were not covered, because my understanding of the bill is that the workers were covered.

The bill proposes to amend the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 to include a NIIS scheme for workplace accidents. Isn't it amazing that suddenly those opposite have a conscience? After all these years, they have found their conscience about workers who have been catastrophically injured at work. It is good to see that they are learning something from this side of the House. It is great to see that they are following our lead and are learning. I did not think that you could teach old dogs new tricks, but apparently you can now. I am very happy that the opposition is observing

and learning from the Labor Party. Contrary to the opposition, the Palaszczuk Labor government has consulted. We are consultative people. However, we do not consult with LNP donors to get favours. They talk about us getting favours from the union movement. As we know, the bill furthers this scheme and the NDIS. I was happy to be on the committee. We had some great discussions. I commend the bill to the House and I hope that the opposition keeps looking and learning.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (8.26 pm): I might have to claim on my trauma insurance after listening to that absolute hogwash from the member for Maryborough. Firstly, I thank my fellow committee members, the committee chair and the deputy chair, as well as the staff, especially Mr Karl Holden, who certainly participated heavily in our hearings. I also thank all those individuals who participated. From the outset, I state that non-government members of the committee wholeheartedly support the extension of the NIIS to those who have been catastrophically injured in a workplace. However, we cannot support the provisions of the bill that reverse the Byrne judgement.

The previous push by government members to adopt the hybrid model of the NIIS continues to haunt the government. I have been a member of the committee examining the NIIS, not from the start but from when it was handed to the education committee. Certainly government members supported the most expensive option, being the hybrid model. Dr Ros Harrington from the Recover Injury Research Centre made reference to the lifetime care and support scheme, which is consistent with the majority of other schemes throughout Australia. It gives those who suffer a critical injury the ability to have lifetime care without the fear of market changes or other issues that may come up, for instance, separation in a marriage or relationship, global market corrections, poorly managed funds or excessive spending. Dr Ros Harrington stated—

From our research into the Australian Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases where people are seeking to access disability support pension because their lump sum compensation for injury has been dissipated, we have found that there is definitely evidence of lump sum dissipation in work injury claims ...

That is very concerning. Dr Harrington goes on to say further—

In our research deduction from a lump sum for legal and medical expenses on settlement constituted over 50 per cent in some cases.

These comments certainly did spike the interest of some government members who questioned Dr Harrington about the Legal Profession Act 2007 specifically exceeding the 50 per cent rule. This further highlights another issue when an individual receives a lump sum. Dr Harrington stated—

We have no way of tracking people. Once they receive a lump sum, they are out of the system. Another member in my focus group said, that, basically four years after injury somebody can be living at home and they are hidden from view. We do not know what is happening with them until they come into health care services in crisis, if their family support has fallen over, or if their funding has failed.

This should certainly set off alarm bells for any injured worker who is thinking about going to a lump sum scheme. The added protection of a lifetime care and support scheme solves that issue. That was certainly a matter that was deeply concerning to the non-government members.

The statement of reservations on behalf of government members talks about how they want to ensure that those who suffer personal injuries receive necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support payments. I must say, for those whose funds have dissipated that is cold comfort.

Another disturbing factor highlighted during the committee's hearings was the lack of consultation undertaken by the government. This was reinforced by the Housing Industry Association, which was listed in the explanatory notes as one of the stakeholder reference groups. At the public hearing on 18 July the HIA executive director confirmed that the stakeholder reference group was not consulted about the Byrne decision. He stated—

There was consultation on the NIIS aspect of the bill, but absolutely none of the Byrne decision.

Furthermore Master Builders Queensland indicated that the first they heard about the proposed changes was at the bill's introduction. This further highlights the government's interest in serving its own purposes when it comes to this issue. This is further reflected by the committee's comments at section 3.2 of the report. It stated—

The committee acknowledges the concerns raised by submitters about the lack of consultation undertaken by the Government on the amendments to reverse the Byrne Judgment, particularly given the potentially significant impacts the amendments may have on principal contractors, host employers, subcontractors and workers.

The amendments with regard to the Byrne decision have deep ramifications. These proposed changes within the bill would effectively take away the protection of these workers. With these amendments, principal contractors may not realise they need to secure private insurance, thus creating a situation of a gap in coverage for injured workers. This is nothing more than cost shifting from WorkCover to private insurance and not about protecting injured workers.

During the committee hearing with WorkCover Queensland the member for Broadwater asked whether there had been any consideration given to allowing principal contractors to come back into the WorkCover scheme. In response WorkCover stated—

... WorkCover has been discussing for a few years now with respective industry associations. The chair of WorkCover wrote to the minister to suggest that that is an option that could or should be looked at. The minister has written back and said they are more than happy for us to have a look at that and please make sure we discuss it with all of the respective stakeholders to ensure that all the options are considered.

