

WEDNESDAY, 31 JULY 2019

ESTIMATES—INNOVATION, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE—INNOVATION, TOURISM INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Estimate Committee Members

Mr DA Pegg (Chair)
Mr JM Krause
Ms SL Bolton
Mr MA Boothman
Ms CL Lui
Mrs C Mullen

Members in Attendance

Mr DF Crisafulli
Mr MC Berkman
Mr JN Costigan
Mr MH Hart
Mr J-P H Langbroek
Dr CAC Rowan

In Attendance

Hon. KJ Jones, Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games

Mr M Jutsum, Chief of Staff

Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games

Mr D Walker, Director-General

Tourism and Events Queensland

Ms L Coddington, Chief Executive Officer

The committee met at 9.00 am.

 **CHAIR:** Good morning. I declare this hearing of estimates for the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee open. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. My name is Duncan Pegg. I am the member for Stretton and chair of the committee. Mr Jon Krause, member for Scenic Rim, is the deputy chair. The other committee members are: Ms Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa; Mr Mark Boothman, member for Theodore; Mrs Charis Mullen, member for Jordan; and Ms Cynthia Lui, the member for Cook. The committee has granted leave for non-committee members to attend and ask questions at its hearing today, so other members may be present over the course of the proceedings.

Today the committee will consider the Appropriation Bill 2019 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility. I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at my discretion as chair or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised

its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasting proceedings are available from the secretariat. I ask that all mobile phones and electronic devices be turned off or switched to silent mode. Also, I remind everyone that food and drink are not permitted in the chamber.

The committee will examine the portfolio areas in the following order: tourism industry development from 9 am to 10.30 am; innovation from 11 am to 12.30 pm; environment, national parks, heritage and Great Barrier Reef from 1.30 pm to 3 pm; science from 3.30 pm to 4.15 pm; and arts from 4.15 pm to 5 pm. The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. The visiting members present are Mr David Crisafulli, member for Broadwater, and Mr Jason Costigan, the member for Whitsunday.

I remind those present today that the committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament apply in this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. I intend to guide proceedings today so that relevant issues can be explored fully and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the minister, the director-general, officials and members of the public to the hearing. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or the director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the tourism industry development portfolio open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, I invite you to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Ms JONES: Queensland tourism continues to grow off the back of record investment by the Palaszczuk government. In the last year, 2.7 million international tourists spent, for the very first time, a record \$6 billion in Queensland, up 8.6 per cent. We are also seeing more Australians than ever before choosing to visit the state where life is beautiful one day and perfect the next. Some 24.6 million Australian travellers spent \$18.5 billion here in Queensland. For the first time in a decade, we have started to turn the tide on market share, growing faster than New South Wales and Victoria. This was my No. 1 KPI, and we are delivering.

We know that the former Newman government ripped \$188 million from the tourism budget, with no plan for growth or for ongoing funding for our RTO network. As a result, we saw tourism flatline. Because of our record investment and stronger partnerships across industry and the private sector, we have turned the corner. Today more than 2.8 million extra tourists are coming to Queensland than in the last year of the Newman government, and they are spending like never before—\$6.6 billion more in our economy than in 2014.

We are backing tourism because we know that this industry does not just create jobs in South-East Queensland; it also delivers new jobs and sustainable jobs right across our great state. This term we are investing an extra \$180 million to partner with the private sector and industry to create new tourism experiences and attractions. This is what the industry told us to focus on. This focus on industry development is delivering \$25 million for the Great Barrier Reef island restoration package, \$38 million for the Attracting Tourism Fund, \$36 million for the tourism infrastructure package and \$12 million for outback infrastructure funding.

As a result, we are delivering more than a quarter of a billion dollars in new tourism infrastructure and attractions, including more than \$165 million leveraged from the private sector. Later this year, construction is also set to start on the \$41 million 94-kilometre Wangetti Trail, set to become one of Australia's most iconic attractions, which the member for Cook can attest to. We also are progressing approaches to market for new integrated resorts in Cairns and the Gold Coast, and our investment attraction unit is laser focused on building our tourism investment pipeline. We have seen more than \$700 million in new hotels and resorts open in the last 12 months, with more than \$14 billion of tourism infrastructure still in the pipeline.

We also continue to focus on route development attraction. Since we were elected in 2015, we have secured 24 new and expanded international flights to Queensland, bringing 2.8 million extra seats worth more than \$2 billion in overnight visitor expenditure. When it comes to events, we call it 'magic'. We have more than doubled our events calendar, now worth more than \$800 million in Queensland, and kicked off new events such as the NRL magic round, QODE and SportAccord 2019.

Since the Premier declared 2019 the Year of Outback Tourism, our rural tourism operators have united like never before. The Premier has inspired a renewed focus on the outback and ensures that we back new events and build new attractions for visitors in outback Queensland.

We also have broken new ground when it comes to marketing our state. In partnership with Uber, we delivered the world's first rideshare submarine right here in our own very Great Barrier Reef—scUber, giving tourists a unique reef experience. A successful worldwide marketing campaign leveraged almost a billion dollars worth of free advertising of Queensland; is that right?

Ms Coddington: \$120 million.

Ms JONES: Talking it up! Queensland's industry is working together, and we are working really hard to grow tourism and tourism jobs right across our state, delivering an economic boon for Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. We will now move to questions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I refer to the department's responsibility to position Queensland as an attractive investment destination on page 2 of the SDS. Have international investors in Queensland's tourism industry started to be billed for the government's foreign land tax surcharge?

Ms JONES: Yes, they have. As the member knows from his time as a minister in government, government is about choices. We need to make choices about where we raise revenue. We made it very clear that we were not going to slug householders, as the Newman government did when it went to the 2012 and 2015 elections promising to reduce electricity prices. In fact, they increased by \$160 per year, by 40 per cent.

In regard to the tourism industry I can say that—you should know this, and I am sure you do—90 per cent of the businesses that operate in tourism in Queensland are small businesses. They are mum-and-dad operations based here in Queensland. A 40 per cent increase in electricity prices is a massive slug for those businesses. That is why as a government we have absolutely focused on not slugging small businesses in Queensland. In actual fact—and this is something that I know you have advocated for in the past—we delivered improvements in payroll tax for Queensland based businesses and for family run businesses.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, I refer again to the SDS at page 2 with regard to attractive investment destination. Can you advise when you were first notified about the foreign land tax surcharge?

Mr Walker: I thank the member for the question. In terms of specifically being advised, I do not recall precisely when that was. I would need to check through my emails and my diary. In terms of investment attraction, I can say pleasingly that we have exceeded our SDS target that you will see within the SDS documents in terms of investment attraction achieved—in fact, quite significantly above what we had posted.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, the question was about the foreign land tax surcharge. When were you first notified about it? Was it weeks before the budget? Was it when the budget was delivered?

Mr Walker: I do not recall. I would need to go back and have a look.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Has the department done any modelling about the impact of this tax on industry?

Mr Walker: We are working with the Office of State Revenue and Treasury generally. We certainly will continue to get a good idea on any impacts, if at all, with regard to that change. As I say, we are very pleased with our delivery against our SDS target on investment attraction for the year just past.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, I refer to the department's service area objective to promote long-term growth of the tourism industry by facilitating a strategic whole-of-government approach to planning and investment, and it is in the SDS at page 3. Has the Premier's office had any involvement, including consultation, over Queensland cruise tourism initiatives or policies considered by the department?

Mr Walker: Not that I am aware. We clearly work closely with departments such as State Development, with Treasury and with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. In terms of our strategic work and our policy work, I am not aware of any such contact.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Did the Premier's chief of staff declare his financial interest in the cruise tourism sector to the department?

Mr Walker: I have not had any conversation with the chief of staff regarding that. Like I say, our advice and our strategic work has been something that we have been piecing together, and rather successfully, I must say, given our results.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Has the department prepared any briefing notes or cabinet papers relating to cruise tourism since 2017?

Mr Walker: I would need to check. I do not recall offhand, but I would need to take that on advisement and come back.

Ms JONES: If I could add with regard to the question—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, my question was to the director-general. If the minister wants to—

Ms JONES: Yes, but it was about a political staffer—

Mr CRISAFULLI: No—

Ms JONES:—and a political staffer in the Premier's—

CHAIR: Order! Member for Broadwater, the minister is trying to add to the answer from the director-general.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Then he should—

CHAIR: I think—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order.

Ms JONES: I think there is a point that needs to be made—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—because it highlights a key difference—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—between the LNP and Labor governments. Chiefs of staff of the Premier—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—do not ring up departments—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—and officers in my department.

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: I will hear the point of order.

Ms JONES: We know you operate like that, but we do not.

CHAIR: I will hear the point of order from the deputy chair.

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Chair, under standing orders 181, 182 and 183, a minister can only answer questions directly put to them or add additional information in writing. The question was put to the director-general and I think the director-general is required to answer it.

CHAIR: You have made your point, Deputy Chair, and the director-general has answered the question. Member for Broadwater, do you have any further questions?

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the CEO of Tourism and Events Queensland. I refer to the department's service area objective to secure major events in the SDS at page 4. The minister made headlines last year announcing a plan to bring an NFL game to Suncorp Stadium after a taxpayer trip to North America. Will there be an NFL game played here in Queensland during this term of government?

Ms JONES: There was no commitment. There was just a meeting and a range of—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Again, Mr Chairman, my question was to the CEO.

Ms JONES: You could ask me questions!

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will come to you.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, there is an attempt to get the information that you are seeking, so you are being unruly. I call Ms Coddington.

Ms JONES: Yes, and I am trying to help with an answer.

CHAIR: Yes. Thank you, Minister.

Ms Coddington: Thank you for the question, honourable member. On trips we constantly are looking to grow our events calendar and we investigate opportunities. At this point we are continuing to talk to different organisations about the potential to have new events in Queensland. Events like an NFL match would need to be investigated, the business case would need to be developed and then we would need to see what the opportunities were.

Mr CRISAFULLI: So no commitment at this stage?

Ms Coddington: No commitment at this point.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have a further question to the CEO of TEQ. Last month the Premier instructed the minister to put a deal on the table to bring the NRL 2020 to Suncorp Stadium. What deal did TEQ put forward and why did it fail to fulfil the Premier's request of the minister?

CHAIR: Just a point of clarification: member for Broadwater, you referred to 'the NRL 2020'. Could you just clarify for the benefit of the committee what you mean by that?

Mr CRISAFULLI: That is the grand final.

CHAIR: Okay. You did not mention grand final, so thanks for clarifying that. Ms Coddington.

Ms Coddington: With regard to the grand final, for 2020 our understanding is that the 2020 match is contracted to the New South Wales government.

Ms JONES: Read the paper.

Mr CRISAFULLI: So the answer to that is also no?

Ms JONES: Read the paper.

Ms Coddington: The 2020 grand final is not available.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Sure. A further question to the CEO: Minister Jones has been included in media reports of IndyCars returning to the Gold Coast that date back to 2016. Last year the minister and the Premier made an announcement that IndyCars may be relaunched in March next year. Could you indicate to us if IndyCars will be coming to the Gold Coast next year?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, just before the—

Ms JONES: Can you table that press release? I am not aware of a press release with my name in it.

CHAIR: Yes, and that was exactly the point I was going to ask. Member for Broadwater, do you have the media reports to table?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will check, Mr Chairman, but there were obviously public statements around the IndyCar, including in recent times. I wanted to know if the IndyCars will be returning to the Gold Coast next year.

CHAIR: Just before you answer, Ms Coddington: member for Broadwater, it appears you do not have the media reports you are referring to. Do you have the dates or the name of the article or a reference point to benefit the committee?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, the question is still relevant. I will remove the reference to 2016, but there has been considerable publicity in recent times about IndyCars returning to the Gold Coast, including a front-page story in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. The question is whether or not IndyCars will be coming to the Gold Coast next year.

Ms Coddington: With regard to IndyCars, that proposal is being led by the department of sport and rec. TEQ is aware of interest to secure a leg of the IndyCar series for the Gold Coast. We are always looking for opportunities to secure new or growing events and major events that will deliver significant tourism value for Queensland. As you know, TEQ event investment decisions are made within a competitive environment and based on the value a prospective event is likely to deliver against our mandated outcomes.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Did TEQ attempt—again to the CEO—

CHAIR: Sorry, member for Broadwater, but who are you addressing your question to?

Mr CRISAFULLI: To the CEO again. Did TEQ attempt to secure next year's State of Origin game 3 for Townsville rather than it going to Adelaide?

Ms Coddington: The NRL have made it very clear that the third match is out for bidding and that the states of Queensland and New South Wales have one match each and the other is out to bid. They are looking for new markets and therefore have Perth and Adelaide in their sights as opposed to current markets, which they see Queensland as being.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Again to the CEO, would there be a pitch put forward? That decision has been made for 2020, but for future years is there an opportunity for that to be held in a regional city, for example Townsville, in 2020?

Ms JONES: Do you care about Townsville now, do we?

Ms Coddington: We would always consider those opportunities. Again, as I have just stated, we also look for the economic benefit of the cost-benefit analysis that we do on bringing events. As we know, events like the State of Origin draw a very large crowd and that comes into the economic analysis that the NRL would make and how much money that they were looking for to secure such an event.

Mr CRISAFULLI: A further question to the CEO of TEQ, and I refer to TEQ's expenses in the SDS at page 22. Do any of TEQ's staff who work in Brisbane live interstate?

Ms Coddington: No.

Ms JONES: Go after the staff. Charming!

Mr CRISAFULLI: Again a question to the CEO: have Queensland taxpayers been billed for any flights or other expenses relating to travel between Queensland and New South Wales for Mr Drummond Montgomery?

Ms Coddington: There would be occasions that that would have happened—

Ms JONES: Like trying to secure the grand final, for example!

Ms Coddington:—because he goes to New South Wales quite often to meet with the—

Ms JONES: The NRL!

Ms Coddington:—NRL but also Opera Australia and many other proponents where we have secured events. The Ring Cycle with Opera Australia and QPAC required lengthy negotiations.

Mr CRISAFULLI: What value for money did Queensland taxpayers receive from sending two executives, including Mr Drummond Montgomery, to the Burning Man event at a cost of \$27,000?

Ms Coddington: We are always looking for new events within our events portfolio. Going to the States on that trip was significant for us—not just for looking at what is a large, remote event that could offer learning potential for us but that trip also included a meeting with the World Surf League to ensure we could continue to secure the Pro on the Gold Coast as well as talking to Nashville in regard to an MOU to back up the work that we do with CMC Rocks. In regard to that, we are looking at a remote style event for which we have a working title of Oasis Q. It is not about replicating what you talk about, Burning Man, but it is about developing an event that is focused on wellness and First Nations people for a location where we can draw a large number of people. There were learnings out of Burning Man that we will apply to the development of that event.

Mr CRISAFULLI: What were those learnings and why would a trip funded by taxpayers deliver value for money for Queenslanders?

Ms Coddington: That event in America draws an audience of around 77,000 people. As I said, it is a very large, remote event—one road in, one road out. That enabled us to learn about how they manage that traffic flow and how the towns along the way are activated to optimise that. We also looked at site logistics—as I said, traffic management, set-up and pack-down. We also had meetings with them regarding the growth and development of the event. We focused on creative content, artistic vision, operational requirements and future planning of the event.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I refer to the department's capital statement on page 57 of Budget Paper No. 3. The Regional Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development Program had a \$12.4 million capital grant budget allocation the last financial year. This financial year, the previously estimated \$39.6 million program is nowhere to be found in the budget papers. Can you please detail what the actual spend of this budgeted amount was and where the other \$27.2 million has been allocated?

Ms JONES: Sorry, which program are you talking about?

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is the Regional Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development Program. It had a \$12.4 million capital budget last financial year and it had forward projections.

Ms JONES: I think it is the Growing Tourism Infrastructure project. This is a \$36 million program. As we said, we are the first government in the history of Queensland to have in the tourism portfolio capital expenditure to grow new tourism infrastructure. The tourism infrastructure fund is a \$36 million fund in total, of which we have allocated \$33.8 million.

So far we have announced 12 projects. This includes at Australia Zoo the Camp Crocodile Hunter, a mix of camping, glamping and cabin accommodation options at the zoo on the Sunshine Coast. Last week I announced the Australian Jet Boats project, which is Moreton rafting, which is a high-speed tour boat departing from Brisbane and taking visitors to key Moreton Bay locations. We have also announced funding for the Australian Age of Dinosaurs, which is the Gondwana Stars Observatory, and the March of the Titanosaurs exhibit at Winton. We have also provided capital funding for the Big Pineapple corporation, which is revitalising and modernising the visitor experience at the Big Pineapple on the Sunshine Coast.

In the city of the Gold Coast, we have partnered with the Gold Coast city council for the artificial reef and dive attraction site. This afternoon I am going to the Whitsundays, where we will be announcing a partnership with a new \$8 million project in that area. In regard to Lady Musgrave Experience, we have also partnered there for a new three-level multipurpose pontoon at Musgrave island. In regard to Longreach, we have also funded, with the Qantas museum, a unique light show and experience that tells the history of Qantas and outback Queensland. We have also partnered with Sunlover for the expansion of marine infrastructure in Cairns and the Whitsundays.

I think everyone in the room would know Sharpie. We have also partnered with Story Bridge adventures on a range of new adventure outdoor activities in Brisbane. Lady Musgrave Island, which has been rated globally as one of our best experiences, has also been funded. I was in Cairns a couple of weeks ago where we announced a more than \$4 million package for a number of new tourism infrastructure experiences. We are including—I thought my kids would be super excited about this—two new water slides on the Great Barrier Reef. I have never gone diving; I have only ever gone snorkelling, so I thought this was something my family could do. Basically, the operators up there—Sunlover general manager Sharon Sheldrake—said that the business operated a slide at Moore Reef and they wanted to expand it. They said—

Without the government's support, these projects wouldn't have been finalised. They will help more tourists come to Cairns, we've got a great marketing campaign to push that out. The project and the build will also create jobs.

You cannot get a better birthday party than that.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, regarding the department's objective to promote the long-term growth of the tourism industry, would you update us on the progress for the short-term lets code of conduct, to finalise the ongoing requests from councils, industry and residents regarding this, which continues to cause ongoing anger and unrest?

Ms JONES: I thank the member for Noosa. I know that the member for Noosa is a strong advocate for her local community in this regard. I appreciate, as we have spoken about in the past, that Noosa is feeling the brunt of this expanded industry. This is part of the issue when you are delivering record growth in tourism, as we are on the Sunshine Coast, for example. Under the Newman government the industry was worth around \$2 billion. It is now worth almost \$3 billion under our watch.

As I have said previously in the parliament, we are working through these issues with the many stakeholders who have varying views about the way forward. The honourable member would be well aware that the Noosa council is already looking to amend its own planning scheme to limit the locations where peer-to-peer sharing is allowed. We found through the discussions at the peer-to-peer round table that there are a lot of powers already under the Local Government Act that enable local councils to deliver this.

One of the key things we heard from the industry reference group was that it did not want one-size-fits-all. Certainly, my concern is where you have communities—I have spoken about this in the past—in the outback. When you have major events like we have just had, the Big Red Bash in Birdsville, they need the additional accommodation to cater for the people. Airbnb has enabled those events to grow.

My issue is that this is a national problem. We are seeing the states coming up with different solutions. I know that New South Wales has been grappling with this for some years and they have not got any better solutions. I can confirm today that I have written to Simon Birmingham to say that we need a national discussion of tourism ministers on this. The latest advice I received yesterday is that the senior officers—directors-general—from all states and territories who are meeting next week will be discussing how we can go forward with a framework that is consistent for operators across the country.

I think there is a real fear in the states going it alone and creating a patchwork of regulation when we should have consistent regulation across the country. That discussion and meeting is happening next week. I am very pleased to talk to the member for Noosa about the outcome of that and certainly make her views known at the tourism ministers' meeting in Cairns coming up soon.

Ms BOLTON: Thank you.

CHAIR: Minister, I have a question in relation to page 3 of the SDS and also your opening comments regarding record visitors to Queensland. Could you please update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's success in growing tourism in Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I said, our government absolutely understands the importance of tourism. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries globally, as more and more people have the opportunity to travel. We have to be out there aggressively chasing new major events and new tourism opportunities to get people to choose Queensland in an ever-growing competitive market.

The chair of Tourism Australia, Bob East, is familiar to many of us. Sometimes you have to take one for the team. I said to the federal tourism minister that, while I did not want to see Bob East leave Queensland as our chair, both Leanne and I felt that having a Queenslanders in the top job nationally would be to all of our benefit. I make this point because tourism means jobs. It does not mean jobs just here in South-East Queensland; it means jobs right across many of the communities that are represented here today. That is why we increased funding by an additional \$180 million, as I have spoken about. Also, we are the first government in Queensland's history to say that we are going to go out there with matching funds to build brand-new tourism infrastructure and to fast-track that infrastructure to create jobs.

In addition to that, we have also provided the four-year funding guarantee, as included in the budget, where Tourism and Events Queensland can actually get on with the job of going out there and chasing events, knowing full well that they have that money in their back pocket. As I have said at previous estimates, one of the biggest challenges in chasing events is not what the member for Broadwater wanted to talk about; it is the fact that when they were in government they had no money in the forward estimates. When you secure events, you do not want a one-off; you want to have a two- to three-year contract. For example, in the case of the Logies, why would we go to all the trouble of securing the Logies for the Gold Coast for one year and put all that effort, money and resources into that to see it poached by another state a year later? We have long-term, ongoing, yearly contracts, which is why it is so critical that we continue to have that four-year funding guarantee.

I say all of this because our record stands in stark contrast to the time in which the honourable shadow minister was a minister in the government. We know that this is what tourism looked like under the Newman government. It flatlined. That was a direct consequence of cutting funding for what they described at the time was a pillar. I do like a graph. The Palaszczuk government very clearly has an upward trajectory in growth of visitor spend in our state because we are backing tourism and tourism jobs.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair. The minister knows well that she should not be using props and I would ask her to cease doing that in the future or else table documents immediately.

Ms JONES: I am happy to table them immediately.

CHAIR: The minister is tabling those graphs.

Ms JONES: That is international visitor spend.

CHAIR: We need the leave of the committee to table. Is leave granted? Leave is granted.

Ms JONES: As I said, it is not only growth in international visitors who are choosing to come to Queensland because of our aggressive approach to deliver world-class events and to ensure that our campaigns are relevant to tourists that we are competing with globally, we are also seeing more Australians than ever before come to Queensland and spend more in our economy. I would like to table the document which shows how much more Australians are spending now in the Queensland market. This is what was happening under the Newman government, once again flatlining.

CHAIR: Is leave granted to table those documents? Leave is granted.

Ms JONES: Under the Palaszczuk government you can see quite clearly that if you invest in tourism you invest in jobs.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Are you tabling that document?

Ms JONES: I am tabling the document.

CHAIR: Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Does that address your point of order?

Mr KRAUSE: I would ask you to direct the minister to stop using props as she knows full well she is not supposed to under the standing orders.

CHAIR: Deputy Chair, the minister is tabling the documents and handing them to the secretariat as you have seen. There is no point of order.

Mrs MULLEN: With reference to page 4 of the SDS and Queen's Wharf Brisbane, can the minister update the committee on the progress of this project and the expected economic value the project will have for the state?