In light of this response from WorkCover, it is surprising the minister today endorses recommendation 3. It seems as though the horse has bolted. The legislation has been written and now we going to try to play catch-up. It feels like this is insincere. Recommendation 3 states—

The committee recommends that Queensland Treasury and WorkCover Queensland work with representatives of principal contractors and host employers to resolve issues arising from the exclusion of those entities from the WorkCover scheme and extend it to give principal contractors and host employers the option of participating in the scheme, taking out a private insurance policy or both.

If this really was the intent of the minister then why include the Byrne provisions. Therefore, the opposition members of the committee are of the view that the Byrne provisions should be removed until such time as a process can be implemented to bring the principal contractors back into the WorkCover scheme. Whilst large contractors have public liability insurance, it is the small and medium size contractors who have limited options.

The lifeblood of the Albert electorate is the construction industry. It is a great employer in my electorate. I have an enormous number of tradesmen and tradeswomen in my area. With a limited spend on infrastructure, which is certainly hitting my region, and a record low infrastructure budget in Queensland, I can certainly say that it is a tough time for small and medium operators in my area. Removing their chance to participate in WorkCover seems illogical at best.

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (8.36 pm): I rise to speak to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016. Before I do I would like to acknowledge the coalminer who lost his life today. Everyone should have the chance to come home. I show my respect to his family and friends.

I commend the committee on the effort it put into considering this legislation and the secretariat and Hansard for all the assistance they provided to the committee. The Productivity Commission recommended a national injury insurance scheme work alongside the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This bill amends the Workers' Compensation Rehabilitation Act 2003.

Under the Heads of Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Queensland Governments on the NDIS, the Queensland government was required to establish the NIIS to provide statutory entitlement to treatment, care and support. This bill has at its heart the intent to establish a no-fault lifetime care and support arrangement to sustain people who suffer serious injuries across four main streams: motor vehicle accidents, workplace accidents, medical treatment injury and general injuries—accidents at home and accidents in the community, including assaults. It is very clear that a person who suffers an injury or a victim is held to be at no fault and blameless regardless of any contributory negligence or misconduct, which are always contentious issues.

The known effect on WorkCover will be about \$40 million per annum in savings. For serious claims that would constitute a fee increase from \$1.20 to \$1.21. That one cent increase is to be absorbed by WorkCover. This bill extends to workers, volunteers, tradesmen and also potentially to company directors who have not been allowed into the scheme before. This bill reverses the Byrne decision handed down on 29 October 2014—Byrne v People Resourcing Queensland Pty Ltd and Anor—which transferred liability by contractual arrangement, leaving those at fault or negligent under section 69C of the Law Reform Act 1995 blameless for their indiscretions.

WorkCover records show that on average only 10 or 11 people involved in work related accidents and one person involved in a motor vehicle work related accident claim for catastrophic injury per year. This bill addresses the issue of seriously injured young people being placed in nursing care. This bill provides adequate funding to facilitate, via lifetime care, them not having to be put into aged-care facilities which is quite often the case once compensation and damages are exhausted.

For common law damages, there is a requirement for third parties to exchange relevant documents. WorkCover spends \$7.63 million in legal fees, and that could be reduced by around 20 per cent by the exchange of discovery documents in damages litigation. This bill also looks at the dissipation of lump sum compensation that is too often treated as a nest egg or windfall and spent, leaving the recipient reliant on the public system for a living.

Quite often 50 per cent of damages are taken up in legal costs under section 347(1) of the Legal Profession Act 2007. The opt-out, opt-in provision to lifetime care may address this. Sadly, no records about the successful quarantining of lifetime care lump sum payments have been held in the past.

I remind those opposite that they are supposed to be the champions of business and the champions of small business. Yet businesses are placed at risk through common law claims and the gap in settlement amounts. I listened to Lord Farquaad, the member for Kawana, talk about rushing bills through. The Byrne decision came down on 29 October 2014. The LNP could have actually put a bill through at 10 minutes past midnight or at any time after that whenever they felt like it. They have done that plenty of times in the past, I understand. It would not have been right or in the best interests of Queenslanders. They just would have rushed it through. The Palaszczuk government does not operate like that. What more can I say? This is a quality, sound piece of legislation that has been brought forth by the Palaszczuk government to protect Queenslanders.

Mr Hart interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Thank you, member for Burleigh. Could you please cease your interjections?

Mr WILLIAMS: I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (8.42 pm): I rise to speak on the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016. On 14 June 2016 the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs introduced the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016 into the Queensland parliament. That was a mere two weeks before the amendments contained in this bill would retrospectively invalidate contractual terms entered into by mutual agreement of both parties and in accordance with industry practice and common law decisions. Were they asleep at the wheel? Much.

The explanatory notes state that the purpose of this bill is to ensure that workers who suffer particularly serious personal injuries as a result of work related events in Queensland receive necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support payments regardless of who is at fault. In 2011, the Productivity Commission recommended the National Injury Insurance Scheme, the NIIS, alongside the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the NDIS. The Productivity Commission reviewed the costs and benefits of replacing the current system of disability services in Australia with new arrangements which would ensure all Australians with significant and ongoing disabilities were delivered essential care and support.

The NIIS is intended to establish no-fault lifetime care and support arrangements for persons who sustain serious personal injuries across four main streams—motor vehicle accidents, workplace accidents, medical treatment injury and general accidents that could happen at home or in the community or assaults. The Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 provides the legislative framework for the Queensland Workers Compensation Scheme. This bill would amend the act to implement a model for the NIIS for workplace accidents which is consistent with the NIIS for motor vehicle accidents under the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016.

Under the May 2013 Heads of Agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Queensland is required to implement the NIIS for workplace accidents from 1 July 2016, or from 1 July 2016 meet 100 per cent of the costs of injured workers who enter the NDIS because an NIIS has not been implemented. Needless to say, the clock is ticking. The clock is ticking rather loudly. The bells have gone off already. This government just does not get it.

The committee was unable to reach a majority decision as to whether the bill should be passed. There were particular concerns in relation to the obvious lack of consultation on parts of this bill. In its report, the committee acknowledges the concerns raised by submitters about the lack of consultation undertaken by the government on the amendments to reverse the Byrne judgement. The explanatory notes detail that the bill reverses the effects of the Byrne judgement by prohibiting the contractual transfer of liability for injury costs from a third party, such as principal contractors or host employers, to employers with a workers compensation insurance policy, such as subcontractors. The bill also provides that WorkCover is not liable to indemnify an employer for a liability to pay damages incurred by a third-party contractor under a contractual arrangement.

Confronted with an obvious lack of consultation, the committee has recommended that Queensland Treasury and WorkCover Queensland work with representatives of principal contractors and host employers to resolve issues arising from the exclusion of those entities from the WorkCover

scheme and extend it to give principal contractors and host employers the option of participating in the scheme, taking out a private insurance policy or both. The non-government committee members support the extension of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, the NIIS, to those who are catastrophically injured at work. However, we are not able to support the provisions of the bill which seek to reverse the Byrne judgement.

Saying that you are a consultative government ad nauseam does not make you a consultative government. While we are being refreshingly honest, perhaps this Labor government can fess up that its reversal of the Byrne decision is more about cost-shifting from WorkCover to private insurers than it is about protecting injured workers. I note that these amendments will raise an estimated \$40 million in savings for WorkCover, so let us hope that these savings have not already been earmarked by the Treasurer for next year's budget folly.

Last sitting week we saw the Labor government handing in the LNP's homework; this week they have not done their homework at all it seems. The clock is ticking, the school bell has rung and 1 July has come and gone.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (8.48 pm): I rise to support the amendments in the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (National Injury Insurance Scheme) Amendment Bill 2016 that implement the National Injury Insurance Scheme for workplace accidents within Queensland's workers compensation scheme. Prior to entering parliament, I worked as a lawyer at a law firm that specialised, among other things, in assisting people to obtain compensation for work related injuries. For many people the fault based legal system that we had, while not without its flaws, worked. However, unfortunately for some, a just system was capable of producing some very unjust results.

Many people who are catastrophically injured at work or in car accidents as a consequence of medical negligence or while innocently going about their everyday lives are left with nowhere to turn. We have a legal system based on fault. If a person can prove that someone was at fault for their injuries, they are generally okay. If they cannot, the person who is at fault gets off on a legal technicality, that person can afford better lawyers than them or even if none of those things get in the way, while an injured person is capable of securing that compensation, that compensation is inadequate. These very vulnerable, injured people are left with skyrocketing medical expenses that place great strain on their loved ones in particular and the community in general. These people wake up like you and me one morning and over the course of their tragic day they have their lives altered forever.

I am proud to be part of a government that, in extending the National Injury Insurance Scheme to people who suffer catastrophic injuries in workplace accidents, has broadened and secured the safety net. This crucial safety net will maximise an injured worker's chance to function independently and continue to engage within their community. The National Injury Insurance Scheme is a parallel and complementary scheme to the National Disability Insurance Scheme which, it is worth pointing out, is one of the most profound social reforms in recent history and of course a product of the Labor Party. Unlike the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the National Injury Insurance Scheme is a state responsibility. Each state is required to administer, finance and implement its own National Injury Insurance Scheme in conformance with a set of agreed minimum benchmarks. Here in Queensland we have smashed those benchmarks.