Ms JONES: As I said, this is a really exciting project. Whenever I am travelling around Brisbane people raise with me, 'What is the time line?' At 18 months I think it has been the largest excavation project that Queensland has ever seen. Excitingly, a number of weeks ago we announced that it was moving into the construction phase with two tower cranes now on the skyline.

Today I am pleased to announce that tenders have closed and are currently being assessed for the Neville Bonner Bridge. Today we will be able to release some of the design work on what the new Neville Bonner Bridge will look like. As you know, this creates a brand new connection between the north bank of the river and the south bank of the river. Construction is expected to get underway in the first quarter of 2020 and be completed by the middle of 2022. We expect that by having this new connection over the Brisbane River, which has been talked about since I think 2001 when I first started working on a north bank document, around 1.4 million additional people will use the bridge each and every year crossing between the north of the river and South Bank. The landing point for the bridge is opposite the big wheel. However, I can advise—I know there were some media reports—that the latest advice I have is that it will not have an impact on the big wheel's operation and it will continue to operate throughout the construction.

As you know, the \$3.6 billion Queen's Wharf integrated resort will completely change the face not only of tourism for Queensland but also for locals as well when you think about the more than 50 new restaurants and bars that will be there for everybody who is coming to visit but also for us as locals. The excavation phase, which I have just spoken about, supported around 100 jobs. Twenty-eight of the 32 contracts tendered for the excavation and shoring works were placed with South-East Queensland companies and there were even three regional based companies that secured work, including a Toowoomba based fence hire company. Excitingly, 99 per cent of the materials that supported the excavation and shoring works were sourced from South-East Queensland.

Stage 1 of construction works for the new waterline park, mangrove walk and bicentennial bikeway upgrade between 1 William Street and the Goodwill Bridge are under way and it is expected that the mangrove walk and the waterline park, which will be the first public realm—and we have talked a lot about the benefit of having additional public amenity for locals—is expected to be delivered before Christmas. We have had to put up with the construction—as with any major project that is what you have to do—but Queenslanders and residents of Brisbane will be able to experience some of that new public realm before Christmas this year.

Ms LUI: Minister, the SDS on page 4 also references the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund. How is this fund helping to grow tourism in Queensland and what funds have been leveraged from private investment?

Ms JONES: As I said, during every election you meet with your stakeholders—as you do regularly in this job, which is one of the great things about being the tourism minister because we have great stakeholders, great people who are very enthusiast who we work with on a daily basis—and what they said to me before the last election was the number one thing we could do to see, as in those charts that I have tabled, an upkick in trajectory was to invest in new experiences.

Queensland is known as a wonderful destination. People recognise that it is a beautiful place to visit, but ensuring we continue to modernise our offering and to have new experiences is what the industry told us would be the best game changer, lock in the funding guarantee, which we have done, and also provide additional funding. That is why I am pleased that through this infrastructure funding we have now awarded funding to 13 projects. As I said, I will be in the Whitsundays tomorrow announcing further funding through this fund. Combined, these projects will support up to 200 construction jobs, 290 jobs when operational and inject an additional \$65 million into the Queensland economy each and every year.

In answering the shadow minister's questions, I said that we have partnered with some of the best-known industry operators in Queensland because what I wanted, given the mandate from our Premier, is to get jobs and get jobs now. We are laser focused on creating jobs so we partner with the people we have the confidence will deliver that infrastructure on time and create and open the doors and enable us to start getting the benefit of that investment.

As I said, \$8 million for the wildlife camping experience on the Sunshine Coast. I think many people in this room, both the member for Noosa and the shadow minister, would know Simon Latchford from Visit Sunshine Coast. He is very passionate about the Sunshine Coast. I have not met anyone who lives on the Sunshine Coast who is not passionate about the Sunshine Coast, and I am sure the member for Noosa knows why. Simon said that one of the issues they have is a lot of the accommodation is two- or three-night accommodation. This Australia Zoo experience really complements the existing accommodation that is on the Sunshine Coast and does provide for day-night travellers as well. It is filling a bit of a gap in the Sunshine Coast market.

As I said, we have also backed investors in the Big Pineapple. I am sure many remember the Big Pineapple. The member for Jordan is nodding. She is more my age so that is our childhood memories. Also we have backed an artificial reef and dive site on the Gold Coast, something that the mayor of the Gold Coast has been very passionate about. I think where we have landed on the dive site on the Gold Coast will be a major win. It is a great location and is a new, modern experience that is different to other dive sites across Queensland. We are backing the expansion of the Sunlover marine infrastructure in Cairns and the Whitsunday—backing our reef operators; and new outdoor adventures on the Story Bridge.

Both the shadow minister and I had a significant birthday this year. I got to climb the Story Bridge for the first time, which I never thought I would do. I am putting that down to a new lease on life. We are also delivering a new three-level pontoon at Lady Musgrave Island which, as I said, will include the first underwater accommodation available on the Great Barrier Reef. These are really exciting initiatives that would not have happened without state government investment. Certainly we have fast-tracked that investment.

CHAIR: Minister, the Premier declared 2019 the Year of Outback Tourism. I refer you to page 2 of the SDS. How is the Palaszczuk government helping to grow tourism in the outback?

Ms JONES: I am sure I speak on behalf of all committee members when I say that, as Queenslanders, we know how tough it is for many of our peers who live in remote and outback parts of Queensland when it comes to drought and what we have seen in the past 24 months with flooding rains as well. Recently I was at an event in my own community with St Vincent de Paul. The head of St Vincent de Paul Queensland remarked that this is the only state in Australia where they simultaneously run a fundraising charity for both drought victims and flood victims. This goes to the length and breadth of our state. The member for Cook is here. She understands what it is like to represent a community that is spread over such large areas of land.

That is why I am so proud that the Premier has chosen 2019 to be the Year of Outback Tourism. I have had the great privilege of going to the outback a number of times this year and meeting with tourism operators, who are really working hard to deliver additional economic spend in their local communities. We are the first government in Australia to provide funds to partner with councils and tourism operators to build new attractions in the outback. In 2018-19 we committed \$12.2 million for outback tourism infrastructure. This includes the \$10 million Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund and more than \$2 million for the expansion and refurbishment of the Australian Workers Heritage Centre in Barcaldine.

In this the Year of Outback Tourism, we have put investment to work to fund 15 projects throughout the Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund. I have already talked about some of those projects. The Cobbold Gorge glass bridge will be a game changer for tourism in that area, as will the Dinosaur Dreaming Trail in Winton and Barcaldine, which are already completed. You can take my word for it, but with all things in politics it is always better to hear it from the horse's mouth, although in this case maybe it is the dinosaur's mouth. The Australian Age of Dinosaurs founder David Elliott said that it is already making a difference. He said that they have broken records in regard to visitors per day. They are trying to fit 45 people on a tour as it has been so busy, but that is great. In the middle of the school holidays, everyone hits at once.

Work is also underway on the Freedom Parks at Aramac, Jericho and Muttaborra. There is the Hands Sharing Country Together project at Barcaldine; the Experience the Brisbane Line project at Charleville; All Aboard! Time Travel After Dark experience at Cunnamulla; the Bigger Big Rig and tree walk at Roma; as I mentioned earlier, the Qantas Super Constellation display at Longreach—and it was

pretty amazing to go inside that aeroplane, which will be a great tourist attraction; and for the first time we are providing five-star ecolodges at Longreach. Another six projects are soon to commence: the artesian baths and landscaping at Julia Creek; outback rail adventures at Longreach; conference room and camp kitchens at Adels Grove; the outback Gondwana dinosaur interpretation centre at Eromanga; the courthouse virtual reality hologram at Birdsville; and the Riversleigh Fossil Centre revitalisation at Mount Isa.

I have never seen so much excitement in the outback regarding tourism. It makes such a difference because when there is a downturn in other economic activities tourism can fill the breach.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, earlier you spoke about the Great Barrier Reef Island Resorts Rejuvenation Program. I refer to page 4 of the SDS. Can you please inform the committee about what the program is doing to help inject new life into tourism on our Great Barrier Reef islands?

Ms JONES: You are right: the Great Barrier Reef is the lifeblood of many tourism operations. I am sure the member for Whitsunday is well aware of that. It contributes around \$6 billion to the economy every year and supports more than 60,000 jobs. That is why, as a government, we are absolutely determined to protect the Great Barrier Reef for future generations. We are also working with the tourism industry to create new tourism opportunities and to grow investment in our islands. For too long we have seen some Great Barrier Reef islands suffer—some because of cyclones and some because of economic issues. We decided very clearly to go to the last election—we were the only side of politics to do so—with a package to revitalise our Great Barrier Reef islands. I am very pleased to say that we are seeing a massive resurgence in the Great Barrier Reef islands.

Only last month we saw Daydream Island open. Hayman Island is reopening later this month. I am proud to say that 10 Great Barrier Reef island resort projects have now been awarded funding under the \$25 million package. These are right up and down the length and breadth of the Great Barrier Reef. They include new and improved public walking trails, better public amenities, renewable energy and visitor infrastructure. We have supported projects such as on Green Island, where we have been upgrading walking trails, and on Orpheus Island. We are reconstructing a jetty at South Molle Island that was damaged during Cyclone Debbie. There are new marina terminals and walking trails on Hamilton Island. We are improving water, energy and waste management on Hayman Island and seeing better renewable energy infrastructure on Lady Elliott Island. That work is now underway and will support around 150 jobs during construction.

Once again, the industry has come out fully supporting the investment that we are making across the Great Barrier Reef. The CEO of Hamilton Island resort, Glenn Bourke, said—

Thank you to you and your team for this wonderful grant and corresponding opportunity for Hamilton Island and the greater environs of the Great Barrier Reef in our region. It provides us with the ability to lift our game environmentally and to commit to significant new infrastructure to deliver great outcomes for tourism and the environment.

Ville Resort Casino CEP Michael Jones said—

Some of these islands and resorts have not been invested in for a long time and there is a chance for renewal. It is great to see that there is a mounting interest for people wanting to travel to these destinations.

Lady Elliott Island managing director Peter Gash said—

I feel confident that this initiative will pay tremendous dividends for the state of Queensland and the state government for having shown the courage and the foresight to make this a reality for Queensland's special islands. These islands are all truly very precious gems that deserve our absolute best to ensure that they are protected and can serve future generations.

We are very proud of our record. We understood that there was an intervention that could be made. That is why we invested \$25 million and, as a consequence of our partnering fund with the private sector, we are starting to see that investment flow.

CHAIR: We will now move to non-government questions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, in my last question I referred to the Regional Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development Fund. The minister's answer was about the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund. I want to go back to the budget from last year, on page 68. Of the \$12.4 million capital grant money for the Regional Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development Fund, how much was spent?

CHAIR: As a point of clarification before we ask for the answer, member for Broadwater, you referred to the budget from last year and not this year; is that correct?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have referenced it this year and the minister's answer pointed to a different fund. I am asking, of the Regional Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development Fund, how much of the \$12.4 million was spent—

Ms JONES: Can I clarify: it is called the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund now.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I understand. I am asking: of the \$12.4 million, how much was spent?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, it is important to get the names of these programs right to avoid confusion.

Mr CRISAFULLI: That is right, Mr Chairman. That is why I am asking how much of the \$12.4 million was spent. I am asking the director-general.

Mr Walker: In terms of the naming of that particular fund, the minister responded just a little earlier and she is absolutely correct: it was renamed the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund. In terms of the allocation, it was \$33.8 million, as we previously advised. The \$24½ million—I am getting some information on that. I can say that the vast majority of the program has been committed. I am seeking some information as to how much was spent.

You will see in the SDS or the budget documentation that we have made some movement in our funds over years. That is primarily to align our cash flows with those of the private sector. Essentially, these are grants to the private sector where we agree milestone payments contractually. Those milestone payments feature at a number of different stages throughout the FEs, so we recast our funds. I will get you some information on how much was spent, but I can assure the member that the vast majority of the \$33.8 million for the GTI Fund is indeed committed.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, my question was how much has been expended? Of the \$12.4 million is it half, is it three-quarters, is it a third, is it a sixth?

Mr Walker: I am just getting that information now.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My next question is to the director-general. I will take that on notice and hopefully we can get that information back. I refer to the \$23 million allocation just mentioned around the Great Barrier Reef resort which is at page 57 of Budget Paper No. 3. How much from last year's \$10 million budget for this package has been spent?

Mr Walker: It is a very similar answer to the one I have given with regard to GTI. It is worth noting that these are grants programs in which we are merely a contributor to a private sector investment. It is not the classic capital works that a state government agency would undertake where it controls the project. We are very much relying upon the time lines of the private sector.

Ms JONES: Progress payments.

Mr Walker: What we do is agree milestone payments or progress payments, as the minister mentions, and they are very much in line with the private sector's delivery arrangements. In recent times we have recast, as we often do, our cash flows to align with those milestone payments.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have a further question. This is about Great Keppel Island—

CHAIR: Who is your question directed towards?

Mr CRISAFULLI: To the director-general again.

Ms JONES: It is pretty predictable.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I refer to the \$770,000 expenditure. Why is this amount about \$5 million less than was budgeted?

Mr Walker: The Great Keppel Island pilot project is very much one to incentivise development on Great Keppel Island. It is very dependent upon Tower Holdings undertaking a sale and a new developer coming on line. We will continue to recast those cash flows until such time as there has been a sale. In collaboration with the new developer, we will align our payments to their development program.

Mr KRAUSE: My question is to the director-general. Ecotourism has been referenced in Service Delivery Statements every budget since the Palaszczuk government was elected, but figures in this year's budget show that the figures for last financial year's overnight stays are 30,000 fewer than targeted. Can the committee assume that during this term of government, since the 2017 election, no additional overnight ecotourism stays have been delivered?

Mr Walker: Are you referring to our SDS documentation or that of another department?

Mr KRAUSE: I am referring to your SDS at page 4.

Ms JONES: Our SDS shows that we have targets around visitor increase in numbers and overnight stays.

Mr Walker: Your question is a specific question with regard to ecotourism visit overnight stays?

Mr KRAUSE: It is and the overnight stays—

Ms JONES: That is included in our overall targets.

Mr KRAUSE: The actual figure was 30,000 fewer this year than targeted.

CHAIR: Deputy Chair, just to clarify. You refer to the SDS at page 4. There are actually no figures on page 4 of the SDS. Can you please point specifically—

Mr KRAUSE: Forgive me, Mr Chair. I was actually referring to the DES SDS, but one of this department's targets is to work with DES to increase overnight stays.

Ms JONES: Ask this afternoon.

Mr KRAUSE: The SDS shows that there are 30,000 overnight stays fewer than targeted.

CHAIR: I am going to rule that question out of order because you will have an opportunity to ask that this afternoon to the department. You are clearly not referring to this SDS. Are there any further questions, member for Broadwater?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have a question of the director-general regarding the department's key priority to commence developing the Wangetti Trail which is on page 2 of the SDS. The minister referred to a commencement date. What month of what year do you believe construction will start on this project?

Ms JONES: In the last quarter.

Mr Walker: I am just—

Ms JONES: It is the last quarter of this year. I will be up there before the end of the year turning the sod.

Mr Walker: Correct.

Ms JONES: You will not be turning the sod; I will be turning the sod.

Mr Walker: You will be turning the sod, Minister.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The department's website has previously stated that construction would start in quarter 1 of 2020.

Ms JONES: So bringing it forward into the last quarter of 2019, that is how I roll.

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Chair, the minister is constantly interrupting the committee's proceedings. I would ask that you direct her to desist from those interruptions.

Ms JONES: I am getting very bored because you are not asking me anything.

CHAIR: You have made your point, Deputy Chair. I have given everybody on this committee in the proceedings so far a fair bit of leeway and I ask that everyone comply with the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, I have had a look through publicly available material and it appears that there have been over half a dozen construction start dates proposed and announced by either the minister or the member for Cook. I would like to know where the clarity is around the start dates. The minister today has said the last quarter of this year, but the department's website has listed multiple different sites as has the website itself?

Mr Walker: The advice from my department is that construction will commence later this year.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the minister. I refer to Budget Paper No. 4 at page 64 relating to the additional \$13.9 million for global tourism hubs and ecotourism trails. Could you provide a breakdown between how much has been allocated to global tourism hubs and how much has been allocated towards ecotourism trails?

Ms JONES: In regard to global tourism hubs that answer was provided to you in response to a question on notice so you have the breakdown.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I would like you to answer that question.

Ms JONES: I have answered that question. You have it on the record. It was provided to you at 10 am yesterday.

Mr CRISAFULLI: You were not able to say how much of the \$12 million has been expended and now you cannot give me—

Ms JONES: It is about \$5 million.

CHAIR: Order! Member for Broadwater, you have asked a question that has been asked in the questions on notice. There is a whole range of other non-government members who are keen to ask questions. Do you have a question?

Mr CRISAFULLI: With respect, I have asked a very direct question. It is a \$13.9 million fund and I want to know—

Ms JONES: I cannot help it if you do not read your answers to your own questions on notice, mate. I answered that question yesterday.

Mr CRISAFULLI: So you do not know?

CHAIR: Order, Minister! Order, member for Broadwater! Member for Broadwater, you have asked your question and you have received an answer from the minister. Do you have a further question?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Yes, I do. I will ask the director-general, who might be over his brief. Can you provide a further breakdown of the amount allocated to the Cairns global tourism hub and the amount for the Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub?

Mr Walker: I can confirm that. As the minister has mentioned, it is in the answer to the question on notice tabled yesterday at 10 am.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, would you be able to give a breakdown on how these funds will be spent on the global tourism hub versus the ecotourism initiative of the government? I want a simple breakdown between two KPIs.

Ms JONES: You asked it and you got the answer yesterday. Do your homework.

Mr Walker: I have just asked my staff to provide me with a copy of the answer to the question on notice. My understanding and my recollection is that that was provided in the answer to the question on notice provided at 10 am yesterday.

CHAIR: It might assist you to know, member for Broadwater, that we have also published publicly the answers to those questions on notice. That might assist you as well.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am asking a question and I would really love the answer rather than pointing to a document.

Ms JONES: You got the answer. That is the whole point. You got it yesterday.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will ask a further question of the director-general. How much has been spent on the report that identifies the 11 secret sites for the proposed Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub?

Ms JONES: It was answer to question on notice 10 yesterday, for the record. I can table that.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair. The minister is being highly disorderly with her disruptions to the committee.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Very much so.

Mr KRAUSE: I would ask that you direct her to cease the interjections. She has not been asked direct questions and we would like an answer from the director-general.

Ms JONES: Everyone can see that.

CHAIR: There is no point of order. Minister, are you seeking to table the publicly available answer to the question on notice to assist the—

Ms JONES: I would like to table the answer to the question on notice provided yesterday which is the question that the honourable member for Broadwater just asked. He received the answer to that exact question yesterday at 10 am. I thought he would have read it by now.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Considering the answer to the question on notice is already publicly available I am happy for that answer to be handed to the member for Broadwater to assist him. There is no need to table it.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is of the director-general with reference to the SDS at page 4 with regard to global tourism hubs. How much was spent on the report that identified the 11 secret sites for the proposed Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub?

Mr Walker: The answer to question on notice 10 tabled yesterday, and I think now with you, details the expenditure for both the global tourism hub in Cairns and on the Gold Coast. With regard to the detail of your question, all I can say is that the government has been unequivocally clear that there is no preferred site for the Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub.

Mr CRISAFULLI: How much has been expended on that process to identify those 11 sites? We have read reports about some proponents being shown some of the sites and yet the Gold Coast community has not been told where those 11 sites are. How much has been spent?

Mr Walker: All I can do is reiterate that the expenditure to date on the activities undertaken for the Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub are outlined in answer to question on notice No. 10. There is no preferred site for the Gold Coast Global Tourism Hub.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, will you be releasing the 11 sites? Will you be notifying the community where those sites are?

Mr Walker: There is no preferred site. We look forward to working with the proponents, of which we have a number that have come forward as part of the EOI. Part of our request of them is to assist in identifying an industry preferred site. They are the experts, and we are looking forward to their input.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, I along with my Gold Coast colleagues have been contacted by an external consultant, KPMG, for consultation over the proposed Gold Coast global tourism hub. How much is KPMG's contract?

Mr Walker: I am not aware of that at hand. We would need to look into it.

Ms JONES: We will find out.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Will you take that on notice?

Mr Walker: Yes.

Ms JONES: We will get you an answer.

CHAIR: I note that that is taken on notice, member for Broadwater.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Thank you. Director-General, I refer to global tourism hubs on page 2 of the SDS. How many electronic gaming machine licences are being considered as part of the market approach being progressed for a Gold Coast global tourism hub?

Mr Walker: There were two very clear things that have been made apparent to me by government—that is, there is no preferred site for a Gold Coast global tourism hub and this transaction is being pursued on the basis of no net increase in EGMs on the Gold Coast. It is on that basis that we take this transaction forward.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Does that same principle of no increase also relate to the Cairns global tourism hub?

Mr Walker: Those statements are specific to the Gold Coast. Having said that, though, I read with interest comments made in the public realm by government. We would need to go to government about any deal we could potentially do on Cairns and specifically what it meant for EGMs.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, you have not ruled out the option of more electronic gaming machines for Cairns?

Mr Walker: It is something that we are still working through, given that we are currently in a procurement process and analysing the RFDP submissions that have been made by the proponents.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Director-General, I refer to the responsibility of the global tourism hub on page 2 of the SDS. Have any taxpayer funds been allocated towards buying back electronic gaming machine licences to facilitate the development of a Gold Coast global tourism hub?

Ms JONES: No.

Mr Walker: This is a question relating to our budget?

Mr BOOTHMAN: Yes. Have any taxpayer funds been allocated towards buying back electronic gaming machine licences when it comes to the Gold Coast global tourism hub?

Mr Walker: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, what about in relation to the Cairns global tourism hub? Have any funds been allocated for pokie buybacks in that process?

Ms JONES: No.

Mr Walker: No. Again, to advise on where we are in the process, we are still in a procurement process and analysing bids.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the CEO of Tourism and Events Queensland. I refer to TEQ's service summary to partner with the aviation industry on page 20 of the SDS. Has TEQ investigated making the contribution to facilitate airline expansion only payable once deadlines and KPIs have been met?

Ms JONES: That is how it works.

Ms Coddington: Our investment in aviation is around marketing support. We work with airlines to ensure the route is as successful as possible. To do that, the marketing needs to start before the route actually starts flying. We do invest with airlines, remembering that that investment is spent by TEQ in market in partnership with trade and industry partners and the airline to market that route. It is not a cash payment to the airline. It is actually used to market the destination. The benefit is back to the destination at all times.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Director-General, I refer to page 3 of the department's SDS and the performance statement on tourism industry development. Following the round table in Cairns held by the minister in March, what meetings have taken place and what commitments have been secured with domestic airlines to bring in domestic subsidies to bring airfares down?

Mr Walker: There has been a lot of work going on with regard to Cairns in ensuring that we all work together—industry, government and stakeholders generally—in improving tourism outcomes for that great part of Queensland. There have been a number of meetings that have taken place. Most importantly, we have taken an expression of interest to the marketplace at large around provision of air services into Cairns. Pleasingly, that closed on Monday, at close of business, with some significant interest. The department, with other departments as partners, is currently working through that exercise now to analyse what opportunities we might have.