The amendments in this bill provide lifetime access to necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support for those who sustain particular serious personal injuries from 1 July 2016 and who are more severely affected by catastrophic accidents in the workplace. Furthermore, unlike in other states and territories, we have managed to strike an appropriate balance between preserving existing common law rights and bridging the gap in the common law system. In fact, the Australian Lawyers Alliance, in support of this bill, wrote in their submission that the model for catastrophic work accidents as proposed gets the balance right by ensuring it is both the fairest and most affordable option that will have a minimal impact on premiums. With an estimated increase to average premiums of just one cent, Queensland has extremely competitive premium rates for employers—testament to sound scheme design and proficient scheme administration.

The National Injury Insurance Scheme is a just, timely and vital reform. By providing lifetime care, assistance and medical treatment to some of Queensland's most vulnerable people, it ensures that we as a society are able to live up to the tradition of a fair go. That is why I wholeheartedly support this bill today.

Debate, on motion of Ms Fentiman, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (8.52 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Kessels Road and Cremin Street, Intersection

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (8.52 pm): I wish to once again bring to the attention of the House the situation faced by hundreds of my constituents living in the residential area off Kessels Road opposite the Garden City shopping centre in Upper Mount Gravatt. I have raised this issue in the House previously but inaction from this Labor government and the main roads minister means that the problems persist.

The state government has imposed a condition on recent developments in this area which bans right-hand turns into Cremin Street from Kessels Road in peak hours. The area I am speaking about is an area that is quite limited in its access. It was cut off by the construction of the South-East Freeway and access to it is very limited indeed. This condition which bans right-hand turns into Cremin Street from Kessels Road in peak hours came into effect in the last couple of months. Locals are furious as it has made their already less than ideal traffic problems pretty much unbearable.

The Kessels Road intersection is really the only access point for these residents to their homes, apart from residential Tora Street, which is in the electorate of Sunnybank. I am sure that that has also become a busy thoroughfare for Upper Mount Gravatt residents since this condition was imposed. I have previously organised a petition of over 200 locals to the main roads minister to remove this condition, but the government is not prepared to listen. The problem at the moment with the ban on right-hand turns is that people will move into a right-hand-turn slip lane not necessarily aware of the ban on turns. There is a red arrow which faces them for obviously a lengthy period of time. When they get there they realise there are only two ways out: they can either merge back into the already heavily flowing traffic, which is dangerous, or take their risks on an illegal move in crossing, notwithstanding the right-hand red arrow. I have stood there, I have watched it and I have seen near misses many a time. It is a very dangerous situation.

The minister has flagged an eventual upgrade for Player Street as the solution. While the Brisbane City Council has committed over \$11 million over coming years to fund this, the state government has made no such commitment to put up its share and, of course, Kessels Road is a state government controlled road. I wrote on behalf of local residents to the Minister for Main Roads about this issue in early July, but I have not heard back from him. It was an extensive letter covering the issues that residents have raised with me time after time when we discussed this issue. They want access to their properties restored and they want the Player Street connection to be fully funded. All this government is offering is yet another planning study for the next intersection down at Logan Road even though the former LNP government already funded one to the tune of \$400,000. That study has been completed but no findings have been made public or been made known to me by the current administration. I urge the minister to look seriously at the problems faced by my constituents and to offer solutions, not more studies.

Franco, Mr J

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (8.55 pm): I would like to pay tribute to a friend, a true comrade and great community member who sadly passed away last week, Mr Jose Franco. Jose died peacefully surrounded by his family. His last 18 months or so were a struggle due to a debilitating stroke, but they were made much easier by his devoted son Alex. Jose will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by his children Omar, Alex and the apple of his eye, Lilliana, and his grandchildren.

As a young man, Jose became politically active and aware in his native Argentina. This was a time when activism carried significant risks. Jose brought his family to Australia for peace, opportunity and democracy and, like all migrants, he has greatly enriched our nation.

For me, Jose represented all that is good about politics. He never desired high office but he did want a world that was better and fairer not selfishly for himself but for his family, his community and our society. He understood that achieving this would take a lifelong commitment of hard work and dedication. He worked on campaigns for Judy Spence, Kevin Rudd, Terri Butler, Cameron Dick, Matt Campbell and Adam Obeid and I am proud to say that my campaign was his last active campaign. No

doubt there is a much longer list that I am not aware of. He understood that it takes small actions by many people to achieve big outcomes. He understood why standing on a street corner mattered. He understood why delivering flyers could help to educate the community about social issues and policy.

Jose was a permanent fixture during election times on the corner of Marshall Road and Logan Road. I cannot drive past there without thinking about him. I also cannot drive past Rockingham Street in Mount Gravatt where he lived in public housing. He was well known and loved by all in his large complex. I visited him on many occasions at this address, usually because he had asked me to come and help one of the residents with an issue. He always took the time to help those people around him.

I cannot stress how much he loved to work. He was a boilermaker by trade and worked until he was nearly 70. That is a tough job. Even at the age of 70 he would bring job ads to me and get me to help him apply for jobs. Sadly, he never did get that last job he was chasing. I bumped into Jose one night in fading light as I was stopping off at a shopping centre after work. He was still standing next to an election sign. I invited him back to our place. I went upstairs to break the news to my wife that we had an unexpected guest. By the time we came downstairs, Jose had a chicken under each arm and had my daughters rolling around the backyard in stitches as he regaled them with stories of his childhood in Argentina chasing chickens. A few weeks later Jose dropped over before Christmas and gave my daughters a present and this happened every year after that.

I think the way my kids reacted to Jose was typical of how everyone responded to him. He was happy; he was positive; he had a smile that stretched from here to Buenos Aires. Of course, being porteños, he was a great dancer. He will be greatly missed by all the members of the Labor Party in Greenslopes, by the people in his community and especially by his family. Entonces Comrade, Adios nuestro buen Amigo, Nunca te Olvaderemos.

Ayliffe-Chung, Ms M and Jackson, Mr T

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (8.58 pm): On behalf of the residents in my electorate of the Burdekin, I would like to express my deepest sympathies to the family and friends of both Thomas Jackson and Mia Ayliffe-Chung and all those who have been affected by last week's horrific stabbing at a Home Hill backpacker establishment. I can say that this incident has certainly rocked our small Burdekin community to the core. Whilst police investigations are ongoing in relation to this incident, I do not wish to make comment regarding the reasons for this horrific double murder. However, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the tragic loss of two young lives and the families whose lives will be forever affected.

Certainly the townsfolk of the Burdekin, and in particular Home Hill, are still trying to come to grips with this senseless and tragic loss of two lives. Mia and Tom were backpackers who had come to Australia on the trip of a lifetime and, as many backpackers do, they travelled around Australia. They ended up at Home Hill, where they were picking local fruit and vegetables on our farms in the Home Hill-Gumlu area. Unfortunately, that dream came to a sudden end a week ago. Tom Jackson, who passed away today in the Townsville Hospital, was hailed as a hero because at the time of the incident he made a very courageous attempt to save Mia's life. As a consequence he suffered horrific wounds which he succumbed to late today. There were a number of other people who were also reportedly injured coming to Mia's aid who have since been released from hospital. With the alleged attacker currently in custody we are yet to determine the underlying reasons for the attack; however, that will come out in time and I have no doubt that justice will be served.

I would like to praise the work of emergency response personnel who attended the scene at Shelley's Backpackers at Home Hill, the Red Cross support services supported by the department of communities, Mayor Lyn McLaughlin and her fellow Burdekin shire councillors and the kind people of Home Hill who have opened up their hearts to assist traumatised backpackers by cooking meals, donating food and essentials, offering emergency accommodation for displaced backpackers and generally providing comfort during this distressing time. Backpackers and visiting tourists have always been welcome at Home Hill, and it is partly because of the inviting friendliness of the locals that they return. I know there have been church services and public meetings, and there is a sense of disbelief in the community today following the loss of Tom Jackson. My condolences go out to both families, who are now coming to Australia to conduct funerals. Rest in peace, Mia and Tom.

NeuroCare Network

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.01 pm): Progressive neurological diseases can devastate the lives of far too many Queenslanders, but they do not have to anymore. The term

'progressive neurological disease' can be used to describe multiple sclerosis, motor neuron disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy and Alzheimer's. It is estimated that around 135,000 Queenslanders live with these chronic diseases, including my very good friend Gary Allen. That number does not include the families, carers and friends of those people who can also face insurmountable hurdles and obstacles in their daily lives.

There is no shortage of evidence that a person staying safely in their own home can be vital for their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing; that a person remaining in the workforce is fundamental to their sense of connectedness and dignity; and that addressing those needs serves a powerful public good for Queensland's communities and for the economy. The challenge for a responsible and socially engaged government is to identify how best to support those Queenslanders and how to do so in a way that is sustainable.

A group of 11 Queensland based progressive neurological disease support organisations, led by MS Queensland, is working hard to ensure that there is a coordination of supports and services, a sharing of ideas and successful strategies, a combined advocacy voice and a complementary approach across all progressive neurological diseases: it is called the NeuroCare Network. I am very proud to have played a very small early role in connecting the NeuroCare Network with the Queensland government and I am thrilled that the Palaszczuk government has committed \$150,000 for the trial of a coordinated approach in Townsville.