Ms JONES: We have had strong interest.

Mr Walker: We have had strong interest. Again, what we are looking to do is ensure that we continue to grow tourism in Tropical North Queensland.

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the minister. Regarding the department's objective of facilitating a strategic whole-of-government approach, given that staff are a vital asset, would the minister please advise what strategies interdepartmentally the government is undertaking to assist the industry to rebrand its jobs including hospitality as long-term career options versus the casualisation of jobs which is impacting not only the industry but the employers and the employees?

Ms JONES: Thank you, member for Noosa. I know that this is an issue that you are very concerned about, particularly around the displacement of workers as housing prices continue to grow in your community. We as a government understand that we need to invest in the next generation of tourism workers. That is why my colleague Minister Shannon Fentiman, in a whole-of-government approach, has enabled year 12 students to have access to one free TAFE course at the completion of year 12. That includes doing further study in the tourism industry. We have worked very closely with operators across Queensland to promote that school leavers can access free TAFE training in regard to tourism studies.

In addition to that, one of the things I am very proud of is our Young Tourism Leaders, which is something I launched a number of years ago where we have young tourism industry workers—under 25 or around that—who are already forging very successful careers in tourism now visiting schools right across Queensland to talk to the next generation of students to say, 'Why don't you join the tourism industry?'

The other thing we did is put Daniel Gschwind on the Jobs Queensland Board because, through the investment government is making, we expect to continue to see a growth in tourism jobs. We have released a tourism jobs plan through Jobs Queensland. That is a direct consequence of our government putting Daniel Gschwind, who as everyone knows is the CEO of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, on our Jobs Queensland Board. We are working hand in glove with the tourism industry to promote tourism jobs and the skilling and training of the next generation of tourism operators.

I also want to acknowledge the Star group, who are delivering Queen's Wharf. They have been working in partnership with TAFE to train up what will be around 8,000 operational jobs going forward at Queen's Wharf. These will be permanent jobs with good wages and conditions. We will be creating new pay packets for Queenslanders as a direct result of that investment.

Mr COSTIGAN: Minister, will you advise whether there is anywhere in the various budget papers funding allocated by the government to entice the NRL to bring its grand final in 2021 and/or 2022 to Queensland?

Ms JONES: Our government is absolutely committed to growing our events calendar. Under the Newman government the events calendar was worth just over \$300 million. I am so proud that it is now worth more than \$800 million in economic activity to Queensland. This includes us securing new major events including the Magic Round—a first for Rugby League here in Queensland.

In addition to that, we are currently in discussions with the NRL in regard to the grand final. The New South Wales government has absolutely let footy fans down. They made a commitment in a contract that they would have their stadiums built. What we are seeing now is that they cannot even demolish their stadiums on time, let alone build a stadium on time. The NRL are absolutely aware of Queensland's desire, and I think footy fans deserve, to have one of those grand finals here in Queensland.

From the most recent conversations I have had with the NRL, we believe that potentially there is 2021 and 2022. If we keep seeing the New South Wales government drag their heels, it could even be 2023—who knows? These are ongoing problems. Quite frankly, right now the contract that the NRL has with the New South Wales government is not worth the paper it is written on. It is about time that the New South Wales government and the NRL came clean with footy fans about exactly where that contract is at.

We have made it perfectly plain—in fact, I am pretty sure that the NRL have my number on the block call list because I ring them so much about trying to secure the grand final. We were the only side of politics that went to the last election with an additional \$36 million to secure events. That \$36 million in additional funding is already delivering new major events, and we will continue to pursue the grand final here in Queensland.

Mr COSTIGAN: Minister, in relation to the government's Attracting Aviation Fund, or whatever it is called nowadays, will you advise how much of that funding as a percentage has been, or is now being, injected into the regional tourism hotspots of Cairns and the Whitsundays?

Ms JONES: Yes, I am happy to get the exact breakdown of that funding, but I can clearly say that all of that money has been expended on flights. As I said in my opening remarks, we have had a significant increase of 2.4 million additional seats into Queensland under our watch. That is because not only have we funded the Aviation Attraction Fund but we have also provided additional funding through other programs such as Connecting with Asia. I am happy to get the breakdown specifically for the Whitsundays and Cairns.

The other thing I have done, in a first for Queensland—there were some people who could interpret it as being a bit of a walk away from what the fund was initially designed for—on a case-by-case basis I have allowed for domestic flights—for example, particularly in those peak months when people from Victoria and New South Wales want to get out of the cold—to allow them to, in some cases, have flights directly from Melbourne or Sydney into Cairns and the Whitsundays. From my perspective, I do not just want international visitors in those communities spending money: I want Victorians, New South Welshmen and I will even take some Tasmanians. We understand that from our perspective our No. 1 priority is jobs and growing the economy, and that is our focus.

Mr COSTIGAN: One final question, Chair?

CHAIR: No, member for Whitsunday, I am giving the member for Maiwar an opportunity to ask a question.

Mr BERKMAN: I would like to start with a question for the DG around Great Barrier Reef tourism, which employs more than 60,000 people, as you would be aware. The science tells us that the reef will be decimated by an average global temperature increase of 1½ degrees, which is almost inevitable at this point, and entirely lost if we hit two degrees. My question, Mr Walker, is: has your department undertaken an economic analysis of how this will affect Queensland's tourism industry and those people who rely on the survival of the reef for their livelihoods?

Mr Walker: There are numerous pieces of research that have been undertaken with regard to the impact on the tourism industry and the economy generally of Queensland and Australia as a result of climate change and impact to the reef. We are very aware of the importance of the reef to tourism. That is why we continue to work with colleagues in other departments such as the Department of Environment and Science and their very good work in seeking to address some of those critical issues. A lot of our focus has also been to ensure that we have a breadth and depth of tourism offerings within Queensland that go beyond the reef, but we are very, very keen to ensure that everything is done to mitigate some of the existing risk.

Mr BERKMAN: I have a question, Minister, in relation to the proposals to lease land at Hinchinbrook, Noosa and the Whitsundays. I note that the Australian Walking Company, which is Brett Godfrey's company, the chair of the tourism Queensland board, has applied for those leases.

Ms JONES: That is not true. That is not actually accurate.

Mr BERKMAN: I am sorry, the Australian Walking Company has not applied for those leases?

Ms JONES: No. I will go through them individually if you like.

Mr BERKMAN: The question is, Minister: was tourism Queensland involved in discussions or the decision to offer long-term commercial leases of Queensland national parks for private ecotourism activities and accommodation?

Ms JONES: No.

Ms LUI: My question is to the minister. Page 4 of the SDS refers to the Investment Attraction Fund. Minister, can you please update the committee on efforts to attract new investors to support the development of tourism infrastructure across the state?

Ms JONES: I know that we started this estimates hearing with some scaremongering from the LNP opposition, but what I can say is that we are very confident about the future growth of the tourism industry here in Queensland. Right now we have a \$14 billion pipeline of new hotels, resorts and attractions for Queensland. Through our investment attraction unit we are working hard to position Queensland as a leading destination for tourism infrastructure investment.

Last financial year alone close to \$700 million in new and upgraded hotels came online. These include: the \$70 million Adina Apartment Hotel; the \$43 million upgrade of The Ville Resort-Casino; \$60 million for the Emporium Hotel at South Bank; \$63 million for the Calile Hotel; \$200 million for the Westin Hotel; \$130 million for the Riley hotel in Cairns; \$50 million for Essence at Taringa; and \$70 million for the Fantauzzo Hotel at Howard Smith Wharves. We are also seeing major investments in our island resorts. The China Capital Investment Group delivered the \$140 million redevelopment of Daydream Island, which is now completed, and Mulpha Australia spent \$120 million to refurbish the InterContinental Hayman Island, open this month.

Mr COSTIGAN: It is already open.

Ms JONES: Yes, you are right; it is open.

CHAIR: Order, member for Whitsunday!

Ms JONES: We are officially opening it in a couple of weeks time.

Mr COSTIGAN: That is right too.

CHAIR: Member for Whitsunday, you are being unruly. I know you might be excited to join this committee again after quite a notable absence, but I ask you to restrain yourself.

Ms JONES: Of all the days for him to raise his face! Has anyone seen *The Age*?

Mr COSTIGAN: I wonder why, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Order!

Ms JONES: We have a man who was kicked out of the LNP for the way he treated women.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES: We have a man over there who kicked a woman out of parliament so he could have a safe seat. Has anyone seen *The Age* today—

CHAIR: Order, Minister!

Ms JONES:—about complaints from all the staffers against the ministers? They do have a women problem.

CHAIR: Do you have a point of order, Deputy Chair?

Mr KRAUSE: The minister is being highly disorderly again. I ask you to direct her to cease those interjections.

CHAIR: As the member for Jordan has pointed out, the minister is responding to the member for Whitsunday's provocations. Minister, do you have a further response to the member for Cook's question?

Member for Cook, do you have a further question?

Ms LUI: Minister, I refer to page 2 of the SDS and the market approach for a global tourism hub in Cairns. Please update the committee on the economic benefits of an integrated resort in Far North Queensland.

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. It gives me an opportunity to address this project which I thought had bipartisan support. Today I am releasing an economic impact analysis for the global tourism hub in Tropical North Queensland. This PWC report estimates that up to 2,300 jobs could be created in the region once the integrated resort is fully operational. Up to 620 jobs

are also expected to be supported during construction. The report also forecasts an uplift to the Cairns economy of up to \$2 billion by 2035. There has been a lot of talk about the importance of Cairns being supported, and that is exactly what our government is doing. You only have to look around Cairns—which I know that you do—to see that our government is spending more in Cairns than any other government when you look at the upgrade to the convention centre, the dredging of the inlet to allow larger cruise ships and ships to come into Cairns as well as this project, which we are now saying will create up to 2,300 jobs.

Chair, we know from experience that integrated resorts have the potential to significantly grow tourism numbers. You do not have to take my word for it: you can take the word of the LNP's documentation at the last election where they talked about integrated resort developments. I am not going to wave it around but I am happy to table their policy. I am sure that the shadow minister is well aware of it. If he is well aware of the integrated resort development policy that the LNP issued at the last election, he will see very clearly that there is no mention of caps on poker machines at all. No mention. Just like there was no cap when they approved the ACF development down at the Gold Coast on The Spit at a location that nobody in the community wanted—on The Spit—which thankfully due to the leadership of the Premier has now been ruled out. We have protected The Spit for future generations. I find it galling that the LNP approved—with no cap—a brand-new casino right on The Spit where we would have seen up to potentially 2,000 addition poker machines. Because there was no talk of caps ever under any of the media releases or statements by any Newman government minister, including the shadow, about whether they wanted a cap. It is funny, when you move 1,200 kilometres, how you change your view.

In addition to that, what we also saw under their watch is an increase of 870 pokies for the Queen's Wharf development, so I find it highly galling that the LNP come in here and try to be holier than thou when it comes to this issue. There is only one side of politics that talks about a cap, and it is Labor. We will always do that. Do not forget who created the new two casino licences. It was the Newman government. Again I have Mr Seeney's press release in front of me from when he announced it. I think the question is—

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is a wonder you bring the press conference into it—

CHAIR: Order, member for Broadwater. You are continually interjecting on the minister on a question that you did not even ask. I call the minister.

Ms JONES: They do not like it because I am calling them out on their hypocrisy. All of a sudden five years later the honourable shadow minister cares about this issue? Did he say anything when he was a minister in their cabinet making these decisions? Did he mention a cap then? Did the honourable minister when he was in cabinet—

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—mention the need for a cap for an integrated resort—

CHAIR: Minister, we will hear the point of order.

Mr KRAUSE: It is in relation to relevance and standing order 118. Chair, I think the minister is straying from the question asked and I ask that you bring her back to the question or, if she has finished answering, have another question

CHAIR: Thank you. The minister is answering the question from the member for Cook. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Ms JONES: I do have something further to add. What I am talking about is the economic benefit of integrated resorts. They went to the last election criticising Labor, mind you, for sitting on our hands in regard to integrated resorts and saying that Labor has done nothing. All we have seen since we were elected and we have been actually pressing play on their policy is them bagging it from the sidelines.

They have had a lot of mileage in the local paper down there, but it is important to be really clear that when the LNP approved the ASF development on the Gold Coast—the integrated resort—there was no talk of a cap. My question to the shadow minister—he parades around saying he is holier than thou on this—is whether he in cabinet spoke up about a cap. I bet the answer is no, because there was no cap and no talk of a cap on poker machines under the LNP. In actual fact, all we saw under the LNP was an increase of 870 pokies here in Brisbane.

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair, again on relevance. The minister is talking about—

Ms JONES: That is their record. It is about time everyone started judging them on their record.

CHAIR: I believe the minister has answered the question. We will move on to the next question.

Ms JONES: I would have answered it if he had asked me the question but he did not.

Mr CRISAFULLI: You did not know the answer to the ones I did ask. You did not have a clue about—

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, member for Broadwater. The member for Cook has a further question.

Mr CRISAFULLI: You still cannot answer—

CHAIR: Order, member for Broadwater! Please allow other committee members to have an opportunity to ask questions.

Ms LUI: Minister, page 4 of the SDS refers to the development of the Wangetti Trail. Can you please advise the committee of the progress of this iconic ecotourism project and the benefits that will flow to the region once the track is operational?

Ms JONES: Thank you so much. I thank you sincerely for your support and advocacy for this project from day one. Everyone has been so excited about the Wangetti Trail. I am very proud that this is the first time we will have a brand-new tourism infrastructure project like this through and adjacent to a national park. This is something that has been talked about for many years. I think I have said that when I was the environment minister I actually received a phone call from Wayne Goss saying, 'You need to act on this,' and I am very proud that we are delivering that. He was a great Queenslander who had great vision for our state.

As you have said, we are investing more than \$41 million to build the 94-kilometre Wangetti Trail—a six-day, five-night ecotourism experience. I must say that this is the first estimates where I have had a shadow minister complain that construction that was meant to start in the first quarter of 2020 is being brought forward to the last quarter of 2019. They are whingeing about it, but anyway. Maybe you just have to be around long enough to see these things happen.

The trail has received significant support from local and industry stakeholders including the members for Cairns, Cook, Barron River and Mulgrave, the mayors of Cairns and Douglas shire, Tourism Tropical North Queensland, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Destination Cairns Marketing, World Trail and, more importantly, the traditional owners of the area which this wonderful Wangetti Trail will traverse. We know now more than ever that tourists are seeking eco adventure tourism. There was a lot of talk from the shadow minister that we are not acting on ecotourism. We are the only government that is acting on ecotourism. In fact, we have funded \$50 million worth of projects for ecotourism in Queensland. That is something I will be proud of for all of my days.

This trail will attract thousands of new visitors to the Far North and provide international and domestic walkers and mountain bike riders with a bushland and ocean experience. The member for Cook knows this area quite well and has seen it, and there are some amazing, world-class sights there that have never been seen before by tourists. The Wangetti Trail, when completed, is estimated to inject up to \$300 million into the economy and could create up to 75 construction jobs. More excitingly, by working in partnership with traditional owners it could create up to 150 jobs operational. We are continuing to work closely with the local traditional owners, including the Yirrganydji people and the Kuku Yalanji people. The department is supporting them to increase their capabilities in regard to jobs and business. We have invested \$950,000 for the business case and design works.

Also, in this year's budget we have excitingly committed the \$36 million to build the trail. We also received in a bipartisan way some funding from Warren Entsch, the federal member up there, who has been on the public record very strongly supporting this project. This is one of those great projects where we are seeing strong support from all levels of government, including the federal government. I think it will be an absolute game changer for tourism not only for Cairns but also for the whole region.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, earlier you spoke about the importance of major events for Queensland. I refer you to page 21 of the SDS and the service performance standard regarding direct and incremental spending generated by the TEQ events portfolio. How is the Palaszczuk government growing the economy through our major events calendar?

Ms JONES: I thank the member for the question. We have been asked quite a number of questions about events today, and that is because we know that events drive visitation. We are actually travelling to places more and more. We have done this ourselves: as we become time poor we make the decision about where we are going to travel based on major events. That is why we have worked really hard with our team at Tourism and Events Queensland to grow our events. When we were elected, Queensland's events calendar was worth around \$380 million. Today I can report that it is well in excess of \$800 million. In those short five years we have grown that calendar significantly, and it is for two reasons.

The first is that we have taken a very direct approach to make some tough decisions about which events we back. There is finite funding, so you cannot always get everything that you want to see. Also, there is stiff competition. There has been some talk about Adelaide and Perth and NRL games. We have to get the balance right. I am not going to pay over the odds for events in a bidding war. It would be highly irresponsible as a state government to pay more than an event is worth. Obviously, we are lucky that in Brisbane we have the best rectangular stadium in the country in our backyard, but I would hate to be the events minister in Perth. What a headache to get people to travel that far to one of your major events. I think that is why they are paying so much for events, but that is another story.

The second reason we are seeing the significant growth—apart from the great work of the Tourism and Events Queensland team—is that at the last election we committed an additional \$36 million for events. Would this be the largest boost you have ever received for events funding?

Ms Coddington: Yes.

Ms JONES: There you go. Congratulations. We were able to get SportAccord, the world's largest sport and business summit, to the Gold Coast. This has never been held in Australia before. We were the first place to have it, here on the Gold Coast. As has been widely reported, this enabled the Premier of Queensland to have a number of meetings with the IOC. Thomas Bach has spoken very highly about the fact that his experience when he came to the Gold Coast because of SportAccord was fundamental in his belief that South-East Queensland can host the Olympics. The Premier had a number of meetings with the IOC during SportAccord, and that is because we were able to get this event here to Queensland.

TEQ estimates that up to \$100 million in events outcomes have been secured as a direct result of SportAccord. In fact, the SportAccord managing director, Nis Hatt, said, 'There is no doubt this has been the best SportAccord ever.' You cannot beat that for an endorsement. We have not agreed on everything this morning, but I am sure the honourable member for Broadwater and I would agree that if you are going to host an event then it is unsurprising that the SportAccord leader is saying the Gold Coast is the best place he has ever had a SportAccord.

There have been delegates from across the world extremely impressed not only with the facilities on offer in Queensland but also with the relaxed lifestyle and the beautiful scenery of the Gold Coast. Many delegates have left the Gold Coast with a strong impression that Queensland is capable of hosting their future events. I am sure we will start seeing the outcomes of conversations had here in weeks, months and years to come.

As I said, we had the magic round, which delivered even more than we expected it to deliver. There were 32,500 seats sold to interstate and international fans. We saw a \$20 million benefit to the local economy because of the magic round. Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner said, 'NRL Magic Round Brisbane will be an event like no other, with a major national sporting competition playing an entire round in the one city.'

I want to acknowledge the partnership we have with Brisbane Marketing. We leave politics at the door and we work absolutely for the best outcomes for Brisbane and the state, so we managed to secure a number of major events to Brisbane that in the past we would not have been able to secure. The CEO of the NRL, Todd Greenberg, said 'We've made a strong commitment to Queensland through this,' and rightfully so. We would like to see more commitment—wouldn't we, member for Whitsunday?—when it comes to these things.

Very excitingly, it is not all just sport, because for the *Ring Cycle* opera, which is to take place in 2020, we expect to see 35,000 visitors, worth \$15 million. Already we have sold more than \$4.5 million worth of tickets for an event that is not happening until I think September 2020, isn't it?

Ms Coddington: November.

Ms JONES: It is late 2020 and we have already sold \$4.5 million worth of tickets, with 75 per cent of the tickets sold for interstate and international travellers. I have to say that 75 per cent for interstate and international travellers is unheard of. That is why we are chasing events that deliver the money. They deliver international and interstate visitors who are choosing to come to Queensland because of these major events. We are targeting events that attract new visitors to our state and deliver an economic return. We are doing this because it means jobs in the tourism industry.

CHAIR: Minister, we only have a short time remaining, but I want to give you the opportunity, if you wish to do so, to respond to the questions taken on notice before the close of this session.

Ms JONES: My understanding is that—and correct me if I am wrong—one question we took on notice was with regard to KPMG, which was what they were paid for that work. It was \$219,000. In answer to the question asked by the honourable member for Whitsundays about the flights secured,

there is Hainan Airlines, Shenzhen to Cairns; SilkAir, Singapore to Cairns; and Virgin Australia, Brisbane to Proserpine. That is when I talked about the fact that I changed the rules to enable some flights between domestic locations because I understand, as does the member for Whitsunday, that what we want is people coming to Queensland and spending money on local economies.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chair, there was just one more.

CHAIR: Those were the only two questions formally taken on notice, member for Broadwater, as recorded by the secretariat. I will give the director-general a chance to respond. Is there anything further?

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Chair, the director-general said he would come back to us about spending.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It was about the \$12.4 million.

Mr Walker: With regard to Great Keppel Island, the spend for 2018-19 was \$2.6 million and for the GTI, the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund, the spend in 2018-19 was \$2.66 million. As I say we have adjusted the cash flow to match the milestones of those particular grant programs.

Ms JONES: For clarity, because we are actually very responsible when it comes to taxpayers' money, we have committed \$33 million of the \$36 million. That will be provided to the private sector in progress payments for those projects. We do not just—

Mr CRISAFULLI: You budgeted \$12 million and spent \$2 million.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, these are questions taken on notice—your questions in fact. I ask you to respect the committee.

Ms JONES: We are fighting over an infrastructure fund and they went to the election with no money for infrastructure—

Mr CRISAFULLI: You budgeted \$12 million but spent \$2 million.

Ms JONES:—so I am very happy to be sitting on this side of the ledger—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Instead of just having a press conference, you should actually follow up and have the substance—

Ms JONES:—talking about a fund that they did not commit to. For clarity—

CHAIR: Order, member for Broadwater. I am about to warn you. You have had numerous—you have been put on notice about interjections.

Ms JONES: I would not be accusing them of not having substance on a day like today if I were a member of the LNP.

Mr KRAUSE: There was one—

CHAIR: I am going to close this session. The allocated time for the committee's consideration of the portfolio of tourism industry development has expired. The committee will now adjourn for a break and the hearing will resume at 11 am with the examination of estimates for the portfolio area of innovation. We look forward to your company then.

Proceedings suspended from 10.31 am to 11.00 am.



CHAIR: We will recommence. The hearing is resumed. Welcome back, Minister and officials. The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of innovation. I note the member for Burleigh has joined us. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, I invite you to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Ms JONES: Economies around the world are recognising the importance of innovation to create jobs, build skills and grow productivity. Only yesterday at a national summit about Australian innovation Cochlear CEO Dig Howitt said this—

We have several countries coming to ask us to move R&D there because they know we will ... create high-paying jobs—
for their people. He went on—

The IP that's developed ... attracts revenue, which means greater taxes are paid. So it's not so much what does the company need, it's what does the country need?

The country needs high-paying jobs. And that's why we need stable policy around R&D investment. That's why we need a mix of tax incentives and direct investment.