Progressive neurological diseases are not limited to a particular geographic region, nor are they limited to individuals who vote for a particular party. That is why it is great that the NeuroCare Network has received bipartisan support and why it is essential to support their efforts right across Queensland. The effective rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland will provide further options and life-work assistance to people living with the terrible impacts of neurological diseases. The NeuroCare Network will help Queenslanders access the information and identify the providers to fully enjoy those benefits. The NeuroCare Network is the first such effort in Australia. We should be proud of that, but I hope that Queensland's approach can provide a powerful model for the rest of the country.

Cedar Creek State School; Pimpama State School; Ormeau Lions Fair



Mr BOOTHMAN (Albert—LNP) (9.04 pm): With all the hype and propaganda that the Minister for Education spins in this chamber about record funding and the glossy brochures with warm, fuzzy pictures, the reality for parents and staff at both Cedar Creek State School and Pimpama State School is somewhat different. Sunday two weeks ago a parent of the Pimpama State School put pen to paper to express her frustration and anger to the Minister for Education. The letter outlined funding that the school thought was granted for a new administration building, but now it has been taken away. The letter states—

Our school was promised much needed funding to build a new administration building approximately eight months ago. This was celebrated and appreciated by all parents and staff alike, as it meant that we would finally have wheelchair and pram access to the 'Heart of the School'—the school office!—plus easier access for all of the elderly grandparents and carers who drop children off to school and need to speak to office staff. Plans were drawn up immediately and tenders were finalised.

The letter goes on to say—

Another local school, Pimpama College, has just had a hall built. I'm quite perplexed at how this 'luxury' can be granted funding, while our school is only wanting an administration building which can be ACCESSED BY ALL WHO NEED IT. Our current building is extremely old.

Further to the Pimpama State School issue, Cedar Creek State School, which is located in the foothills of Tamborine Mountain and is 142 years old, recently made efforts to have their very own tuckshop—a facility most schools take for granted. A member of the school community informed me that they believe due to exorbitant department of education minimum requirements the price has jumped from \$50,000 to \$180,000. The Cedar Creek P&C, whilst they do a fantastic job, certainly cannot afford \$180,000; it is simply out of reach for them. I say to the minister that these communities demand action and they ask that these facilities be implemented in these schools. The Cedar Creek State School is 142 years old and they want their tuckshop. All parents and people with wheelchairs have the right to access the administration block.

On a happier note, the Ormeau Lions Fair is on this weekend. This is the biggest annual event on the northern Gold Coast. It is an event which brings lots of families to the local community. It has been going on for many, many years and I would like to thank the committee, Pauline Weatherby and Bill McIntosh, and many other individuals for all their tireless work in getting the fair together this weekend.

Zillmere Festival

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (9.07 pm): It is a pleasure to have an opportunity to update the House on the Zillmere multicultural festival, which was held in my electorate last Sunday, and to talk about multiculturalism across my electorate more broadly. The Zillmere multicultural festival, now in its 15th year, has become a hallmark event on our local calendar and is one of the many important events that have taken place during August as part of Queensland Multicultural Month.

The Zillmere community is known for its rich diversity and has a long history of creating opportunities to recognise, express and celebrate that diversity. With vibrant and growing Bhutanese, Islander, Indigenous, Indian and Filipino communities, among many others, Zillmere is reflective of the cultural diversity across the Nudgee electorate where almost 30 per cent of people were born overseas. Zillmere, along with surrounding suburbs including Boondall, Nundah and Chermside, are some of the most culturally diverse areas on the north side of Brisbane.

The Zillmere Festival is a celebration of that diversity—a celebration of and for people of all cultures and all religions to enjoy. The festival seeks to uniquely balance traditional and contemporary expressions of culture. The day formally commenced with a welcome to country from Maroochy Baramba, local elder Uncle Alex, traditional dance by a Zillmere Aboriginal local dance group and continued throughout the day with cultural performances including Bollywood, Egyptian, Columbian and Polynesian dance, African drumming, Italian opera and arts and crafts, fabulous food and pony rides.

This year the festival was delivered through a partnership between Jabiru Community Youth and Children's Services, Kurbingui Youth Development Association and MDA Ltd—three organisations that work with great passion and purpose to provide a connected community in my and many other electorates. The festival was funded by Multicultural Affairs Queensland and the Brisbane City Council, and it was a pleasure to join with my colleague Jared Cassidy, councillor for Deagon ward, to officially open the festival. The Queensland government has been a proud supporter of the Zillmere Festival for a number of years. I thank my colleague the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Grace Grace, for providing festival organisers with the continuity of confirmed funding for 2017-18 in recognition of the importance of this event to the local community.

Queensland is an increasingly multicultural society, with census data estimating that Queensland is home to people from more than 220 countries and geographic locations. This government's commitment to multiculturalism, to the value we ascribe to social diversity and to inclusiveness, is demonstrated in the passing of the Multicultural Recognition Act 2016 earlier this year and its commencement on 1 July. This piece of legislation was an important step for Queensland in formally recognising our cohesive multicultural society with all of its diversity and the significant benefits this brings to our state.

In closing, I once again thank the organisers of the Zillmere multicultural festival, Kurbingui, Jabiru and MDA for their efforts in coordinating such a significant and successful community event that celebrated the diversity of our local community so well.

Gold Coast Waterways Authority

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (9.10 pm): I rise this evening to remind the parliament about the great achievements of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. Some years ago, when I first ran for the seat of Southport, there was a great deal of concern about the lack of a coordinated management process around the various agencies that were involved in taking care of the some 168 kilometres of Gold Coast waterways, particularly the Broadwater area, parts of Stradbroke, the foreshore areas of Southport and the Spit. The Newman government in the last term sought to establish a coordinated approach to this and established the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. What a great job they have done.

Over the past few years we have seen an amazing amount of maintenance work undertaken the length of breadth of the Broadwater. We have seen new facilities constructed over at the Spit and Doug Jennings Park, including a new amenities block with a rising main to connect the amenities block and the kiosk at the end of the Spit to the sewerage system. That was one of the things the community particularly asked for. We have also recently seen major restoration works of the western side of Doug Jennings Park—an area referred to as 'the finger', around the old marine stadium. This includes some 4,000 new trees planted in that area, bollards and security gates installed, more bins, enhanced security and new roadways which now restrict illegal access for campers and four-wheel drivers.

I am particularly pleased about the outstanding work the authority has done, in conjunction with Gold Coast City Council and with funding from the previous government, to complete that magnificent new boat ramp on the Southport foreshore. The boat ramp and the parking areas that adjoin it are effectively stage 3 of the re-establishment of the Broadwater Parklands that began back in 2005. It is fantastic to see that final stage, with the completion of the parklands and the new aquatic centre and now one of the finest boat-launching facilities in the state, if not in Australia. I can assure the House that the local boaties are enjoying the new facilities. I even ventured down there early one Saturday morning and demonstrated my worst—or perhaps best—reversing skills with a boat trailer to launch my jet ski. It was a little calamitous!

It would be remiss of me not to commend the great work of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. It has been a great initiative. I really believe that the Gold Coast and those who live in and around the Broadwater have benefited from the establishment of that authority some four years ago.

Road Safety

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (9.13 pm): I rise to urge all members and the people of Queensland to support the government's My Road Toll campaign. That was the message last Sunday from the Logan Road Safety Expo, held on Wembley Road. Our road toll is too high. Even one death on our roads is too many. We should recognise that a road death does not affect just the victim; it has a ripple effect that hurts their partner, children, parents, friends and indeed the whole community.

Recently while at my son's soccer training at Park Ridge one of the fathers spoke about being behind a car that unexpectedly simply swung across the road and clipped oncoming traffic. He pulled over and sat with the man as he faded in and out of consciousness. He relayed the small details: the little red car, the photo of the kids on his phone. When the man slumped over, he gently cradled his head. He remained with him, sitting in the passenger seat until the police and ambulance arrived. A week later he was still deeply affected by the incident. His journey home that day would be a memory that stayed with him and affected him for years to come. I am told that the man in the red car survived, but no doubt for him and his family there are tough days ahead. He, too, will never forget that day.

The whole of the Logan community is touched by the road toll. That is why the Minister for Main Roads's My Road Toll campaign will strike such an impact. It is the families—fathers, mothers, sons and daughters—telling their clear story. We need to be clear with the message of the 'fatal 5': distraction and inattention, speeding, drink and drug driving, failure to wear a seatbelt, and driving while fatigued. These are the causes of the majority of accidents, and we can make a difference. Do not let it be your family member who feels they need to participate in next year's My Road Toll campaign.

Last Sunday the Logan community made a difference on the road toll. The Logan Road Safety Expo was a tremendous success, with hundreds of families learning the lessons of road safety. The event was supported by the Logan City Council, Neighbourhood Watch, PCYC, Bendigo Bank and Toll. Wendy and Geoff Smith from the Crestmead PCYC were the driving force behind starting up the day a number of years ago at Waller Park, and now it is the largest in the state.

I also recognise Sergeant Matt Massouras from the Crestmead PCYC; Tracey from Crestmead Community Centre, who is so passionate about young drivers getting into work and safely getting there; Bob Clarke, who has taught so many people to drive and so much more about life and responsibility; the Logan police, including Mike and Ben; the fireys; and the ambulance workers. They are all doing great work out there to educate the public. The firefighters used their equipment to cut apart a car to show how they would rescue a person from an accident. All of the Logan community were out there to make a difference. They were there to spread the message of My Road Toll and how it affects not just the victim but also all Queenslanders who know someone hurt in this way.