That is why our government, through our Advance Queensland agenda, is working with local communities, local councils, local businesses and our universities here in Brisbane and across Queensland to create new jobs and strengthen our economy. This is particularly important in regional Queensland. By using new technologies including drones, machine learning and robotics, we can boost productivity, skills and jobs in traditional industries such as mining, resources, agriculture and manufacturing. Once again, this plays a very important role with regard to regional Queensland.

Yesterday I was joined by the mayor of Toowoomba, Paul Antonio; the mayor of Mackay, Greg Williamson; and the mayor of Gladstone, Matt Burnett, to officially launch a new innovation pilot in their cities. We released the Queensland Connects report at QUT, the culmination of two years of work between world leaders in innovation the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or MIT, and Queensland business leaders, investors, universities and government. This report provides a blueprint to build jobs and innovation in regional Queensland.

Yesterday we announced that Mackay, Gladstone and Toowoomba will be the first three cities to undertake the next stage of this important work. The mayor of Toowoomba said yesterday that this project will build on our diverse economy, low unemployment rate, continued economic growth and ensure business confidence. Through our whole-of-government Advance Queensland programs delivered through nine departments, we have already supported more than 16,400 jobs. More than 7,400 of these are in regional Queensland. We have backed Queensland start-ups like Brisbane based company RedEye, who employed just eight people in 2016 and now operate four offices around the world and employs more than 100 people. We also supported GO1, a Logan based business that has scaled up and now has a global reach. In Burleigh, we have backed AgriChain, who have gone on to secure \$3.5 million in private investment to exploit their blockchain trading platform.

Today I can announce that in an Australian first the Queensland government has secured a new partnership with global tech company Google to launch its very first drone delivery service Wing Aviation in Logan later this year. Wing Aviation Australian Head of Operations Terrance Bouldin-Johnson said—

Queensland has staked out a leadership position in the advancement of drone technology and some of the most significant drone developments in the world are happening here.

In fact, the recently elected South Australian Premier, Steven Marshall, toured The Precinct, our innovation hub, in the Valley last month to see firsthand how our investment in innovation, business and jobs is delivering for our economy.

Chair, you would know too well that Campbell Newman and I do not always see eye to eye. However, both of us understand that by investing in smart businesses, local innovators and start-ups and by working hard to scale up investment we can create more jobs for Queenslanders in our state.

CHAIR: We will now move on to questions. Member for Burleigh, do you have a question?

Mr HART: Yes, I do. My first question is to the DG and it is in reference to SDS page 7 promoting investment-ready Queensland start-ups and small and medium enterprise to international investors. Mr Walker, given that your minister has principal ministerial responsibility for Advance Queensland and the Business Development Fund as an Advance Queensland program, can you confirm who is responsible for the payment of \$267,500 to Fortress Capstone Pty Ltd in March 2018?

Mr Walker: The Advance Queensland program has a number of departments which have lead responsibility. In the case of BDF, QIC—Queensland Investment Corporation—is the decision-maker with regard to any investment. They take an equity stake as part of their investment decisions.

Mr HART: Director-General, can I clarify this with you? Does that mean that the payment is ultimately the responsibility of the Deputy Premier?

Mr Walker: There is a Queensland Investment Corporation, as I understand. As I mentioned, this is a program that sits outside of my department. QIC is the investment decision-maker.

Mr HART: And QIC sits in Treasury, so that would make the ultimate decision-maker the Deputy Premier, correct?

CHAIR: Order. Member for Burleigh, I am going to rule that question out of order. You have had a clear response from Mr Walker that it is outside of his responsibilities. I think the questions you are asking would have best been directed to other estimates committee hearings. We are considering innovation in this particular question. You have had a clear answer to your question on that particular topic. Do you have further questions?

Mr HART: I do to the minister regarding the same reference in the SDS. Has the minister ever discussed Advance Queensland funding programs with David Barbagallo?

Ms JONES: As the Minister for Innovation, my responsibility is to deliver an innovation agenda for Queensland.

CHAIR: Are there any further questions, member for Burleigh, or should we move on to other questions?

Ms JONES: In relation to the Business Development Fund I have never had a conversation with David Barbagallo.

Mr HART: Minister, you sit around the table at CBRC and so does David Barbagallo. Were Advance Queensland funding programs ever discussed there?

Ms JONES: In relation to the Business Development Fund, as we have already advised, that is a decision made by independent assessors; it is not a decision of the cabinet.

Mr HART: Minister, has David Barbagallo ever discussed a Fortress Capstone application with you?

Ms JONES: No.

Mr HART: Has David Barbagallo ever emailed you about Fortress Capstone?

Ms JONES: No.

Mr HART: Minister, can you advise if either Mr Andy Greig or Steve Baxter or companies associated with those people have ever benefitted from a grant or initiative of Advance Queensland or your department?

Ms JONES: With regard to Advance Queensland, as I said in my opening remarks, we are creating an environment in which investors can invest in Queensland based businesses. As you well know, Steven Baxter is a very proud champion of investing in Queensland businesses. This is a man who has worked tirelessly to grow the innovation sector here in Queensland. Absolutely, he has invested in Queensland businesses over many years.

CHAIR: Do you have any further questions, member for Burleigh?

Mr HART: Minister, has David Barbagallo ever discussed the acquittal of the government's investment in Fortress Capstone with you?

Ms JONES: No. I have had no discussions with David Barbagallo about that business—ever. Why would we?

Mr HART: Director-General, I refer again to page 7 in relation to Advance Queensland and specifically the Hot DesQ program. How many companies received grants through the Hot DesQ program in 2017-18 and 2018-19, and what was the total expenditure on that program?

Mr Walker: I am just getting some information on the spend. It is fair to say that that program is now at its end. We have committed \$6 million to the Hot DesQ program.

Mr HART: Is there a break-up between those two years?

Mr Walker: We announce the winners as the rounds go through. In fact, ministers have released those previously so they would be available on the government website. I just cannot see anything on my sheet at the moment, but my understanding is that it would be on the public record.

Mr HART: How many of those companies are still in Queensland?

Mr Walker: It is worth providing some context for Hot DesQ. This started very early, with Josh Lerner being engaged by government to provide some advice on how best to stimulate the innovation ecosystem in Queensland. The focus was very much on the generation of start-ups. A number of gaps were identified and a series of programs were then defined to address those gaps. One thing that the ecosystem spoke about—and regularly—was the need to learn from other successful start-ups, those going through the very difficult journey that it is to be a start-up in the new economy.

Other jurisdictions had had great success with similar programs, such as Chile. A program, namely Hot DesQ, was derived around that notion of bringing in the best and brightest from elsewhere so that they could become part of the Queensland community. It is in that context that people were sought from interstate and overseas. To be very clear, specifically we were seeking people from outside Queensland to come to Queensland to help Queensland start-ups.

With regard to your specific question, there are a number of success stories with regard to those who have stayed on—and why wouldn't they? As a former South Australian, I cannot think of a better place to be than Queensland. There are a number that have stayed on. Of course, others have returned to where they were previously, having discharged their responsibilities contractually with the state.

Mr HART: Do you have numbers around those companies that are no longer in Queensland?

Ms JONES: They are not obliged to stay.

Mr Walker: The minister makes a very good point. They were not obliged to stay. In fact, they were only obliged to discharge their contractual responsibilities, which were to stay for a period of time and engage with the start-up ecosystem here in Queensland, to share their knowledge and to impart their skills and expertise. The pleasing thing—I am just looking for the detail from my staff—is that a number have stayed, which was never the obligation. I will look to come back with specific details of how many have stayed. It is very pleasing that some have stayed. In particular, some have been able to go on and provide additional assistance to the ecosystem. I am mindful of companies such as PledgeMe, one of the Hot DesQ recipients in the early rounds. They produced a platform that allowed—

Mr HART: That is fine, Director-General. I am really only interested in the ones that have come here, collected our money and left. Can I get those numbers? If you want to take it on notice, that is fine.

Mr Walker: I am happy to do that. I was just going to mention that PledgeMe has been very useful in attracting further funding for other start-ups in Queensland—another gap identified as part of the Josh Lerner report.

CHAIR: Is the minister happy for that question to be taken on notice in regard to the figures? The question is taken on notice.

Mr HART: On 19 June—my birthday, by the way—the minister said on channel 9 that she would evaluate each grant on a case-by-case basis. Has that happened?

Mr Walker: Yes.

Mr HART: Minister, is Hot DesQ under review and what is its likely fate?

Ms JONES: As we have heard, when the Newman LNP government was elected it commissioned Josh Lerner, who was seen globally as one of the leaders in building an innovation ecosystem. That report was commissioned in 2014. In that report, commissioned by the Newman government, Josh Lerner said that one of the things you need to do is attract talent to work with businesses here in the community and use the start-up knowledge that they have experienced around the world. I am advised that that is the basis for the Hot DesQ program. That is why it is called 'Hot DesQ'. It was never about an incentive to come to Queensland and set up business; that is a very different fund. This was more partnership funding, where we encouraged businesses, as per the Josh Lerner recommendations, to come and be a part of the ecosystem so we could fast-track the ecosystem growth. National data now shows that Queensland's start-up sector has grown faster than Victoria's. Why? At the last estimates we announced that we were going to increase by 50 per cent the precinct in the valley, because we have made a very deliberate investment to grow our start-up and entrepreneurial environment.

Mr HART: Sorry, Minister, but the question was: is it under review and what is its likely fate?

Ms JONES: That is exactly where I am getting to. I believe that this program—I have said this publicly and I am happy to say it again here—absolutely served a purpose at its time. It was from the Josh Lerner report, commissioned by the Newman government, which said that we needed to look at what levers we could pull to grow innovation. In my opening remarks I said that we know that if governments do not invest in the space then we will go backwards. It was revealed only this week that for the first time Australia has fallen out of the top 20 most innovative countries in the world and is now 22nd. It is deeply worrying for me as a mother.

I say all of this to answer your question. I think the Hot DesQ program absolutely served its purpose in regard to building that ecosystem. I do not believe that we need to continue that program. As we move to our new innovation strategy towards scaling up Queensland businesses, I think we will redirect the remainder of that funding towards those programs. I have said that publicly before.

Mr HART: That is another program that you have axed.

CHAIR: Member for Burleigh, do you have a question? You are not here to provide a running commentary. Please ask your question.

Mr HART: Mr Chair, thank you for that. Minister, in the same interview you said that you would only support programs that continue to deliver. How can a company that has already gone bankrupt or deserted the country deliver for Queensland? I ask that question just to get a sense of what you were thinking at the time.

Ms JONES: I was not the minister at the time.

Mr HART: It is somebody else's fault?

Ms JONES: No, I am not saying that. I have met and dealt with some of the Hot DesQ recipients, some of whom, as the director-general has said, have chosen to stay in Queensland and build their companies here. The logic at the time, as I said on the public record, related to growing our ecosystem. Our focus as a government, particularly in the first term, was about not being left behind and about fast-tracking entrepreneurs being based in Queensland, not going to Victoria, New South Wales or overseas. The Hot DesQ program was designed to bring some of the best and brightest brains to Queensland to work collaboratively with our local entrepreneurs and local start-ups to pass on their knowledge of success so that they, too, could be successful. In my opinion, that program has absolutely delivered. It has done what it was required to do but, as part of the review I am undertaking into Advance Queensland, we as a government are now very much focused—appropriately, given that our ecosystem has grown—on scaling up. I think this program has served its purpose and we are moving into the next stage of our Advance Queensland agenda.

Mr HART: Director-General, I refer to page 7 of the SDS and Advance Queensland, specifically the Small Business Innovation Research Fund. How much was budgeted for this fund in 2018-19?

Mr Walker: Thank you for the question and, again, the SBIR is a procurement initiative and one that was run in conjunction with a number of departments from across government, and it is worth providing context to this again. It was about identifying challenges that currently confront Queensland in a rather serious way, and in particular via those lead departments, and taking an innovative approach to solution identification.

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order, Mr Chair.

An opposition member: Yes, relevance.

CHAIR: We will hear the point of order from the Deputy Chair.

Mr KRAUSE: Yes, it is about relevance. It was a very specific question about the amount budgeted in 2018-19 and I would ask the director-general to please come to that.

CHAIR: Thank you, Deputy Chair. I believe the director-general is coming to that figure.

Mr Walker: I thought it helpful to provide some context around the SBIR and in particular the benefits that it is providing.

Mr HART: We do not have much time.

Mr Walker: We will find that detail and get back to you.

Mr HART: Director-General, can you also give us a figure on how much was spent in that same period? I assume you would want to take that on notice as well.

Mr Walker: In terms of SBIR, the total commitment was \$2.6 million over the life of the program.

Mr HART: Director-General, how much funding was given to companies that were not from Queensland? Can you give us that figure?

Mr Walker: Again, we would need to get that information. It is worth noting that there are procurement rules around how government takes to market its offerings and we cannot preclude organisations from interstate or overseas in bidding for works. The focus was very much on delivering solutions—the best possible solution—to some really big issues from how best to mitigate risk on the Great Barrier Reef to other such things. The notion is you deliver the best possible solution, so we will get some detail on those that were outside of Queensland. Like we do with most procurement, we give heightened weighting to Queensland businesses—it is certainly a priority of my department—but when the solution is a better one from elsewhere then departments make their decisions.

Ms JONES: National Competition Policy.

Mr HART: So you will take that on notice?

CHAIR: Is the minister happy to take that question on notice?

Mr Walker: Yes.

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr KRAUSE: Can we just clarify that was yes?

Ms JONES: The important thing that the DG was saying is that this is not a grants program. It is a procurement program, so the procurement laws of the country and the National Competition Policy enacted by the Howard government apply. You can have some weighting for locals, but where a procurement has to be run nationally and interstate—

Mr KRAUSE: I raise a point of order. There was no question asked of the minister. The question was asked of the director-general, but if they are going to be taken on notice could we just have a clear answer about that please—about the 2018-19 budget and also the promotion of grants given outside of Queensland?

CHAIR: Deputy Chair, thank you for your point of order. I note that the question has been taken on notice. Member for Burleigh, do you have—

Mr KRAUSE: There were two elements to it, Mr Chair.

CHAIR:—any further questions?

Mr HART: Yes, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: The question was taken on notice.

Mr HART: It was taken on notice?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr HART: Director-General, what eligibility is in place to ensure grants are only given to small businesses?

Mr Walker: We have a number of programs and each program has a guideline that clearly sets out what precisely we are seeking to achieve, provides guidance to the marketplace in its response, provides guidance in particular to my departmental officers on how they will assess the applications that are received and, where we do use an independent panel, provides guidance to those independent panel members. For each of those programs it will vary, but generally given the nature of this department and its focus there are a number of guidelines and guidance around how we support small to medium sized enterprises. In fact, the vast majority of our activity is indeed in that space.

Mr HART: Thank you, Director-General.

CHAIR: Member for Burleigh, I am going to give the member for Noosa an opportunity to ask a question.

Ms BOLTON: Thank you, Mr Chair. My question is to the minister. With reference to page 3 of the SDS and the whole-of-government approach to planning and investment, would the minister please outline what interdepartmental and external innovations and innovative strategies are being implemented to manage our increased tourism? Does this include transport options, waste management and worker accommodation? As the minister knows, we have our Gubbi Gubbi—Kabi Kabi—coming from Cherbourg home to Noosa to work in tourism projects and they are going to need accommodations as well.

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question, and she is quite right in saying that what stands us apart is that we understand that innovation does not happen in a silo; it has to happen across all different portfolios. The way we have structured the Advance Queensland program means that there are nine ministers and nine departments that are responsible for individual projects. When it comes to innovation in housing policy, that absolutely sits with the Minister for Housing and Public Works.

I recently met with a fantastic company called Igloo during the last parliamentary sitting—it could have been before—and they are absolutely coming up with processes to make it easier for the private sector to deliver housing, particularly for those who are struggling to afford accommodation. Our focus very much and part of the work that I am doing through the review of the Advance Queensland policy is to align our Advance Queensland spending with the priorities of the government. Advance Queensland priorities, as articulated by the Premier, absolutely draw out the fact that we understand that homelessness and housing is an ongoing requirement. I would be expecting that, as we rollout the new strategy, there will be more focus on innovative solutions to housing outcomes.

Ms BOLTON: Fabulous. Thank you.

CHAIR: I call the member for Jordan.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, it was very exciting to hear this morning about Google Wing. Are you able to provide some further information to the committee on the Palaszczuk government's strategy to make Queensland a global hub for drone technology?

Ms JONES: As the member is a very proud member of our Logan team and a very passionate supporter of seeing investment in the Logan region, it is amazing that today we are announcing that Logan is going to be on the lips globally of innovators. Google and Alphabet, their parent company, are some of the largest companies in the world right now and they are making investments in environments where they believe the government is able to deliver secure investment for them.

We cannot underestimate what a game changer this is. Alphabet, one of the largest companies in the world and one of the fastest growing companies in the world right now, could choose to do this technology anywhere. We were up against very strong competitors, both interstate and internationally. They have chosen Queensland because they know that we are a government absolutely committed to growing innovation and, as I said earlier in my remarks, they understand stable, reliable government decision-making. That is why they have chosen here. They have chosen Logan because, as you know, it is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland right now. It is absolutely full of families, as you know, that really will benefit from having a delivery-to-door service that Google Wing provides.

The advice that we have is that the global technology giant will launch their service in September this year and they are already out there in the Logan community, starting discussions and community consultation on this new initiative. Excitingly, Logan customers will be able to get delivered orders of up to 1.5 kilograms, including food and drink. I know that you are a mother as well, but the immediate thing that came to mind for me is if you are home alone and you have one child asleep and the other one is sick and you have run out of baby Panadol. That was the first thing that came to mind for me when I was having this discussion—that is, I could use this service rather than having to get the other child out of bed and pack them in the car to drive down to the chemist. Not only will it make life easier, but I am very proud of sharing this knowledge—that is, they have assured us that it is their policy that up to 50 per cent or more of the local products that they will make available through this service will come from local businesses, so we expect a major boon for local cafes and restaurants as well as businesses in the Logan area that will get access to a whole new customer base by having Google Wing.

Google Wing chose Queensland to expand their drone delivery service on the back of meetings that have taken place over a number of years such as during our Trade 2018 program during the Commonwealth Games. We also had follow-up meetings with Google Wing in Silicon Valley during the most recent trade mission and today's partnership is all part of our plan to embrace the importance of drone technology moving forward. We are also working very closely with the Australian government and other partners with regard to drone technology where Queensland is being recognised as world leading. Google's Australian head of operations, Terrance Bouldin-Johnson, has said that they are very pleased to be expanding their Australian operations and launching the first air delivery service in South-East Queensland.

As he says, Queensland has staked out a leadership position in the advancement of drone technology, and some of the most significant drone developments in the world are happening right here in Queensland. This is because the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, has led the charge. She was the first Premier in Australia to release a Drones Strategy for our state and we have already established a partnership now with the federal government with a \$100 million cutting-edge facility for drone research and design here in Brisbane. We understand the importance of creating jobs through new technology and also improving the lives of ordinary Queenslanders through drone technology like this partnership with Google Wing.

Ms LUI: Minister, I refer to the SDS at page 7. In 2017 Queensland won its bid to host the Defence Cooperative Research Centre for Trusted Autonomous Systems. Can you please update the committee on the benefit of this CRC to Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I have just remarked, the reason we have a global giant like Google investing in drone technology in Queensland is that they understand that we have a road map to grow this industry. Queensland is now at the forefront of the development of key technologies including artificial intelligence, robotics and autonomous vehicles. The Defence CRC for autonomous systems is a strong vote of confidence in Queensland and leading innovation and technology capability.

As a consequence—and I know that my ministerial colleague Cameron Dick, the Minister for State Development, is also very passionate about this—we have been partnering with Boeing and the federal government to produce one of the world's cutting-edge design and research facilities for drones. As I said, this is part of our Drones Strategy. It is now operating in out of Toowong. Last month I was very privileged to officially open this new hub. It is an approach that will leverage, we believe, millions of dollars of new investment and create jobs here in Queensland that, if we had not secured the CRC, would have been lost to other states.

The \$100 million Defence cooperative research centre will also give local companies a unique opportunity to work directly with the Defence Force and defence services. Whenever you talk to a new business, whether it is a start-up or, indeed, a small or medium enterprise, they talk about that first customer. Securing a first customer, or a strong customer like the defence services, is critical for them

to reinvest in their business and grow and expand their jobs and workforce. For example, Queensland companies Cyborg Dynamics and Skyborne Technologies have already secured contracts with the Defence CRC. I met some of the representatives of those companies at the launch. They were saying to me that, because of the Defence CRC, they are now employing more people and keeping those jobs here in Queensland.

Why are we investing in this space? We are investing in this space for our No. 1 priority under the Palaszczuk government, which is creating jobs locally. These local businesses are just an example of more businesses that will be able to secure new work and jobs through the Defence CRC. They will play a crucial part in the story of developing game-changing defence products and ensuring that local know-how stays here in Queensland. To that end, Dr Shane Arnott, the director of Boeing's Phantom Works International, has said—

We are on track to issue \$4.7 million in contracts associated with our Advance Queensland Autonomous Systems Platform Technology project by the end of 2019.

This is why Boeing has made significant investment in Australia, most recently in Queensland and its agile small-to-medium enterprises.

Skyborne Technologies, one of those small businesses that I spoke about, has said about this project—

The centre has allowed Skyborne to add intelligence to our unmanned system to provide the soldier on the ground with the precision of robot support.

These are just a couple of examples of where small businesses are benefiting from the investment that we are making with large global partners such as Boeing and Google Wing.

CHAIR: Minister, with reference to page 7 of the SDS and the Palaszczuk government's commitment to growing entrepreneurship in the regions, could you please update the committee on efforts to support entrepreneurs and start-ups in regional Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. We are very much of the view that having investment in new technologies and the innovation sector creates new opportunities for jobs in regional Queensland. By having more connectivity and unlocking our fibre network—I will talk about that later—through FibreCo, there is an unparalleled opportunity for businesses based in regional Queensland to automatically get to a global market. This is probably one of the most exciting things that is going to happen in the next five to 10 years for our children here in Queensland, particularly for children growing up in regional Queensland.

All of these technological advancements deliver a global market to local businesses in regional Queensland. Through our Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program—the MIT REAP—as I said, we are partnering with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, QUT, Rio Tinto, the University of Queensland, the Central Queensland University and our start-up investors to grow innovation in regional Queensland.

As I said, we have now outstripped Victoria when it comes to growing start-ups. Through this program we have seen over the last two years a real blueprint, or road map, for how we can continue to make those local collaborations in regional Queensland to grow jobs. As you heard in my opening remarks, yesterday I was joined by the mayors of three of our very dynamic cities that are known globally for having unique domain strengths. Toowoomba are world leaders in agritech and also in delivering some of the best agricultural products to the world. Mackay is known globally as being one of the leaders not only in the production of sugar cane and biofutures but also in mining technology and engineering advancement. That is why we have companies like Rio Tinto on board. Gladstone has built up a very strong reputation globally when it comes to the LNG industry. Our government is also very focused on growing the hydrogen industry there to keep jobs and create new jobs in regional Queensland.

That is why we announced yesterday that we are partnering with councils in these communities to do the next stage of this work, which is a sub REAP. Yesterday, we committed \$300,000 to partner with these councils. In the next six months I will be going to each those communities to pull together that sub REAP. Some of them have already been established. Also, we will be working together, sharing ideas and collaborating across those three regions. I share the enthusiasm of the mayors in saying that by investing in regional innovation we can create regional jobs. That is exactly our focus.

Ms LUI: Minister, I refer to page 7 of the SDS. Could you please update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's effort to improve the quality and speed of the internet in our regions through FibreCo Queensland?

Ms JONES: Already today we have talked about Steve Baxter. I should acknowledge him on the public record to say that he has been relentless in his pursuit of making sure that the government delivers on this election commitment. We were the only side of politics that went to the last election saying that we are going to use the government owned assets of our power companies to deliver a better quality internet service through our unlimited backhaul capacity in our power networks.

I make this point because it concerns me that, whilst we are looking at the opportunities that can be unlocked by us owning these power companies, since its re-election we have heard the Morrison government saying that the only way they will fund infrastructure moving forward is if governments like ours sell our assets. This is a stark contrast between our side of politics, which believes that these assets belong to the people of Queensland, and the other side, which, even weeks after the election, is now advocating for the sale of these assets. As we have said very clearly, we will not sell these assets that are owned by the people of Queensland.

In regard to FibreCo, I can announce that the FibreCo board was set up, as per the deadline, on 1 July. I was very pleased to attend their first board meeting last week. Last week, Greg Young was appointed as chair and they are currently in the market for a permanent CEO—although, of course, we have an acting CEO at the moment. Rachel Bauer and Jane Seawright were also appointed independent directors. There is strong regional representation on that board and, of course, 50-50 women and men, as per government policy.

FibreCo Queensland will partner with the private sector to make government fibre-optic cable available to Queenslanders. The first major job of FibreCo will be to connect the government owned fibre to the NBN network. This will happen in six regional centres: Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has estimated that in regional Queensland the backhaul component of costs for telecommunications for regional towns, businesses and communities accounts for up to 50 per cent of the cost that those people are paying, compared to only 13 per cent in metropolitan Australia. This is a divide between regional Queensland and South-East Queensland that our government thinks needs to be closed. That is why we are making this investment. In the budget we have allocated \$8 million to roll out this new program that will close that divide.

In Brisbane, close to 90 per cent of households have access to the internet. As the honourable member who asked the question knows, in Cairns and communities like Ingham, household internet access is at 70 per cent. We are going to close this digital divide by linking the NBN with our FibreCo investment. Since we have been out in the marketplace as a new competitor against the existing telcos—and I am not going to sit here and bag telcos—Telstra has already reduced its backhaul prices by up to 40 per cent, given that we have a price signal in the market of the government using our assets to drive down prices and deliver on new security of backhaul capacity in regional Queensland.

CHAIR: With reference to SDS page 7, how is the Advance Queensland Precinct at Fortitude Valley driving collaboration in and supporting Queensland's innovation ecosystem?

Ms JONES: As I said in regard to the questions from the shadow minister, very much our focus, particularly in the first term of the Palaszczuk government off the learnings of the Josh Lerner report, which was commissioned by the Newman government, was that we needed to make a very deliberate decision to invest in innovation, also in regard to infrastructure—that is, precincts, just like the Brisbane City Council is doing, just like the federal government is doing, although we would like to see more.

We developed the precinct area. Some of the Hot DesQ participants, for example, were based at the precinct, because the whole point of a hot desk and why it is called a hot desk, not a permanently-move-to-Queensland desk, is because it is about getting those people to come in and be part of that scene, part of that precinct and share their knowledge and expertise with our new start-ups. There is literature globally that shows that if you do not invest in shared learnings in those early stages then those businesses are more likely to fail. That is why learning from your peers, learning from people who have come before you, whether it is a politician or a small business, is a very good way to grow your experience and that exactly what we have done at the precinct. I must say about Robert Schwarten that I also learned some things not to do! Just joking, Robert, if you are watching.

Since we opened the precinct in early 2017 it has hosted more than 500 start-up events with more than 35,000 attendees. That is why last budget we committed to a multimillion dollar expansion of the precinct—as I said, a 50 per cent increase in the floor size there. Since then 11 new tenants have now moved into the precinct: TravelbyBit, Sophus and Kapiche. The precinct is now home to more than 27 tenants, including local start-ups, investors as well as the Office of the Chief Entrepreneur. I think it is worth reporting that through this investment one of the foundation tenants, Clipchamp, has also doubled their existing tenancy space—that is, they are growing and creating and putting on jobs.

As they grow their team to deliver, they are rapidly growing a global customer base but, importantly, because they have stayed here in Brisbane, because we created a home and we have invested in them, they are keeping those jobs here in Brisbane. I cannot begin to tell you, since I have been in this role, how many businesses have said to me if they did not secure the funding through Advance Queensland they would have had to move interstate. Do not forget that New South Wales is breathing down our neck in this space. They want our businesses to move there. If we had not invested in them they would have taken their businesses interstate or overseas.

Ms LUI: I refer to page 7 of the SDS. Given the Palaszczuk government's focus on growing jobs in the regions, can the minister outline how the government is supporting regional innovation?

Ms JONES: As I said, one of the things that we are most passionate about is that I think 60 per cent of the grants that have been awarded through Advance Queensland have gone to regional recipients. That is because we understand there are greater challenges in those communities and we want to be backing regional businesses to stay in regional business. That is why Queensland's regions have also benefitted from \$1.3 million in the Regional Startup Hubs Support Program that has supported hubs in Noosaville, Tewantin, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Manunda in Cairns, Sippy Downs, Robina, Kalkie in Bundaberg—where chief of staff went to primary school and was in the drumming band—Maroochydore, Cairns, Toowoomba, Yeppoon, Mackay, Woodridge, Gladstone, Samford, Sunshine Coast, Atherton and in Maryborough. We want these programs to make a difference to everyone and businesses right across Queensland and to create jobs right across Queensland.

For example, in the electorate of Jordan, Advance Queensland has delivered over \$400,000 to more than 45 different businesses in your local community. Of this, \$250,000 has been committed through programs administered through my department, including \$180,000 to the research fellowships grant and also \$45,000 to the PhD scholarships grant and, additionally, the electorate has benefited from the Advance Regional Innovation Program, which delivers each region \$500,000 over three years.

Our funding is matched on a one-to-one basis with cash in kind, but at the end of the day this is about building a backbone, a spine of innovation across Queensland. I have been the education minister in the past in Queensland and we have fast-tracked robotics and coding in schools. I do not want those students who have grown up in Gladstone and have gone to Gladstone State High School to have to move to Brisbane to get a job. What this investment is all about is saying we want people to stay in regional communities and work in new, high-paying jobs in regional communities.

Mr HART: Director-General, Minister Jones said in an interview on 16 June—

Look, I actually think this program could have been run better. I think there is a better use of the money in a different project.

That was talking about the Small Business Innovation Research fund. Has that fund been scrapped now?

Mr Walker: The minister referred to this. As part of the broader review of our Advance Queensland Strategy we have been looking at every one of the programs that currently exist and, more importantly, what we need moving forward. This is one that is drawing to its close and we will not proceed with. We continue to monitor the programs to deliver the best possible value.

Mr HART: Where will the remaining funds go?

Mr Walker: We are yet to finalise that. As I am sure you would be aware, we put to the community at large a draft innovation strategy recently and it received a number of submissions. We are looking to finalise that shortly with regard to any redirection of funds.

Mr HART: Minister, in an interview on 16 June you said, 'It was a grant provided before I was the minister.' Did you speak to the former minister, Leeanne Enoch, about the program and how it was established before you threw her under the bus?

Ms JONES: That is a bit unfair. I was at the interview, you were not. They asked me specifically about one specific grant in 2016. I pointed out that I was not across the detail of a grant given in 2016 because I was not the minister in 2016. I was very prepared to answer in relation to Small Business Innovation Research Grants that had been received under my watch and I did have those details. As I said, I was not aware about the details in 2016. I thought it was better to be honest about the fact that I was not the minister in 2016 and did not have those details to hand than try to make up an answer which, as you well know, can lead to members of parliament not answering questions or being dishonest. I was honest in saying I was not across the detail of a specific grant in 2016.

What we have heard here today is that my job as the minister is to ensure the Advance Queensland policy and the projects that we fund keep pace with the growth that we are seeing in our innovation ecosystem. What we heard very loudly and clearly over the last 12 months in regard to the

detailed community consultation that we have run is that they want us to focus now on scale-ups, that a number of programs absolutely had a time and place in the first term of government, which was growing that ecosystem, becoming a place where people actually want to be part of the innovation sector, which is why we have now overtaken Victoria as having more start-ups and entrepreneurs based in Queensland than Victoria, and they are not happy about it, because we had those programs, we had those deliberate innovations.

As we have said repeatedly here this morning, my job now is to align the funding to match where our growth trajectory is. It is a forward thinking plan about where we need to invest and which businesses we should invest in.

Mr HART: When Steve Baxter was the Chief Entrepreneur of Queensland can you tell us whether he provided any advice about innovation policy or Advance Queensland initiatives?

Mr Walker: The Office of the Chief Entrepreneur and in particular the Chief Entrepreneur is a primarily honorary role. It does a number of things. In particular it is about inspiring entrepreneurs across Queensland. On occasions Steve would certainly provide feedback about what is working and what is not working, but it is not a policy role as such. It is the role of my department to provide advice and strategic advice to government.

Mr HART: Can I clarify whether Steve Baxter would have provided advice about the Business Development Fund?

Mr Walker: I have never had a conversation with Steve around the BDF.

Mr HART: Moving on to SDS page 7, Advance Queensland, specifically the Venturer Program, Director-General, how much funding was provided to the Venturer Program, please?

Mr Walker: I believe it was \$124,000 which was to go towards the design of the program. Again, this was an intervention that was identified as necessary early on in the journey of our ecosystem to build it, particularly focused on scale-ups. The Chief Entrepreneur at the time, Mark Sowerby, identified certainly as part of his commentary to us that one of the issues along with the feedback we got from Josh Lerner is that it is a very mentally tough thing to succeed with this start-up. That was an investment that was made. The provider thereafter essentially put it to market and charged participants to attend and participate in that program.

Mr HART: Ultimately, who decided where the missions went—that is, the locations they travelled to?

Mr Walker: My understanding is that it was a decision of the provider. When it was announced, as I recall, back in 2017, it made it very clear that there would be five missions, some of them within Queensland and some interstate. It even mentioned, from recollection, that one would be overseas.

Mr HART: The provider has had its contract terminated. Will that program continue under somebody else?

Mr Walker: The contract is not continued because we have seen that program out. It finished last year. It has done its job. As the minister has mentioned, some of these programs were very helpful in the early stages of AQ. We are now in a review process as part of the Advance Queensland review, with a new strategy to come. As the minister has mentioned, our focus will move to scale-up in particular.

Mr HART: Can you clarify: did the minister sign off on this program and approve the funding for it?

Mr Walker: Again, my recollection is that this was pre the machinery-of-government change. If the question is around Minister Jones, I do not believe so. Again, I am not sure, at \$124,000, whether it would require or necessitate a ministerial sign-off. We would need to look into that. Again, it is not a program that Minister Jones had been involved in. The advice from my department is that the minister was not required to sign off on this program, given the number of \$124,000.

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank members of the committee for allowing me to attend today. I welcome the minister, her staff and staff from the department. Minister, I refer to page 280 of the Commonwealth Games' *Post games report* and the State Contingency Fund. Why will the Labor government not give back to the Gold Coast the \$167 million to fund light rail stage 3 and leave a true Commonwealth Games legacy?

Ms JONES: We saw only today in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* that John Coates, the chair of the Australian Olympic Committee, was saying that the Gold Coast is crucial to delivering the Olympics. For the Gold Coast, I do not think there is a bigger legacy from the Commonwealth Games than the

whole of the International Olympic Committee saying that South-East Queensland, Queensland and, indeed, the Gold Coast should all be part of a Queensland bid for the Olympics. Our government made a commitment to deliver the Commonwealth Games on time and on budget. That is exactly what we did. We never sought legal advice to scrap the Commonwealth Games entirely, unlike the LNP government.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can you confirm that the \$167 million went back to Treasury?

Ms JONES: We discussed this at last year's estimates. I have already been on the record in regard to that. I can say that our government continues to keep our share of funding for the light rail project. In regard to stage 1, we did the heavy lifting. In regard to stage 2, we did the heavy lifting. We are also very keen to see the third stage go ahead. The transport minister has spoken about that. The Gold Coast City Council has consistently contributed the same amount of money for all three stages. In fact, the mayor was on the record saying that it is, I think, 13 per cent or 16 per cent and he will keep that same contribution from the Gold Coast City Council for each stage.

The only partner in this crucial—and I agree with you entirely that it is crucial—development for the Gold Coast that each and every time whittles down their contribution is the Morrison government, the conservative government of Australia. As I said last week, I think they are taking the Gold Coast for granted. Why is it that the members of the Gold Coast sitting opposite me right now are willing to accept that their colleagues in Canberra cut the funding—

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Mr Chair.

Ms JONES:—towards this program at each and every single stage?

CHAIR: Order, Minister. There is a point of order. I will hear the point of order from the deputy chair.

Mr KRAUSE: The point of order is on relevance. The question was quite specific. The minister is straying into other territory. I ask her to come back to the question or conclude.

CHAIR: There is no point of order, Deputy Chair. It was a very broad-ranging question that perhaps should have been asked yesterday. I have given the member for Surfers Paradise a lot of leeway and I am, therefore, giving the minister some scope as well. Minister, do you have anything further to add in answering the question? Member for Surfers Paradise, do you have any further questions?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, thank you, Chair. My reference is again to the Commonwealth Games *Post games report*, page 265. Minister, are you satisfied that all subcontractors were adequately informed by Goldoc, as security was budgeted to be a total net cost to the government of \$221 million and the actual figure was \$174 million, notwithstanding the accompanying note explanation? I have read the note explanation. I am querying that decreased number.

Ms JONES: My understanding is that all contracts have been finalised.

Mr LANGBROEK: In that case, Minister, will you advise whether there were any financial repercussions for the government from the Fair Work Ombudsman's investigation into the delayed payments to Commonwealth Games security providers?

Ms JONES: I am not aware of any of those. As I have said, our No. 1 commitment was to deliver the Commonwealth Games on time and on budget. You started the questions saying that we had made a saving and now you are saying that there is a cost blow-out; is that right?

Mr LANGBROEK: No. I was asking whether there were financial repercussions from the ombudsman's investigation.

Ms JONES: Not that we are aware of, no.

Mr LANGBROEK: Minister, was there any investigation into claims by security guards that 'subcontractors were waiting on Goldoc' and that that was the cause of payment delays and subsequent savings to government?

CHAIR: One moment, Minister. Member for Surfers Paradise, for the benefit of the committee, you have given a quote. Do you have a reference for the quote that you can either table or provide to us?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, I do. I am prepared to provide it. It is a quote from a newspaper article. I did not bring enough copies.

CHAIR: You are seeking to table that document. Is leave granted? Leave is granted.

Ms JONES: I am happy to look at that. My understanding is that it was advertised that tourism and major events was the first part of the estimates and now we are in the innovation part. I do not know whether all of the innovation members want to continue to ask questions that should have been asked in the first part of the estimates. Maybe the member for Surfers Paradise has a legitimate reason for why he could not be here this morning.

As I said, my understanding is that this matter has been finalised. I am not aware of any additional penalty being paid because of the Fair Work Ombudsman. If there is any information that the member has that he would like to share with me, I am happy to look at it. However, my understanding is that this has been resolved. In fact, most conversations that we seem to be having now in regard to the Commonwealth Games long-term legacy for Queensland are that it is now being talked about as the state to host the Olympic Games in 2032.

Mr HART: Director-General, as we have heard this morning, the government is investing \$3.8 million in FibreCo, which was strongly pushed by Steve Baxter, who at the time was the Chief Entrepreneur of Queensland. Can you advise if Mr Baxter has any financial interest in or position with FibreCo and if he stands to benefit in any way from FibreCo's existence?

Mr Walker: No.

Mr HART: Director-General, I refer to page 7 of the SDS. It appears as though, after two years, the Myriad Festival is no longer. Can you confirm whether the Myriad Festival has been cancelled?

Ms JONES: We had a whole new festival this year called Curiosity. You could have come. Thousands went.

Mr Walker: The minister is absolutely right: we transitioned from Myriad. Earlier this year we held an innovation festival called QODE. It was quite the success.

Mr HART: On the Myriad Festival, the Chief Entrepreneur signed an underwriting agreement for the e-charter. Can you tell us if he did that on his own behalf or on behalf of the government? Did that charter cost the government any money?

Mr Walker: We are now talking about the inaugural Chief Entrepreneur, Mr Mark Sowerby. He did enter into an arrangement to underwrite it personally. There was no requirement for state dollars, given that the flight itself was funded by sponsorship and ticket sales.

Mr HART: In a TV interview the minister said that the flight was paid for by donations, including the airline. Director-General, can you tell the committee who made those donations and how much they were?

Mr Walker: Sponsorship is what took place. There were a number of sponsors. I do not have them at hand. We had some of the big end of town from Cisco, from memory, to Gadens law firm. We had a number of sponsors for this flight. Please remember it was a particularly dynamic thing for the state of Queensland to do. This was from Silicon Valley to Fortitude Valley.

It had over 220 passengers representing 25 international and Australian investors. It did not cost taxpayers in terms of that flight, but what it did do is provide a tremendous opportunity for start-ups in Queensland to further their cause. In fact, many of them now talk about the opportunities that they were given and they have now received funding as a result of being involved in that exercise.

Mr HART: Minister, it appears that Advance Queensland's QODE event replaced Myriad on a one-year contract. Is this where the rest of Myriad's funding went? If you have had better luck with it will it be continuing?

Ms JONES: Yes, QODE will be continuing.

CHAIR: Member for Burleigh, do you have one more question before I go to the member for Maiwar?

Mr HART: Yes. Director-General, can you advise how much rent River City Labs paid at the Advance Queensland hub in Brisbane while Steve Baxter was the state Chief Entrepreneur?

Mr Walker: We would need to get that figure. The rate they would pay would be equivalent to the other tenants within the building. They have a slightly larger square metre arrangement there. We will get that information for you, but it would have been the standard rate that we have sought from all tenants.

Mr HART: Will you take that on notice?

Mr Walker: Yes.

Mr HART: Could you also just check and see whether after River City Labs was sold the deal is still the same?

Mr Walker: Will do. I cannot imagine why it would have changed but we will look into that.

Mr BERKMAN: My question relates to \$15 million in state funding for the Defence CRC. There is an international campaign led by an Australian expert in AI calling for a treaty banning lethal autonomous weapons or in other words those drones that can kill without human control. This is proposed alongside existing treaties that ban nuclear weapons proliferation, chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Minister, are you concerned we could end up spending taxpayers' money on a facility to develop weapons of mass destruction that are ultimately banned under international law?

CHAIR: Minister, before you answer the question, member for Maiwar you referred to a treaty. For the benefit of the committee and all those present and watching, could you inform us as to which treaty you were specifically referring to in your question?

Mr BERKMAN: I referred to an international campaign led by an Australian AI expert who is calling for a treaty.

CHAIR: Thank you for that clarification, member for Maiwar.

Ms JONES: I have full confidence in the Australian Defence Force and it acting in an ethical way. As we have said on the record and as my ministerial colleague who has appeared before me the Minister for State Development has said, we are backing defence as an industry. It is one of the largest employers in Queensland.

For many years I represented the Enoggera Army base which was in my electorate. I have had the great privilege of working with a number of key people in that area. We are also backing agriculture, mining, resources and environmental management as key industries where Queensland is seen as world leading and having world-leading technology. To answer your question, I am very confident in the work that the Australian Defence Force is doing as part of the CRC.

Mr BERKMAN: Can you confirm whether any part of the \$15 million of Queensland taxpayers' money will go towards work to develop autonomous killer drones at the Defence CRC for Trusted Autonomous Systems?

Ms JONES: My understanding is that the Defence CRC was awarded by the federal government in a competitive process which Queensland won. We will be working very closely with them on the work that the Australian Defence Force prioritises. I am not the Australian defence minister. What I can say to you is that I think this is a great win for Queensland because it creates jobs locally in your community.

CHAIR: We now move on to government questions.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, I also have a question in relation to the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur. Could you please outline how the government is encouraging investment in Queensland start-ups through the Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur?

Ms JONES: Before I answer that question, with your indulgence, Chair, I wanted to say that I have now seen the document tabled by the leader, I am sorry, he is not the leader of the opposition anymore, the member for Surfers Paradise—I am having a flashback. I have read the article. As it quite clearly says, there are no outstanding payments with regard to security guards in terms of the government. It is between security companies and their subcontractors. My advice is consistent that there is no ongoing issue with regard to the state government or any contracts with Goldoc.

CHAIR: Thank you for that clarification, Minister.

Ms JONES: With regard to the Chief Entrepreneur, I am pleased to say that as the minister I have appointed Leanne Kemp, one of the world leaders in blockchain. She is hitting the ground running. She is such a dynamic woman. She is the first female Chief Entrepreneur in Queensland. Excitingly, she now participates in global forums with regard to the circular economy and also battery technology. I can announce today that from tomorrow she will be spending the next month on the road crisscrossing Queensland and holding innovation summits with small businesses and regional communities. She is kicking off her tour in Cairns. I understand that she is in Cairns as we speak.

We understand that having someone with global connections, such as Leanne Kemp, who has now secured major contracts with some of the largest companies in the world, is a way that we can really build the mindset in regional Queensland that what these new platform technologies deliver and with a more connected community through projects such as FibreCo, businesses based in Cairns or Bundaberg or Gladstone, for example, will have access to a global market.

It is not just us in Queensland that think having a chief entrepreneur is a great idea. We have now seen that the South Australian Premier who, as we know, came up to Queensland recently and toured our precinct now has a policy, I understand, to deliver a chief entrepreneur for the South

Australian conservative government. That is a state that understands when you are not Sydney or Melbourne you have to fight hard to secure new contracts and jobs. As they often say, the best form of flattery is imitation. It is great to see that the Liberal Premier of South Australia is now saying that they would like to use our model and had a number of briefings with our staff at the precinct about how we have grown and now we were able to leapfrog Victoria and be the start-up capital, shadowed only in behind Sydney.

Ms Kemp is a great example of an innovation leader. As you know, she is the founder and CEO of Everledger, a leading, emerging enterprise that uses blockchain to track high-value assets on what is a global digital ledger. This technology will only continue to grow. Ms Kemp has presented at more than 40 conferences, workshops and school forums, including a keynote address at our QODE festival, that we talked about. With regard to QODE, we were up-front about saying that we were transitioning to a new event. I believe I answered all those questions last year. That has all been on the public record. She was a great speaker at that. I got a lot of good feedback about her.

In her role, Ms Kemp has already visited Chinchilla, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Emerald, Yeppoon, Great Keppel Island, Cairns, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. She has earmarked for the next month that she will be on the road in Queensland talking to regional Queensland communities about jobs growth by investing in innovation.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, I was hoping you could please update the committee on how the Palaszczuk government supports promising Queensland start-ups to scale up and grow?

Ms JONES: As we said, our focus as a government is not only on building an innovation ecosystem, as has been recognised by many of the largest business owners in Australia at an innovation summit as we speak. They have said very clearly that what they want from government is co-investment and strong, clear leadership and policies. I saw Campbell Newman comments—I think it was in the *Courier-Mail*—saying that he is very pleased that the government has implemented what the Josh Lerner report said and it would have been a great shame to see us go backwards. I will take that endorsement where I can get it.

One of the great examples of where we have supported a Brisbane business to grow, both from its start-up stage into the scale-up stage, is RedEye. RedEye started as a Brisbane based tech start-up when they first received a \$250,000 grant through the Advance Queensland Ignite Ideas Fund in 2016. At that stage they were employing eight people. They are now employing 100 people globally and now manage more than \$200 billion worth of critical infrastructure through their technology.

RedEye, as a consequence of this large customer base, has also expanded overseas with offices in the Philippines and New Zealand and a US office in Denver. I had the privilege on behalf of the government to open their Denver office. It is a great success story of a Queensland business that is now achieving global reach. This Brisbane company is now exporting Queensland born and bred technology to global markets. It is largely thanks to the strong support of this government. Of course, as I say, do not take my word for it. RedEye chief executive and co-founder Wayne Gerard said—

I just can't comment enough on how effective I think the Queensland government has been. The level of government support available means that the state is really leading the world in terms of building start-up ecosystems. The people running Advance Queensland, the government initiative, really get it. They are not bureaucrats. These people are experimenting—trying, testing and learning—and they are supporting start-ups just like us.

RedEye is once again an example of how we have to back business to back jobs. So far we have supported more than 5,200 of these businesses. As I said in my opening remarks, this is supporting more than 16,400 jobs across our state.

CHAIR: Minister, in relation to page 7 of the SDS, I understand that RedEye are recipients, as you said, of the Palaszczuk government Ignite Ideas program. Could you please update the committee on progress in partnering with small to medium sized companies through this program to create jobs in Queensland?

Ms JONES: Ignite Ideas is one of the programs that I probably get the most feedback about, that it is such a great win. As I said, it really does fall into that category of helping businesses scale up so they can create more jobs in Queensland.

Rocklea based start-up Like a Photon Creative received an Ignite Ideas grant in round 3 to grow their production company. I had the privilege of meeting the two women who are running this business. It is amazing. They do digital technology. They have created new movies that will be released internationally. They have now secured deals with Sesame Street and with Disney. They are a Queensland start-up that now has contracts with Disney to create new content over many years to come.

Since partnering with the government, they have also signed a deal with Universal Studios to produce 10 animated feature films, and they are now employing 70 staff. This would not have been possible, in their own words when I met with them only last week, if it were not for the investment that we have made. We have fast-tracked those jobs and that growth here in Queensland.

Gold Coast start-up Kynd received an Ignite Ideas grant in round 3 to commercialise its mobile platform to connect local carers and support staff with anyone needing disability support and home care. Everyone in this room knows that one of the fastest growing segments of the Australian economy right now is the carer economy. In particular as we see the rollout of significant investment through the NDIS, connecting carers with people in need of support is going to be a growing business. That is why we are backing this Gold Coast business Kynd.

Milton based start-up WorkingMouse received an Ignite Ideas grant in round 2 to commercialise their artificial intelligence coding platform called Codebots. I have also had the privilege of meeting with them. At the time they received this grant from the state government they were employing around 14 people. Today I can advise that they are now employing 58 Queenslanders here in our local economy.

In total through Ignite Ideas alone we have now delivered more than 1,000 new jobs in businesses in Queensland. We know, as has been reported—and I quoted CEOs in my opening remarks—that we can fast-track jobs and create jobs in Queensland in these new technologies by partnering with the private sector. We are not trying to emulate what the private sector does, but we are backing the private sector to create these jobs.

Ms LUI: Minister, I refer to page 7 of the SDS. Can you please update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's efforts to attract international investors to Queensland?

Ms JONES: As I said, not only are we supporting businesses to go global; we are also working really hard to ensure we have global companies investing in Brisbane based or Queensland based companies to keep jobs here in our state. We are creating the jobs of the future by linking these partnerships.

There is an Underwood business called GO1, which provides corporate training and professional development. They launched in 2015. Since they partnered with the government they have gone from 19 workers to more than 100 jobs here in Queensland. They are also the first Australian firm to ever receive funding from Microsoft venture capital fund M12. This is once again an Australian first: a Queensland business has secured funding from global giant Microsoft, which has invested in it through its capital fund M12.

The company has now received \$30 million in investment and is ready for international expansion beyond its presence in the United States, London, Malaysia and Vietnam. The government support of GO1 in those early stages, when they needed that support, has enabled them to go global and secure investment in companies such as Microsoft. GO1 hire local developers, local project managers and support staff based in Queensland to scale up their business so they can have a global presence. As I say, this is just another example of a pioneering Queensland business that has benefited significantly from our agenda to invest in them.

Another example is Immersive Robotics founder Tim Lucas, who moved his company from Perth to Brisbane because he saw that through our government's investment in our Advance Queensland agenda there were more opportunities for him to grow his business here than being based in Perth. Immersive Robotics are world leaders in real-time video compression and streaming technology for virtual and augmented reality headsets. As members of parliament, many of you as you go to events, whether it is a tourism event or a football event, are seeing more and more of this augmented reality growing and these headsets becoming available as that technology advances. This is going to be a significantly growing segment of the market in coming years.

Immersive Robotics advised us that, after receiving a grant from the government, they have now created more than 10 high-value jobs in this new industry. What is even better, because it is such a fast-growing part of the economy, is that they expect to double their workforce in coming years. We have created and supported more than 16,400 jobs in total by investing in our best and brightest small businesses and start-ups here in Queensland.

Ms LUI: My next question is in reference to page 7 of the SDS. Could the minister please update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's strategy to promote Queensland as a global leader for clinical trials in the biopharmaceuticals industry?

Ms JONES: In my experience, what I hear very loud and clear from industry is that Queensland is seen as a bioresearch industry hub. We have seen significant growth in biopharmaceutical products. What is really exciting, though, is that we are laser focused on creating jobs in regional Queensland. I

am so proud that I was able to secure through our funding a partnership with the Mackay Regional Council to deliver the Coral Sea Clinical Research Institute to Mackay. This facility will pump an additional \$1 million into the Mackay economy each and every year. More importantly, it is a sign of how we can partner with local businesses and councils on the ground to diversify economies in regional Queensland.

I understand that Mackay is the first regional city in Australia to be running clinical trials. This relates to coeliac disease, which we know affects many people in our community. It is very exciting that this is now happening in a regional centre and that the first regional centre to have clinical trials like this is based in Queensland. We were able to do that not only because we are world leaders in this technology but also because when you have grown up in Queensland, like many of us have, we take for granted our significant investment in having such a strong regional hospital blueprint. Many of you will be familiar that, after years of not seeing investment, we as a government have rebuilt many of our regional hospitals.

Having a network of regional hospitals is one of the selling points we have when it comes to the investment in clinical trials like this and pharmaceutical companies wanting to trial new products to market in Queensland. This is a very competitive space. When I make representations on behalf of Queensland and on behalf of the Queensland government, they very much look at the world-class hospitals that we have—for example, the oncology research in South Brisbane, Herston, Woolloongabba and Southport on the Gold Coast and the cardiovascular research that is underway in Woolloongabba, Chermside, Bundaberg, Fortitude Valley and Herston. We will continue to work with biopharmaceuticals companies to create new opportunities to have clinical trials in regional Queensland.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, I refer to page 7 of the SDS. Are you able to update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to invest in new technology to create jobs?

Ms JONES: As we know, investing in new technology is a great way to build new jobs in traditional industries in which Queensland is recognised globally as having world leaders and experts; for example, mining, resources, agriculture, environmental management and, moving forward, even our tourism industry. That is why we launched the IndustryTechFund, which is a \$15 million investment for large-scale co-funded tech projects that have the potential to take Queensland ideas and products to a global market. For example, we partnered with Boeing to deliver \$4.35 million for the unmanned systems project. This brought together Boeing, Telstra and Queensland Gas Company to develop an advanced airway system to enable drones to operate in a range of civil and commercial industries. This support alone will deliver 100 jobs here in Queensland which, if we had not secured that deal, would have been lost interstate or overseas.

We have also partnered with Boeing to deliver project Trinity. This project is aimed at working with small to medium enterprises to create the new generation of drones. Through this project we are engaging with 14 small to medium sized companies across the state from Caloundra to Toowoomba and Brisbane. Over the next three years this project will support 130 jobs based here in Queensland.

We have also partnered with Redback Technologies. This is, in my opinion, very exciting technology. I had the opportunity to meet with the scientists and researchers behind this new technology. This fast-growing Queensland based technology company is developing a state-of-the-art battery storage system. It is Redback's aim to make battery storage technology more affordable. We know there are many people out there who want to transition to more environmentally friendly ways of consuming and using energy. That is why investing in companies like this can fast-track the pricepoint which will open it up to families right across Queensland, particularly in areas that are represented by members of parliament here today. This system is capable of reducing energy costs for families and pumping renewable energy back into the grid. My prediction is that in the next two to three years the pricepoint of this battery storage at the home based level will see many more families embrace that.

I know that already there are a number of energy companies in Queensland partnering with Redback Technologies to provide that option to families who can afford it. When we introduced work with regard to solar energy on our roofs, our experience was that my community of the Ashgrove electorate—as it was then—took up that opportunity the most and were the earliest movers in that space. It meant that as we brought down the price per unit that then allowed other families who had lower disposable incomes to get on the back of that technology. I expect that will be the same with home based battery technology as well. Their system is capable of reducing energy costs but, more excitingly, already we expect that this project alone will support 65 jobs here in Queensland. Once

again, if we had not invested in them they would have gone wherever that global investment was. They could have gone interstate or overseas. That is why we have to be interventionist in keeping these businesses here in Queensland.

CHAIR: We will now move to non-government questions for the short time we have remaining.

Mr HART: Minister, I notice that you said you were up-front about Myriad closing, but I do not remember you making an announcement about it. I do not remember you talking about it at any stage. When I checked this morning their website was still up. You could still look at booking a stand; you could still look at booking a ticket. Do you think that as the minister for Advance Queensland you should at least take the website down?

Ms JONES: When I stood there and announced that Curiosity was going ahead, I also answered questions at that time—as you would imagine I would—and said that we were no longer pursuing Myriad. Myriad was a success and we had feedback, but we started working on a long-term innovation festival for Queensland some years ago. In actual fact, I am being told that I released a media statement on Thursday, 13 December 2018 about this.

Mr HART: So why hasn't the website been taken down?

Ms JONES: I do not run the Myriad website. Myriad runs their website. Anyway, I am really excited. Because we had Myriad, we were able to start building an innovation event here in Queensland. We have taken it to the next level, through our investment in Tourism and Events Queensland, to create QODE. What we want to carve out is that Queensland is the home to Australia's largest innovation festival. Indeed, when I announced QODE what we said was we want the QODE festival and the Curiosity branding. You would be well aware that the partner in this is the Brisbane City Council. The Brisbane City Council is a large partner for us in Curiosity and QODE. We want to build it to be the largest innovation festival in the Southern Hemisphere based here in Queensland. The reason why we want to do that is because we know that brings the best and brightest to Queensland. As stated in that press release—

Lord Mayor Graham Quirk said QODE would bring the world's thought leaders in technology and innovation to Brisbane at a time when the city's start-up and research sectors were undergoing significant growth.

"I look forward to welcoming more than 1000 innovators, investors and entrepreneurs to QODE in April next year," Cr Quirk said.

CHAIR: I have a point of clarification. The member for Jordan did not want to interrupt and create a point of order, but she has helpfully had a look at the Myriad website. For your reference, member for Burleigh, it is clearly marked 2018 and it seems as though you cannot purchase any tickets.

Mr HART: That is not what I said, Chair. I said it was still running.

Ms JONES: For clarity, my understanding is that Myriad is a festival proponent. They might want to have the Myriad festival somewhere else in the world. The difference is QODE is a festival that Queensland owns and that we have built in partnership with the Brisbane City Council. I have been on the public record for a number of months about this. QODE happened at the beginning of the year. It was well attended. As I said, the Lord Mayor was there—

Mr HART: That is QODE. I was talking about Myriad, but thank you.

Ms JONES: Yes, so Myriad ended in May 2018.

Mr HART: Can I just ask a quick question of the director-general?

Ms JONES: It might go to Canada.

CHAIR: Do you have a question, member for Burleigh? We are pushing up against time because we have questions on notice. Do you have a question?

Mr HART: Page 7 of the SDS advises that an Advance Queensland Economic Council will be established. Can the director-general tell us if that council has been established, who appoints the people, and who might they be if it has been established?

Mr Walker: We are looking to finalise the Advance Queensland strategy in the very near future, and that will be a decision of government; namely, its finalisation and release. One of the suggested actions in that was as you say, so that will be a decision of government in due course.

Mr HART: Point of order, Mr Chair. I find the remark of the minister personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

CHAIR: For the benefit of the committee, can you clarify which remark?

Mr HART: It was about being away or on a cruise or a trip.

CHAIR: Was it the reference to a holiday in Canada that you found offensive?

Mr HART: Yes, that was the one.

CHAIR: Are you willing to withdraw that, Minister?

Ms JONES: I just said that Myriad could go anywhere, including Canada.

CHAIR: There is clearly a dispute about the remarks. Member for Burleigh, you will have other options to take that up.

Mr HART: I found it personally offensive and I ask the minister to withdraw.

Ms JONES: I withdraw.

CHAIR: The minister has withdrawn. We will now move on to answers to questions on notice if you wish to provide those at this juncture, Minister.

Ms JONES: Hot DesQ 2017-18: there were 28 recipients, of which 19 have stayed in Queensland; in 2018-19 there were 10 recipients, and I am advised that all remain in Queensland.

With regard to SBIR, 22 companies have received funding of which approximately half were Queensland. River City Labs' rent was for a lease of 1,323 metres squared. Rates are consistent with other tenants' there. I am advised there has been no change with regard to the rent rate following the sale of River City Labs.

Mr HART: Minister, can I just clarify. When you said roughly half, do you actually have the numbers?

Ms JONES: I am just trying to read the writing. Ten.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. Before we formally close off this session is there anything you would like to add?

Ms JONES: Yes, I would like to finish something with regard to SBIR because there was been a bit of commentary on this. As the director-general said in answering the question, this is a procurement policy. All procurement contracts across Australia must comply with the national competition law in Australia, which was introduced by the Howard government. It stipulates that you can provide some weighting for communities. We know that as a government we have introduced the strongest procurement policies with regard to Buy Queensland that Queensland has ever had. Even with those policies in place, through a procurement policy you must provide the contract to the person who wins the procurement contract. My understanding is that one was a project done with the Australian department of environment, to which they contributed \$1.5 million. That was a requirement of the grant funding which was jointly funded with the federal government.

CHAIR: The time allocated for the consideration of the portfolio areas of the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games has expired. I note that all questions on notice have been answered. You are very efficient today, Minister. Thank you, Minister, Director-General and officials for your attendance. The committee will now adjourn. The hearing will resume at 1.30 pm with the examination of estimates for the portfolios of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts.

Proceedings suspended from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm.

**ESTIMATES—INNOVATION, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE—ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, SCIENCE
AND THE ARTS****In Attendance**

Hon. LM Enoch, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Ms H Jackson, Chief of Staff

Department of Environment and Science

Dr J Merrick, Director-General

Mr T Roberts, Deputy Director-General, Environmental Policy and Programs

Mr M Jacobs, Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology

Queensland Art Gallery

Mr C Saines, Director

Arts Queensland

Ms K Herring, Deputy Director-General

Queensland Theatre Company

Ms A Jolly, Director

 **CHAIR:** The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts. The visiting members present are Mr David Crisafulli, the member for Broadwater, and Mr Michael Berkman, the member for Maiwar.

I remind those present that the hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament apply in this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. I intend to guide proceedings this afternoon so that relevant issues can be explored fully and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee.

I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at my discretion as chair or by order of the committee. I ask that all mobile phones and electronic devices now be turned off or switched to silent mode. I also remind everyone that food and drink are not permitted in the chamber, except for water.

I now welcome the minister, the director-general, officials and members of the public to the hearing. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or the director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of environment, national parks, heritage and the Great Barrier Reef open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, I welcome you and invite you to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide an update on the Palaszczuk government's work in protecting the environment and Great Barrier Reef. I would also like to acknowledge that today is World Ranger Day, and I would like to thank the more than 800 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers as well as the many Indigenous land and sea rangers across the state who work very hard to preserve more than 1,000 parks, forests and marine parks in Queensland.

Just like rangers, we know that Queenslanders care about protecting the environment. The environment plays a pivotal role in the health of our communities. A clean and healthy environment is essential for healthy living—from the air that we breathe to the water we drink. Our world is facing a challenging time as we start to feel the effects of climate change, and we are ultimately the last generation to be able to do something about it.

The Palaszczuk government recognises the importance of responding to this challenge, and that is why we have established ambitious targets, including zero net emissions by 2050 and 50 per cent renewables by 2030, to put Queensland on the path to a more sustainable future. In this year's budget, we are continuing our commitment to protect the Great Barrier Reef following record funding of \$330 million over five years. Protecting the reef and the more than 60,000 jobs that rely on it is one of our government's Advancing Queensland priorities, and we are accelerating our work on improving water quality and tackling ongoing issues, such as crown-of-thorns starfish, to help the reef become more resilient.

Science shows that one of the biggest threats to the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has continued to lead climate change action, with an investment of more than \$70 million through to the forward estimates of 2022-23. In this year's budget, we have invested more than \$17 million in climate change initiatives. We are also funding projects under the \$500 million flagship Land Restoration Fund, which supports carbon-farming initiatives and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

In Queensland we have about 13 million hectares of protected areas and forests, including five World Heritage areas. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service manages more than 600 protected areas, 60 per cent of which falls within bushfire prone areas. In this year's budget, we have committed a further \$16 million towards the ongoing fire management project to allow QPWS to continue their hard work in bushfire mitigation. In 2018-19 QPWS conducted planned burns on more than one million hectares, which was 62 per cent higher than the targeted amount. This was also the largest area covered in five years.

Queensland's unique landscapes and waterways are beacons for around eight million international and 50 million domestic visits each year. The Palaszczuk government has allocated \$10 million for national parks revitalisation this financial year which will go towards upgrading infrastructure in national parks including those impacted by Tropical Cyclone Debbie.

Our government is also pleased to continue to support the work in the Wet Tropics World Heritage area, with \$9 million over three years to eradicate yellow crazy ants. This year's budget has also included funding to protect Queensland's threatened species. This includes \$1.5 million for infrastructure improvements to the Moggill Koala Rehabilitation Centre and to the RSPCA for their wildlife hotline service, which I had the opportunity to visit personally just a few weeks ago.

This year we have had some incredible success in making Queensland a more sustainable state. It has been more than a year since the plastic bag ban came into effect, and we have seen a 70 per cent drop in plastic bag litter. Earlier this morning, I also announced that more than 700 million containers have been returned through the container refund scheme, which started just nine months ago. This scheme has created more than 600 new jobs and has had incredible success as more and more Queenslanders get involved in the recycling initiative. More refund sites have opened up, and today I was able to announce that we have reached 307 container refund points across the state. That is three months ahead of the legislated target by 1 November this year.

We are also continuing to invest in better waste management for Queensland. As the committee knows, unfortunately Queensland is generating waste faster than it is growing in population. We are addressing this through our new waste management strategy, which is underpinned by the waste levy that came into effect on 1 July. We know that there are more economic and job opportunities in recycling. It is anticipated that by 2025 there will be an extra 2,000 jobs in recycling thanks to the work we have done. Having a more sustainable future will go a long way in helping protect Queensland's environment.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. We will now move to questions. I will give the non-government members the first opportunity to ask some questions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My first question is to the director-general. I refer to the \$228 million spent last year as part of the department's environmental protection services, outlined on page 5 of the SDS. Have the director-general or any of his senior staff received any input by either oral or written means from the Deputy Premier or her staff regarding the approval of the Adani mine in the Galilee Basin?

Dr Merrick: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I refer to the \$228 million spent last year as part of the environmental protection services, outlined on page 5 of the SDS. Have the minister or any of her senior staff received any input by either oral or written means from the Deputy Premier or her staff regarding the approval of the Adani mine in the Galilee Basin?

Ms ENOCH: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Nothing?

Ms ENOCH: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Not a phone call?

CHAIR: The minister has answered the question, member for Broadwater. Do you have further questions?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Is it time to buy a cute cottage in Clermont or a big block in Bowen?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, I really caution you. You are continuing on with your interruptions from earlier this morning. I counsel you to ask some questions or we will move on.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Thank you, Chair. Minister, I refer to one of the department's services—that is, to control actions that will impact on the state's environment, on page 5 of the SDS. Why did the department contract external consultants to review Adani's wildlife management plan?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I will bring forward the appropriate deputy director-general on that matter shortly. However, can I just be clear for the committee, as I have done for the parliament, that there is legislation in place—the Environmental Protection Act—that ensures that the regulator is able to make these kinds of decisions regarding Adani or any other proponent free from political interference. It is the role of the regulator to determine whether they need to receive more technical advice outside the remit of their department to be able to make their decision. That is the capability of the department to choose that. It is the same with the federal government as they are able to seek input from CSIRO, for instance, and other external bodies to help make decisions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Further to that, when was the last time the department required a wildlife management plan for a mine to be externally reviewed?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I will seek some advice from the director-general on that. I bring forward the director-general. However, can I say this? I think every Queenslanders expects the environmental regulator in this state to be able to seek information to make the most informed decision on behalf of them.

Mr CRISAFULLI: And to treat everyone fairly.

Ms ENOCH: That is absolutely what every Queenslanders would expect from their environmental regulator. They should be able to do that free from political interference, which they have been able to do in this state under the legislation that has been in place since 1994.

Dr Merrick: By way of context in relation to the first question, the Carmichael coalmine is the site of the largest and most significant known population of the endangered black-throated finch. As a result of engagement with the proponent over a period of time, the fact that a number of matters were unresolved and the significance of the BTF population, the regulator formed the view that there should be a review by an independent expert panel. The review was to ensure that the final decision regarding the potential approval of the BTFMP was consistent with the very best threatened species and conservation science and was assessed and reviewed externally to government by highly qualified experts in the field. The review ensured the final decision was guided by independent scientific analysis that was beyond reproach in terms of its objectivity.

In terms of the second question the member raised, it is not unusual for the Department of Environment and Science to seek expert advice on environmental matters, particularly in relation to approvals. Indeed, in the last year there were a number of examples of that. I will give one example in relation to the recent QGC Surat Basin acreage development project. In the environmental authority amendment application we sought expert advice from GHD Ltd in terms of potential impacts on groundwater. I could provide other examples if the committee needs them.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My next question is to the minister, and I refer to SDS page 5. What involvement did anti Adani campaigner Tim Seelig and former Greens party candidate Kirsten Lovejoy have in the Adani approval process?

Ms ENOCH: None whatsoever. It is the role of the regulator, which is a particular part of the department that has that responsibility, and the delegate who oversees those decisions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My next question is to the director-general. I refer to the 2019-20 service area highlights and a review of the EIS process under the 1994 act, which is in SDS page 6. Is this review in response to the minister's statement that Queensland's environmental laws are flawed?

Ms ENOCH: Can I clarify that they are not my comments at all. I did not say that the Queensland laws are flawed. I said that legislation is flawed. When you look at the federal government in terms of the lack of policy and legislation around climate change, there certainly needs to be some action at the federal level.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. The member for Broadwater is claiming statements made were made by the minister.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will reword that, Mr Chairman.

CHAIR: Are you prepared to—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Absolutely. Director-General, is this review in response to the minister's public statements surrounding the approval process for the Adani mine?

Dr Merrick: With respect, I have just given the reason the regulator commissioned the review.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My next question is to the minister, and I refer to SDS page 6 and the Environmental Protection Act. How much has the department budgeted for the review in question for the EIS process?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I will bring forward the director-general to answer that very direct question.

Dr Merrick: In relation to the cost of the review of the BTFMP, I am advised it was \$27,000.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My next question is to the minister. I refer to the service area highlighting a waste strategy for Queensland, which is SDS page 22. What procurement process was undertaken to appoint Coex as the container deposit scheme manager?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. In terms of the procurement process with regard to Coex, I will bring forward the Deputy Director-General for Environmental Policy and Programs as his area has had direct involvement around that. Of course, as the member would know, Coex is a not-for-profit organisation that has been awarded the opportunity to run our container refund scheme in Queensland, a scheme that the parliament through legislation wholeheartedly supported. However, I will bring forward the deputy director-general to answer that particular question.

Mr Roberts: The WRR Act, the waste act, provides a mechanism for the minister to invite an eligible company to apply to become the product responsibility organisation for running the scheme. Following passage of the amendments to the act in September 2017 and the establishment of the CRS scheme, the beverage industry was informed of its obligations to form a PRO and subsequently operate the scheme. This included a letter to the two entities, the Lion organisation and Coca-Cola Amatil, in September 2017 inviting the formation of an eligible company to apply to become a PRO. CCA and Lion subsequently formed Coex as an eligible company under the Corporations Act. A formal invitation was then issued by the minister in October 2017 for Coex to apply to become the PRO. Coex then made an application to become the PRO and, subsequently, the minister conditionally approved Coex as the PRO for Queensland.

The appointment process was as follows. In September 2017 invitations were sent to CCA and Lion inviting the formation of an eligible company. In October 2017 the eligible company Coex was established under the Corporations Act. In October 2017 the minister formally sent a letter of invitation to Coex for them to apply for appointment as the PRO. In November 2017 an application was received and assessed. In November 2017 the application assessment report was prepared and the appointment recommended. In 2017 Coex was conditionally appointed as the PRO. As well as the enduring conditions of appointment, Coex is obligated to satisfy a number of appointment conditions prior to receiving unconditional appointment, which happened subsequent to that stage.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, I will stay with the deputy director-general. It does not seem like it is an overly competitive process. I will park that. What about the selection of the chair, the former Labor candidate for the seat of Warrego? What was that appointment process?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, to ask a direct question of the deputy director-general you have to get a referral by either the minister or the director-general. I am sure you are aware of that.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will ask the minister. I am confident that she will refer it.

CHAIR: Your question is: will the minister refer a question to the deputy director-general? Minister?

Ms ENOCH: No, I am happy to answer that question.

CHAIR: Thank you. Please respond.

Ms ENOCH: Of course. There was a full process with regards to the appointment of the chair of Coex along with other board members. I can confirm that an organisation was used in helping to seek out suitable candidates. That company was called Effective Governance Pty Ltd.; they were commissioned. That full process was undertaken and recommendations made to me by the department regarding a suitable chair to be appointed to Coex.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, are you aware of any legal action against the scheme operator?

Ms ENOCH: There is a matter that is currently being undertaken. It would be inappropriate to make comments about that.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Has the minister, the minister's office or the department received any complaints from Queensland recycling companies about Coex's tactics in terms of the way they do business?

Ms ENOCH: I just caution the member in terms of his language in this hearing.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The word 'tactics' is how you conduct yourself.

Ms ENOCH: I understand that. We are clearly witnessing 'tactics' here.

CHAIR: Thank you for your definition, member for Broadwater. We will let the minister answer the question.

Ms ENOCH: This is a new scheme. It is nine months old. There is a legislative framework in place—a legislative framework that was supported by the parliament—to ensure that the scheme works alongside the existing industry in Queensland. That work is continuing. You would expect that, as the scheme matures, Coex and various members of the industries will be able to work closely on ensuring the scheme is the success that everybody wants it to be.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Further to the waste strategy, I refer to page 22. Minister, what investigations has the government undertaken to ensure all recyclable containers that are part of the container refund scheme have an end market?

Ms ENOCH: Under the legislation, the way the scheme in our state has been set up puts that responsibility on Coex, the company responsible for delivering our service. There are a number of mechanisms to ensure that that information is being provided. For instance, there is a requirement for an annual report. I have expected and received updates in terms of the successful progress of the scheme. Of course, the department works closely with the scheme operators to ensure they are operating within the legislative framework set by the parliament.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is very specific. In terms of what people are paying extra for and getting the refund—we also want an environmental benefit—is there an end market, for example, for juice box containers?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, you are effectively repeating the question you asked previously.

Mr CRISAFULLI: No, I am not, Mr Chairman.

CHAIR: I will give the minister an opportunity to respond, but I do caution you about repeating questions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It was very specifically about the juice boxes.

CHAIR: Thank you, member for Broadwater.

Ms ENOCH: As I said, the legislative framework places that responsibility on the container refund scheme operator. However, this speaks to a bigger problem nationally. We know that we need to see more work in terms of being able to remanufacture, recycle and utilise those opportunities in this country. In Queensland we have put \$100 million towards developing and encouraging industry development in this state with regard to recycling and creating end markets. We need a comprehensive waste strategy at the federal level. In fact, many states that have container refund schemes have called on the federal government to harmonise schemes so that Australia sees more opportunities for recycling and the industry and jobs that go with it. Every state is challenged by this. We have put \$100 million towards industry development in this state. Of course, I continue to call on the federal government with regard to its waste management strategy.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My understanding from industry is that there is probably in excess of 100 tonnes of those juice boxes, which we call 'poppers'. Without the ability to recycle them, it really undoes the whole premise of the scheme—almost a tax without a benefit. Minister, what investigation have you done to find a possible solution for that? Otherwise we are creating a tuckshop tax. Has the government investigated ways they can be recycled and put pressure on Coex to do so?

Ms ENOCH: It is astonishing that, nine months into a scheme that has been incredibly successful, that is supporting small businesses and the creation of new jobs, the opposition continues to trash the scheme. In terms of the kinds of questions being asked by the member for Broadwater with regard to the container refund scheme, I have already said that this state is investing in developing industry in Queensland. This is a perplexing issue for the whole of the nation. That is why in Queensland we have taken the step to contribute and invest \$100 million in terms of industry development. Without a comprehensive waste strategy at the federal level—the ability to harmonise and see investment from the federal government in this space—it is once again states like Queensland doing the heavy lifting. When we consider the level of waste being generated in Queensland, we want to prevent this kind of material ending up in landfill and to create clean product for the market, at the same time as developing a market here in our state where we get to remanufacture and recycle. That is why the \$100 million is such an important part of the broader conversation we are having with regard to the recycling revolution that Queensland is embracing wholeheartedly.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, with reference to strengthening reef regulations and health on page 6 of the SDS, what funding has been allocated to purchase vulnerable areas within the Great Barrier Reef catchment as part of the strategy to decrease sediment run-off and assist in reaching reef water quality targets as well as add to the target of 17 per cent of conservation lands by 2021? Is this achievable given that this budget's target is 8.25 per cent of lands?

CHAIR: Member for Noosa, I understand that you are enthusiastic about this topic. You have asked a very lengthy question. I will allow the minister an opportunity to respond, but I invite the minister to respond on the basis that it is a lengthy question with a number of components.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Noosa for her question and her passion for the Great Barrier Reef, in particular ensuring we are giving the reef the best possible chance to withstand the impacts of climate change. We know that climate change is the No. 1 risk to the Great Barrier Reef, but, of course, the second greatest risk regards water quality. That is why there has been an investment from this government, working with landholders, to reduce sediment and nutrient run-off to provide the best opportunity for the reef to withstand climate change impacts.

This government has already acted in this space. For instance, we acquired Springvale Station in 2016 to have some impact around the kind of sediment run-off we were seeing in that catchment area. To be clear, there is obviously legislation before the House so I will not go any further into other measures regarding the protection of the reef through reef regulations.

The final part of the question concerned protected areas. Since the Palaszczuk government came to office we have seen an increase of one million hectares in protected area estate. As I understand it, the amount of protected area that we now have is two times the size of Tasmania. Of course, we continue to see opportunities for that to expand. The introduction of a new category of protected area—special wildlife reserve—is another opportunity to extend and expand our protected area estate in Queensland.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, with reference to page 5 of the SDS and your opening comments, how is the waste strategy supporting the industry to create jobs?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question and I am pleased to inform the member about the potential for new jobs to be created by Queensland's new waste management and resource recovery strategy. The strategy was released on 1 July this year and its implementation is supported by the waste disposal levy, which also commenced on 1 July. The strategy is based on transitioning Queensland to a circular economy and puts a focus on growing the economic opportunity that will come from increased recycling and resource recovery. I am sad to report that Queensland's recycling rate is currently the second worst in the country. Increasing our efforts is important, not just for the environment but also because we know that there are three times as many jobs in recycling as there are in landfill.

Data developed by Arup consultants along with Queensland Treasury Corporation have confirmed that Queensland's new waste strategy has the potential to create an extra 2,000 new jobs in the industry by 2025. That is a significant opportunity for Queensland's economy, and the Palaszczuk government is also supporting more jobs in this sector. Since the introduction of the waste levy, an extra 16 compliance staff from the Department of Environment and Science have been on the ground, ensuring businesses are doing the right thing when it comes to waste management.

Today I can also announce that the Queensland government has formed a partnership with four councils including Bundaberg, Fraser Coast, Gold Coast and Townsville where we are providing funding to support an extra two staff on the ground for each council to help crack down on illegal

dumping. All councils in Queensland can also now apply for grants as part of a \$2 million program over two years to get this support. We are committed to ensuring councils have the resources on the ground to improve waste management.

More broadly, we also recognise that investing in the resource recovery sector represents an enormous opportunity to create jobs in Queensland whilst also delivering significant improvements in how we manage our waste. In 2018 the Waste Recycling Industry Association of Queensland identified that there were over 800 businesses already operating in the waste and recycling industry in Queensland. Through the \$100 million Resource Recovery Industry Development Program, the Queensland government is committed to growing that industry, including biofutures, and diverting waste from landfill. One of the clear objectives of this program is to support investment that creates new jobs, including skilled jobs in innovation and new industries and new jobs in regional areas. All of this work is critical to developing the waste and resource recovery industry to see jobs growth right across Queensland.

Mrs MULLEN: I would like an update on how you are helping Queenslanders to manage their waste better and increase recycling rates.

Ms ENOCH: This is a question that I think all members of parliament get asked quite often in terms of some practical, easy steps that households can do in this space. My family now has five bins that we manage in our household to be able to separate waste and ensure that we minimise the amount of waste that goes to landfill. It is important in all of that to reframe how we think about waste management in our state.

On 1 July our government released the new waste management and resource recovery strategy, as we know, and this strategy provides the long-term strategic framework for how we intend to increase Queensland's recycling rate from around 45 per cent—the second worst performer in the country—to 75 per cent by 2050. The strategy was developed over 18 months in consultation with the waste and resource recovery industry, environmental groups, businesses, the building industry and local councils, making it a true collective piece of work.

Underpinning implementation of the strategy is the reintroduction of the waste disposal levy. The levy provides price disincentive to landfill while providing much needed funds to help invigorate investment in new and expanded recycling and reprocessing infrastructure. Implementation of the strategy is also supported by the development of action plans that target specific priority wastes. The first of these action plans is the resource recovery industry's 10-year road map and action plan developed by the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. The draft road map, which will be finalised soon, is supported by an investment of \$100 million into the Resource Recovery Industry Development Program.

On top of the work that has been done on the new waste strategy, a number of other milestones have also been achieved in the past year. As I already pointed out in my opening statement, on 1 July last year legislation banning the supply of single-use lightweight plastic bags came into effect. Before the ban, around one billion of these bags were being used each year in Queensland and 16 million ended up as litter every year. The ban on these bags has seen a 70 per cent drop in plastic bag litter which is great news for our environment. Also, on 1 November last year Queensland's container refund scheme, Containers for Change, commenced. The introduction of the scheme has provided many parts of Queensland with access to recycling services for the first time and helped prevent these containers from ending up as litter, and we are not finished yet.

A number of other initiatives will be delivered over the coming year to further support the strategy and progress Queensland's waste reform agenda, including a school based waste education strategy and finalisation of an energy from waste policy. Importantly, the government has made a commitment that 70 per cent of waste levy revenue will go back into local councils, waste management and environmental priorities. The department is also working with the Local Government Association of Queensland and specialist contractors to deliver an Indigenous communities waste management plan, with \$4 million allocated in this year's budget to undertake further removal of car bodies and scrap metal from islands in the Torres Strait, for instance. There is a lot of work happening in this space as we support Queenslanders to fight the war on waste in our communities, across our state and in our own households.

Ms LUI: My question is to the minister, and I ask: what are the successes of the container refund scheme and could you outline the key achievements?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. After just over eight months and nearly nine months of operation, Queensland's container refund scheme has exceeded everyone's expectations. Commencing on 1 November last year with 232 container refund points, there are now more than 307

refund points operating across the length and breadth of the state. In fact, today I was able to visit what we have claimed as being the 307th site with a small business operator—a family business—operated by Lee Armstrong and his family. That is a great success for the local community in terms of jobs creation and a great small business story. As the committee knows, Container Exchange, or Coex, the not-for-profit company appointed to run the scheme, was required to establish at least 307 refund points by 1 November this year under legislation. As I have already said, today we have announced that they have met their target well ahead of schedule.

Of course, the key marker of success is that we now can say that 700 million containers have been returned through the refund points in the last eight months and more than 600 jobs have been created, and this is absolutely extraordinary. We are tracking at a third more than what we thought we would be doing at this stage. In fact, if you want to put it in State of Origin terms, Queenslanders have returned more than 200 million more containers than New South Wales did when their scheme had begun. Litter surveys conducted at more than 300 locations across the state show at least a 30 per cent to 35 per cent reduction in beverage container litter. More than 600 jobs have been created, as I have said, with many of these in regional areas. More than \$70 million in refunds have so far been returned to individuals, charities, schools and community organisations and the small scale community infrastructure grants provided through the Department of Environment and Science have seen around 170 community groups, schools and charities benefit from funding to help establish donation points that will provide much needed additional fundraising opportunities.

In my own electorate of Algeester I have seen schools set up monthly container refund drives and they have been able to secure some \$1,000 every time they do that, which is a lot of sausage sizzles and cake bakes. It has been an incredible success for schools, for charities, for individuals and for small businesses and jobs across Queensland.

Ms LUI: Can the minister please update the committee about the container refund scheme and how it is creating jobs, particularly in regional Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. As I have already stated, we have seen more than 600 jobs created as a result of the container refund scheme. As I said this morning, since the scheme started on 1 November last year we have seen more than 700 million containers returned and Coex has now opened 307 container refund points across the state, reaching its 12-month target ahead of schedule. That is such an incredible achievement—to reach that milestone so soon into the operation of the scheme, remembering that it is still quite a new scheme at almost nine months old. To have that kind of achievement has been fantastic. It is proof of how eagerly Queenslanders have embraced this recycling scheme.

As I have said, many container refund points are run by small businesses and social enterprise organisations, with the scheme creating opportunities for long-term unemployed in particular. Many of these jobs have been created in regional Queensland. One refund point operator who operates 22 refund points across Cape York, for instance, is newly employing 11 full-time and three casual staff, which is great for the local community. In fact, I visited Weipa recently to see the opening of a container refund processing point where some of those people are employed. In April I also had the chance to visit a container refund point in Hervey Bay and had the opportunity to meet two brothers who had been unemployed for quite some time and who now were absolute star employees of this container refund point in Hervey Bay.

These employment opportunities not only exist at container refund points. Additional jobs have been created through the establishment of new logistics and processing businesses to service the collection of containers through the scheme. I expect to see the container refund scheme continue to deliver for Queensland in terms of both benefits for our environment and long-term jobs across the state.

Ms LUI: Minister, with respect to page 4 of the SDS, could you outline the contribution that the Great Barrier Reef is making to jobs and the economy and any threat to its continued contribution?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Cook for the question. I acknowledge her obvious passion for the Great Barrier Reef and the region in which it is situated. The Great Barrier Reef supports more than 60,000 jobs, many of which I am sure are in the electorate of Cook. It contributes over \$6 billion to the Australian economy, so it is incredibly important in terms of not just its environmental values but also its economic value. The Palaszczuk government is working hard to preserve the health of the reef, with a record investment of \$330 million. We are also seeking to build on the reef's immense economic contribution.

In terms of threats, if there is a real threat to local tourism jobs supported by the Great Barrier Reef in Cairns and right along the coast it is, in fact, the Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef, the federal member for Leichhardt, Warren Entsch, and the LNP opposition members who sit here today and who we can only assume agree with the views of Mr Entsch. In a national radio interview on 29 May 2019, two days after being appointed special envoy, when asked if he was aware of a link between climate change and the Great Barrier Reef Mr Entsch said, 'We'll find that out as we go,' and, 'I'm not going to make uninformed comments.' This is an absolutely frightening response.

Climate change is not just an environmental issue but also a serious economic one, and the federal LNP government's failure to act on climate change puts at risk tens of thousands of jobs that rely on the Great Barrier Reef. Recently, Cairns tourism retailers reported concerns about climate change hurting the number of tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef, telling reporters that this is starting to hurt their businesses—evidence of the damage that the LNP's failure to act on climate change is now being felt by small and medium businesses that rely on the Great Barrier Reef to grow and on the jobs we know are supported by the reef in Far North Queensland and right down the Queensland coast. The opposition leader and her shadow environment minister, the member for Broadwater, who is here today, need to pull their federal special envoy colleague into line. Their deafening silence over the last two months since he made these comments says to Queenslanders that they agree with his uninformed views. We know that Queenslanders' jobs are at stake.

I note that COAG is being held in Cairns a week from tomorrow. I think it is a timely opportunity for the opposition leader and the shadow Treasurer to pick up the phone to the Prime Minister and tell him that he needs to rebuke his special envoy and start taking strong action on climate change for the families who rely on the Great Barrier Reef.

CHAIR: Minister, could you please update the committee on how the Queensland government is addressing climate change and also the programs that are in place to assist Queensland's communities, local councils and businesses in adapting to climate change?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the chair and member for Stretton for the question. The Palaszczuk government is taking strong action to address climate change. Our programs target individual Queenslanders, communities, local governments and businesses to better adapt to and take advantage of the opportunities presented by climate change impacts. In particular, the government is focusing on support for Queensland's local governments and industry to help them respond to climate change and new low-carbon industries. Regional export exposed economies like Queensland's must plan and act decisively if we are to capitalise on emerging opportunities and remain an attractive investment location in an increasingly risk-averse environment.

To guide better response, seven sector adaptation plans have been co-developed with sectors including built environment and infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, human health and wellbeing, biodiversity and ecosystems, emergency management, and small and medium enterprises. I was happy to be able to launch the sector adaptation plan for small and medium enterprises at a recent CCIQ event. A final plan is being co-developed with the resources and manufacturing sector. The sector adaptation plan development process has been warmly embraced by industry bodies and other stakeholders participating in the process, at a cost of just over \$376,000 invested to date.

Carbon farming is an example of a new and emerging industry that will provide low-carbon jobs in regional Queensland. This sector would be worth up to \$8 billion to the Queensland economy by 2030 under supported policy and marketing conditions—conditions that the Queensland government can assist to create. Carbon farming can deliver more than carbon offsets—new jobs and revenue sources for rural and regional communities, healthier habitats for threatened species, improved water quality flowing into the Great Barrier Reef and social benefits, particularly in First Nations communities where carbon-farming practices align with cultural practices.

The government is establishing the \$500 million Land Restoration Fund to facilitate the growth of this new industry and become a supplier of choice for high-quality carbon offsets. To further support local governments, we have also partnered with the Local Government Association of Queensland on the QCoast2100 and Queensland Climate Resilient Councils programs. In 2015 the Queensland government committed \$12 million to the QCoast2100 program to help coastal communities better prepare for hazards such as sea level rise and coastal inundation. A further \$1.25 million has been committed to expand this program to the remaining 45 local governments in Queensland. All of this demonstrates how seriously the Palaszczuk government takes climate change risk and how much work is going into adaptation and the development of new industries.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We will now move on to some non-government questions.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I refer to page 22 of the SDS regarding the waste strategy. Do any Coex employees have a personal or family commercial interest in operating their own container deposit sites in Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: That would be a matter for the operations of Coex, who are operating under a legislative framework. That would be a matter that you would need to write to them about.

Mr CRISAFULLI: On 5 September during parliamentary debate the previous environment minister stated the government would include recycling industry representatives on the board of the Product Responsibility Organisation. Was the waste reduction and recycling regulation ever amended to include a recycling industry representative?

CHAIR: It might assist, member for Broadwater, if you can tell us what the reference to the SDS is?

Mr CRISAFULLI: The reference is to SDS page 22, which is about the waste strategy.

CHAIR: And your reference to the quote from the former environment minister?

Mr CRISAFULLI: That was a public statement made by the former environment minister.

CHAIR: On which particular date and at which forum? Was it in parliament or are you talking about a media quote?

Mr CRISAFULLI: It was in parliament on 5 September. It has been widely reported since.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question and, Chair, thank you for your clarification. As I understand it, that has not occurred. However, Coex talks with and consults with the industry in depth and I have personally asked those questions of Coex representatives in correspondence and in my dealings with them.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Will the minister be stepping in to make that change to the regulation?

Ms ENOCH: Can I just be clear to the member, in terms of the operations of Coex and the legislative framework that exists, one that the whole of the parliament supported and those opposite supported, that legislation exists now to ensure that we have the best possible operation of a scheme in our state. When you consider schemes in other states—let us have a look at South Australia, some 40 years old now—we are seeing results in Queensland that have been absolutely amazing—outstanding. The legislative framework that the whole of the parliament supported has been ensuring that that scheme has the greatest possible chance of success in this state.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question relates to the statement in the parliament by your predecessor about the need to put that into the regulation for it to occur. That is a matter for parliament. Would you be of the view to do that?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, you have already asked that question and the minister has given a comprehensive answer. I am ruling that question out of order.

Mr CRISAFULLI: So Steven Miles under the bus. My next question also relates to SDS page 22. What actions has the minister taken to ensure the scheme operator is charging reasonable and fair audit fees?

Ms ENOCH: In this state there has been a unique approach, and I think a sound approach, to ensuring that the pricing is appropriate. First of all, our scheme was designed to keep costs down by having prices based on actual sales rather than projections. Given the overwhelming number of containers that have been returned the cost of administering the scheme, of course, is reflected. When the scheme was first initiated I made it clear that the government would commission, and we have commissioned, the Queensland Productivity Commission to undertake price monitoring over the first 12 months of the scheme to examine the impact of beverage prices and ensure there will not be any unreasonable price increases on any range of beverages in Queensland. That report is still to be provided, but that is underway.

Recently in New South Wales an independent report was done on their pricing scheme. New South Wales has a monthly way that they determine the pricing. In Queensland it has been held for 12 months. The independent report indicated that New South Wales should follow the lead of Queensland in this matter to ensure that they are able to follow our lead in ensuring that costs are kept down by basing it on actual sales data rather than projections.

A great deal of work has been happening around that space to ensure that we have the best possible scheme we can possibly have in Queensland. I think when we are seeing the amount of containers being returned through the scheme and the number of small businesses that have taken up the opportunity to actually be part of the scheme, we are seeing a great balance there.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I would like to turn to the Land Restoration Fund and your response to question on notice 17. From the answer you have provided is it correct that less than two per cent of the \$500 million promised at the last election has been invested in the Land Restoration Fund?

Ms ENOCH: As the member has already said, this was an election commitment at the last election and so it been just over a year and a half since that commitment was made. In terms of the kind of outcomes that we are seeking through the Land Restoration Fund, the establishment of a carbon farming industry and opportunities for Queensland, there is a great deal of work that is required in terms of ensuring that we have the pipeline of projects to be able to attract that kind of investment.

There have been a number of investments already from the Land Restoration Fund. In fact, two pilot projects have already been funded. I was able to announce just last week the latest pilot project that has been able to provide some opportunities for very regional projects to be supported. A \$5 million Pilot Projects Program was announced on 25 October to support projects to enhance stakeholders' capacity to participate in carbon farming, as I have said, and demonstrate the viability of carbon farming for multiple environmental and social benefits through those on-ground actions or innovative business models.

Mr CRISAFULLI: This is a \$500 million fund. It would take 98 years at that rate to spend that.

Ms ENOCH: To be clear for the member for Broadwater, who once again is supposed to be the spokesperson for the environment for the opposition, who continues to find ways—

Mr CRISAFULLI: To try to get you to spend your money on the environment, to do good.

Ms ENOCH:—to talk down the incredible work that has been happening in this space.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, please stop interrupting the minister.

Ms ENOCH: When you consider the opportunities around carbon farming, the way that carbon credits operate, just last week I was able to announce with the mayor of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, for instance, and Unitywater, a great project that will be seeking out opportunities around blue carbon, for instance. These are new markets that we are entering into. The Land Restoration Fund is the first of its kind in Australia and there is a great deal of work to set up to ensure that we are able to continue finding the best opportunities for landholders and others in Queensland to benefit from carbon farming. Two pilot projects have already been announced.

The first six projects under the Kickstarting the Market stream, with a total value of \$1.2 million, were approved on 26 February. A further six projects, under the Catalysing Action stream, with a total value of \$4 million, were approved on 14 May and announced just last week. These projects include work that demonstrates a cost-effective approach for restoring rainforest to North Queensland, using traditional mosaic and firestick farming practices to control non-native species, demonstrate how ending clearing of regrowth on grazing property can deliver cultural, economic, social and environmental benefits—I am happy to continue on. In fact, these fantastic projects—

Mr CRISAFULLI: No, that is excellent. You mentioned the carbon credit units. I want to touch again on answer to question on notice No. 17. What you did not mention is how many carbon credit units have been issued from the fund since it was promised. Can you please advise how many credits have been generated from that \$8.1 million invested?

Ms ENOCH: This has been answered in the question on notice. I would direct the member to read the response.

Mr CRISAFULLI: How many carbon credits?

Ms ENOCH: I encourage the member to read the response, once again.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, again you are asking a question that has been addressed in answer to a question on notice.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Would you be able to tell me that answer, Mr Chairman?

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, you are asking the minister to read the answer to a question on notice that is publicly available. I have given you a lot of leeway.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I respect your ruling, Mr Chairman. Director-General, I refer to the department's key priority to implement the Queensland waste levy. Of the \$1.2 billion that this levy is forecast to raise, how much will be available to the private sector or not-for-profit groups to spend on environmental initiatives?

Dr Merrick: The government has made a commitment over the forward estimates that 70 per cent of forecast levy revenue will be reinvested in a range of programs that will support advance payments to councils, scheme start-up and operational costs, industry programs and environmental

programs. Clearly, we are very early into the levy. In terms of, for example, dedicated environmental streams, we have already seen an additional \$6 million allocated towards the community sustainability awards, the first \$2 million of that in this financial year.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is a \$1.2 billion scheme. The question is: of the \$1.2 billion that will be raised in the next three years, how much is available for people other than government—that is, environmental initiatives by not-for-profit groups, community groups and business? You mentioned the local government fund, yes; the administration fund, yes; and the amount that goes back to consolidated revenue. I get all of that. How much of the \$1.2 billion can be accessed by somebody other than government?

Dr Merrick: In terms of the allocation to date, 26 per cent of the forward estimates funding has been allocated. Of course, the actual revenues from the levy are only just starting to flow, so it would be premature at this stage to have fully allocated revenues that are yet to come forward. As the minister alluded to in an earlier answer, the government has already committed \$100 million to industry development schemes. That strikes to the question the member is asking.

Mr CRISAFULLI: That is less than 10 per cent. Minister, again I refer to the Queensland waste levy. Will the rebate paid to local governments for the collection of wheelie bins continue beyond the next three years?

Ms ENOCH: As the member knows, we were the only state in mainland Australia left without a waste levy due to the fact that the LNP repealed the waste levy in this state back in 2012. In terms of the operations regarding the 105 per cent that is provided to local councils, no other state in the country does that. The Palaszczuk government made a commitment that it would not cost any more to put your wheelie bin out. We have honoured that commitment through the 105 per cent allocation of funding, in advance, to local councils.

We have seen a \$143 million payment to local councils in advance of the levy even coming into effect fully. Of course, the levy only came into effect 30 days ago. Therefore, in terms of being able to ensure that residents do not have to pay any more to put out their wheelie bins, that 105 per cent absolutely is something that no other state does. That is on top of the fact that we provided just over \$5 million to local governments to be levy ready. Every single local government inside the levy zone, bar one, accessed that funding.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Point of order, Mr Chairman. The question asked whether it will continue beyond three years. The minister has not addressed that. The minister has spoken about the value of it and I understand that. The question is: will it continue beyond three years?

CHAIR: The minister is addressing your question, member for Broadwater. Please continue, Minister.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am not sure if it is a yes or no.

CHAIR: If you listen, you might actually get the answer, member for Broadwater. I call the minister.

Ms ENOCH: This is a hearing for this budget. This budget indicates that there is a 105 per cent allocation to local councils to ensure that residents would not have to pay more to put out their wheelie bins. We know that the LNP have already said that they will repeal this levy if, at any time in the future, they would actually be in charge of the treasury benches again. They have said publicly that they will repeal this levy, creating uncertainty in the market. In terms of the \$100 million investment being made right now to bring more industry into this space, that kind of talk from the LNP continues to place uncertainty in the market.

CHAIR: We will now have a question from the member for Noosa.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, I refer to page 11 of the SDS regarding the protected area strategy. What funding increases will be made available to organisations that are involved at a grassroots level in protecting our threatened species and biodiversity, as this is a key concern of not-for-profits and volunteers, including the Great Barrier Reef hearings?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Noosa for the question and acknowledge her passion for biodiversity. She lives in a part of the state that is home to some incredible native species and great biodiversity. Of course, we have seen some great examples of how local council, community organisations and state government can work together to expand habitat for protected species or threatened species such as the koala. Being able to add some, I think, 2,500 hectares—or around that amount—to the protected area estate in the fashion that we saw with the local council, a local community organisation and the state government was a great example of how to work together to ensure that we are protecting species and biodiversity.

There are bodies of work underway currently to establish a biodiversity strategy and a threatened species strategy. Those two bodies of work will inform our operations and practices into the future. However, the 2019-20 budget that we are debating now includes \$11.3 million that has been allocated to enable the department to progress priority acquisitions for protected areas in southern Queensland, for instance. That obviously will go some way in terms of securing and ensuring that biodiversity is upheld in those areas.

On top of that, the Land Restoration Fund will deliver co-benefits in this space, including habitat rehabilitation. There is an anticipation in that space. Also, there is \$1.5 million for the Community Sustainability Action—Protecting Queensland's Threatened Species funding scheme, where you will see individual grants of up to \$100,000. There are a number of projects that support this work, but, of course, the overarching two bodies of work that will be very significant in this space—the biodiversity strategy and the threatened species strategy—will play an important part into the future.

Mr BERKMAN: In approving Adani's Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems Management Plan, GDMP, the minister and the department relied heavily on advice from CSIRO and Geosciences Australia that, in turn, adopts findings and recommends measures from the Lake Eyre Basin Springs Assessment, LEBSA. I seek leave to table a short excerpt from that CSIRO/GA advice, if I may.

CHAIR: Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Do you have enough copies for all committee members?

Mr BERKMAN: I have an abundance of copies, Mr Chair. Dr Merrick, would you like a copy of that?

Ms ENOCH: We would like to see it, yes.

CHAIR: We will take time to distribute the copies.

Mr BERKMAN: For ease of reference, I specifically bring your attention to a highlighted passage on the second page, which is page 6 of the document.

CHAIR: Member for Maiwar, there are a number of highlighted passages on the page you are referring to. Which one are you specifically referring to?

Mr BERKMAN: The second one, which states—

Whether the springs with discharge character at Doongmabulla emanate from a Triassic or Permian aquifer is unresolved without further data. Drilling of new monitoring bores in the vicinity of the springs, and appropriate seismic survey are required.

CHAIR: Member for Maiwar, can you clarify your question?

Mr BERKMAN: Indeed. I was just identifying the passage as you asked. Dr Merrick, can you confirm that the advice from GA and CSIRO, relied on for the approval of Adani's GDMP, was that the source aquifer of the Doongmabulla Springs remained unresolved or in plain English it had not been identified?

Dr Merrick: With the agreement of the minister, we might call forward the project's executive, environmental services and regulation. While he is coming forward, I point out that the department and the regulator took extensive advice from CSIRO. The report to which you refer was the second piece of work that CSIRO and Geosciences Australia has done.

In terms of the second piece, we sought very specific questions around the level of certainty one can reasonably expect in terms of underground water. That work was tested in terms of the extent to which the source of the springs was identified. That work very much set out the fact that, certainly in terms of the principal source of the springs complex, that had been identified in the GDMP. That was tested also in terms of independent legal opinion.

Mr BERKMAN: You have referred to a principal source there. I would like to go back to this. The minister in estimates last year, you will recall, responded—

... Adani is required to identify the source of the aquifer at Doongmabulla Springs prior to the approval of that plan.

Dr Merrick, was the Doongmabulla Springs identified before the GDMP was approved on 13 June?

Dr Merrick: The delegate considered the advice of CSIRO and Geosciences Australia which identified that principal source aquifer had been identified. As the minister's statement to the House also pointed out, there were additional requirements of Adani and commitments that were made through the approved GDMP that were very much intended to address any remaining uncertainty around other potential contributory sources to the springs. Yes, in terms of the department's consistent position around identifying the source springs, the Geosciences Australia and CSIRO report provided the necessary certainty for the delegate to make that decision.

Mr BERKMAN: Going to the GDEMP itself, the triggers for adaptive management regarding the Doongmabulla Springs are based on assumptions about a single-source aquifer for these springs yet that advice from GA and CSIRO makes it abundantly clear that there may be other or multiple source aquifers. Dr Merrick, if the GDEMP assumptions on a single-source aquifer are not correct, is it the case that the adaptive management measures in the GDEMP will not protect the ancient, unique Doongmabulla Springs?

CHAIR: I am ruling that question out of order, member for Maiwar. It is clearly hypothetical. I call the member for Jordan.

Mr BERKMAN: Chair, if I might raise a point of order.

CHAIR: I will hear your point of order, member for Maiwar.

Mr BERKMAN: It refers to assumptions explicitly identified in the Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems Management Plan.

CHAIR: Member for Maiwar, you have had a good go—

Mr BERKMAN: Allow me to move on to one final question.

CHAIR: Member for Maiwar, you have had a really good opportunity. I have ruled your question out of order.

Mr BERKMAN: This will be a very brief question.

CHAIR: You are becoming unruly. I call the member for Jordan.

Mr BERKMAN: Chair, seriously, protection racket extraordinaire.

Mrs MULLEN: I would like to go back to an earlier response in relation to addressing climate change. What will a well thought through plan to combat climate change deliver for Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: At the outset, I need to be very clear that the Palaszczuk government absolutely accepts the science on climate change and, as such, is implementing a comprehensive climate change response to ensure Queensland remains an innovative and resilient state that manages the risks and harnesses the opportunities presented by a changing climate. Our response was released in July 2017 and comprises the Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy and the Queensland Climate Transition Strategy. Together these two plans outline 46 actions delivering significant benefits for Queenslanders by building awareness, fostering innovative approaches to the multiple challenges and opportunities, enhancing the resilience of communities, importantly, and the resilience of infrastructure, and effectively managing climate risks.

For the benefit of the committee, I am happy to highlight just a few of the important programs underway as part of the response. The climate science program is delivering high-resolution climate projection data via an easy to use online interface, enabling all Queenslanders to access and apply quality data in climate risk assessments. The Queensland Climate Resilient Councils and QCoast2100 programs, delivered in partnership with the Local Government Association of Queensland, are improving the resilience of local governments and regional communities by increasing their capacity to understand and manage climate risks. Careful planning for the direct and indirect effects of a changing climate can help regional communities thrive and prosper.

The communities in transition program is also helping regional communities take charge of their own futures by managing risks and identifying opportunities that will emerge through the economic transition to a zero net emissions economy. Stakeholder-led sector adaptation plans are helping to prioritise climate change adaptation activities across the key sectors of the economy by identifying emerging risks and opportunities, sharing knowledge and encouraging collaboration.

The Queensland government is fostering innovation to ensure we stay ahead in the transition to a low carbon economy by partnering with the private sector and non-government organisations. In Queensland we are proud of the fact that our electric superhighway is the world's longest electric vehicle highway in a single state, with a network of charging stations from Coolangatta north to Cairns and west to Toowoomba.

The Queensland government is also supporting the growth of the carbon-farming industry, including through the \$500 million Land Restoration Fund that will facilitate a pipeline of projects that generate carbon credits, along with additional environmental, social and economic co-benefits. Planning for the future, including climate adaptation, is critically important for Queensland and our economy, and our government is leading the way in this space.

Mrs MULLEN: I have a further question in relation to resilience. Can the minister outline the important work that QPWS is doing to safeguard our protected areas and the community from bushfires?

Ms ENOCH: I again want to highlight the amazing work that our Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers do in our protected area and national parks. They are incredible individuals who commit so much of their time and their lives to the protection of these very important places. Through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service the department prioritises the protection of life, property and the environment. The Palaszczuk government's commitment to bushfire management in our parks and forests is demonstrated in the budget with new funding of \$16 million over four years and \$2.6 million per year ongoing for the enhanced fire management project.

This project aims to improve the capacity and capability of QPWS to reduce the risk to life, property, cultural sites, places and biodiversity from the adverse impacts of damaging wildfires. It will also focus on extending and enhancing the collaboration with First Nations peoples and application of traditional ecological knowledge within QPWS managed areas. Collaboration with First Nation peoples already exists through the planning and operations across many of our managed areas, including, for example, the Rinyirru Lakefield National Park. It fosters continued improvement and implementation by incorporating traditional knowledge and practices in many of our land management processes.

The department monitors bushfire risk and employs a number of mitigation techniques, such as planned burning, with over, as I have already said, one million hectares of estate completed in terms of planned burning in 2018-19. That was the largest area of completed planned burns in five years. It was well above the target that had been established by the department.

In preparation for the 2019 bushfire season and as part of Operation Cool Burn, the department, QFES, other government bodies and landholders will focus on reducing bushfire risk. In addition to planned burns, the department maintains an extensive network of roads and fire lines, trails and equips staff to respond to bushfires and works cooperatively with other fire agencies, neighbours, lessees and First Nations partners.

The bushfires that Queenslanders experienced during the 2018 summer were a result of an unprecedented and a very protracted heatwave. The bushfire response operation was the largest in Queensland's history, and the severity of the fires was far greater than what has previously been considered normal for Queensland.

Our rangers are first responders to bushfires in parks and forests, and the Inspector-General Emergency Management report into the 2018 bushfires acknowledges the exceptional response of responsible agencies including QPWS. It is important to acknowledge that during November 2018 and December 2018 less than 10 per cent of fires originated on the QPWS managed estate. Of those bushfires that did originate on QPWS managed estate, approximately 70 per cent were contained within the estate boundaries due to the effective combination of prevention, preparedness and response activities.

The department works with neighbours and lessees to encourage a landscape scale approach to fire management through the good neighbour policy. The department supports planned burning by lessees and landholders where it is carried out at safe times and not in high fire risk periods.

Despite the misinformation being spread by the opposition, amendments to the Vegetation Management Act 1999 made last year have not changed the way lessees and neighbouring landholders can clear firebreaks to protect their homes and properties. The effectiveness of QPWS's good neighbour policy to drive good relationships with its neighbours and a collaborative approach to bushfire management is also acknowledged in the IGEM report.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible efforts during last year's bushfires of the QPWS staff who day after day worked in very extreme conditions to protect not only our national parks and forests but also the property and lives of adjacent landholders. They should be commended for the amazing work that they did.

CHAIR: Minister, as you are aware, many people in my local community love to visit the great national parks we have throughout Queensland. Could you advise on the government's commitment to visitor infrastructure in our national parks?

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Chair and member for Stretton. I know that we share some communities across our electorates and that people are very passionate about national parks and having appropriate access to them. Of course, our national parks are world renowned for their conservation values, their magnificent landscapes and wildlife which attract millions of visitors each year.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to investing in visitor infrastructure in our national parks to enhance visitor experience and boost ecotourism, thereby increasing advocacy for protecting our state's precious national and cultural heritage. Over \$24 million of additional funding is being invested in 2019-20 as part of a \$45 million program to revitalise infrastructure in the state's high-profile national parks. This will enhance visitor experiences and boost ecotourism.

Our major project investments in 2019-20 include \$3.8 million to redevelop the Mon Repos Turtle Centre, with a further \$3.75 million from the Commonwealth Building Better Regions Fund; \$7.4 million for Whitsunday Island; \$4.3 million to complete a \$5.1 million upgrade of the visitor facilities at D'Aguilar National Park; and \$10 million for tourism and visitor infrastructure including Great Sandy, Lamington and Daintree national parks.

Last financial year the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service delivered over \$50 million of capital works—its largest ever program. Over 250 projects, worth \$35.6 million, were completed including \$1.1 million to upgrade the Whitsunday Island day use area; \$1.7 million for Noosa National Park tracks and visitor facilities; \$2.5 million for boardwalks and tracks in Daintree National Park; \$900,000 for visitor facilities in the Glass House Mountains; \$1 million to upgrade visitor facilities in Springbrook National Park; \$1.2 million for new moorings to protect the Great Barrier Reef; \$1 million to upgrade visitor amenities at Inskip Point; \$750,000 for the Lamington National Park visitor centre and facilities; and \$400,000 for tracks in Mount Archer National Park. A further \$12 million was spent on 27 projects that are still under construction.

In recent years the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has invested significantly in improving access for people with disability across the national parks estate. Disability access and facilities are considered in the design of all new infrastructure and whenever upgrading existing facilities in Queensland's parks and forests. Examples of recently completed projects include: in the Noosa National Park, improved disability access along the Noosa coastal walking track, a major redevelopment of the Noosa day use area including improved disability access throughout and provision of a wheelchair accessible barbecue area with picnic tables; Laguna Lookout has also been redeveloped with disability access provided throughout; in the Glass House Mountains National Park, development of the new Tibrogargan day use area including provision of assisted disability access, wheelchair accessible picnic tables and toilet facilities with disability access; and, in the Beerburum State Forest, a new toilet facility with disability access in the camping area there.

The maintenance and upgrade of national park infrastructure is, of course, incredibly important. As the committee can see, there is a lot of work going on in this space.

Ms LUI: Minister, with reference to page 4 of the SDS, could you outline how the Queensland government has been working to protect the reef and where the federal government is currently failing to do so?

Ms ENOCH: Of course, protecting the reef is not just about the environment, although that is obviously incredibly important. The interconnectedness that that ecosystem has with other ecosystems is incredibly important. It is also, however, about protecting the over \$6 billion that the reef contributes to the national economy and the more than 60,000 jobs that rely on its health.

Scientists tell us that the Great Barrier Reef is facing two major threats. The first major threat of course is climate change and the second is poor water quality. Last year the Palaszczuk government announced record funding for the reef, with \$330 million over five years to help restore, protect and build its resilience. We continue to deliver on-the-ground improvements to reef water quality through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program.

Our extensive program of work includes land restoration and on-farm projects tackling everything from gully erosion to fertiliser efficiency, building extension capacity and boosting coral recovery and abundance in the face of the reef's greatest threat—climate change. We have committed, as we have heard already, \$500 million to the Land Restoration Fund and a raft of climate actions to ensure that Queensland not only transitions to a low-carbon future but also prospers in doing so. Here in Queensland we are committed to playing our part by reducing carbon pollution by 30 per cent on 2005 levels by 2030 and to zero net emissions by 2050.

By contrast, the federal LNP government has not yet settled on an effective climate change response. The federal government's Great Barrier Reef Special Envoy has stated that plastics are the greatest threat to the reef, apparently. I am not taking away from the fact that we need to deal with plastic pollution. We are doing a great deal of work in that space including some work that has been done around the plastic pollution reduction strategy. The introduction of a waste levy and other measures to reduce litter in our environment—like the container refund scheme, like the single-use plastic bag ban—are all contributing to ensuring that we are seeing less plastic in our environment. However, the fact that in the last days of the Morrison government the former environment minister appointed a political adviser to a role within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority only demonstrates even further the politicisation of a key reef protection institution.

At the state level, I note that the member for Broadwater has recently recognised that climate change and water quality do need to be dealt with. I acknowledge that, but apparently he is uncomfortable with the government talking about these challenges and responding to them substantively. Frankly, to my way of thinking that is a cop-out. What good are empty words? We need to act on the science. That is just what the Queensland government is doing. We are stepping up and ensuring that the reef is protected for future generations. We are accepting the science and we are supporting science in this state. We are taking action to ensure that we are protecting the reef against its two major threats: climate change and water quality.

CHAIR: The time allocated for this session has expired. The committee will now adjourn for a short break and the hearing will resume at 3.30 pm with the examination of estimates for the portfolio area of science.

Proceedings suspended from 3.00 pm to 3.30 pm.



CHAIR: The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of science. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, I invite you to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for the opportunity to make some opening remarks about the Palaszczuk government's investment in science. Science is in our everyday lives. It creates new understandings, it helps educate us all and ultimately helps improve our lives. The Palaszczuk government backs science, and we will