Kawana Electorate

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (9.16 pm): I am continually impressed with the constituents of Kawana and the great community spirit they have. Recently I was pleased to award around 50 Kawana constituents at the Kawana community awards. Every year we recognise volunteers for their great contribution to the Kawana community. Recipients included dance instructors, event organisers, lifesavers, environmentalists as well as many other local community champions. Some nominees were nominated multiple times, testament to their dedication and commitment to helping others. It was great to catch up with Ian from Coast Guard Mooloolaba. I was reflecting with Ian that a few nights earlier I may have had to have the assistance of the coast guard out on the waters of the Sunshine Coast. It just shows that one should check the weather before one goes out onto the water.

I mention the Kawana Shoppingworld upgrade. Mirvac is investing in a fantastic expansion to Kawana Shoppingworld which will include cinemas. Currently there are cinemas available in Caloundra and Maroochydore but there are none in the Kawana electorate. It is great that Kawana Shoppingworld will finally have a cinema, more specialty stores and additional car parks for the complex. Upgrades will also include increased dining options as well as vastly improved street presence, both on Nicklin Way and on Point Cartwright Drive. The cinema complex will have 10 screens and an additional 750 car parks. We look forward to that development starting in the electorate.

Local roads around the hospital are still a concern to many in my electorate. The roundabout upgrades have started, but there is still a concern from the business community, with a 40 to 75 per cent increase in traffic when the hospital opens, that there will be major traffic delays, particularly when the hospital opens in April next year. I call on the government to continually look at and put heaps of money into those roads, including the Mooloolah River interchange.

I also ask for common-sense solutions with respect to signage. The Best Western hotel and other businesses just want a sign on Nicklin Way to show that there is a new business complex down there. There is a Coffee Club, Raw Energy, Good Bean and the Best Western hotel. We need some good signs. I would ask the minister to get the bureaucrats out of the way and put up a sign on Nicklin Way, at least in the interim, to show where the business community is. Particularly with the delay of the hospital, lots of businesses down there need more foot traffic.

I thank Pacific Lutheran College on its Ocean Festival a couple of weeks ago and Talara state college for its school fete. Both schools did an awesome job and thank you to all of the organisers for those amazing events.

Finally, I pay tribute to a real community champion, Brian Hall, who recently passed away. Brian was a champion in our Lake Currimundi-Kawana Lions Club. I offer my condolences to his wife, Dora. Brian was always the life of the party at the Lions Club. He was the emcee for many events and I struggled when speaking at these events to match his good wit. He certainly was the life of the party. To Dora and all of Brian's family, I wish them all the condolences I can give. He will be forever cherished in my memory.

Thompson, Ms J

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.19 pm): I rise to pay tribute to the contribution of Judy Thompson to my electorate of South Brisbane. After many years shaping young local minds as the principal of West End State School, Judy has recently retired. I have been privileged to work alongside Judy for many years not just as the local member but as a parent and I felt it fitting that I place on the parliamentary record my personal thanks for her service. Judy began her teaching career in 1979 at Bray Park State School and her passion for education was clear from the beginning of her career, with her second-year appraisal noting that her commitment to the classroom inspired enthusiasm and loyalty in her students. In 1999 Judy became a principal for the first time, developing a reputation as an innovative leader during the merging of primary and secondary schools into Kelvin Grove State College.

She joined the West End State School family as principal in 2009. I have seen firsthand the immense commitment that Judy brought to her role and the compassion that she felt for every student who passed through West End State School's gates. In a suburb that is growing and changing rapidly, Judy always sought the best for the local students and families of West End. As student numbers swelled, Judy has sought to ensure sustainable growth of the school. Her leadership and hard work paid off with the announcement in the most recent Palaszczuk Labor government state budget that West End State School would receive \$10.75 million over the next four years for new classrooms, a library and resource centre, and a new outdoor play area. Through this growth, though, Judy also has ensured that the values that make West End State School such a special school are maintained. She has driven a school culture that is committed not just to academic excellence but also to social justice, multiculturalism and public service.

Having just come to the end of Book Week, it is timely to highlight one of Judy's greatest passions—her love of reading. Throughout her career Judy emphasised the importance of reading to all of her pupils. The West End State School library is testament to this commitment, being listed on the Australian School Library Association's Great School Libraries list for a number of years. Just last year Judy won the Queensland School Library Association's award for Principal of the Year. Judy has now commenced her well-deserved retirement. I want to commend Judy for her enduring commitment to

public education and thank her for the 37 years of service she gave to children across Brisbane. On behalf of local West End community members, West End families, the school council and the West End State School P&C, I wish her all the best for her retirement and I thank her very much for her deep, deep service to our community.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.22 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams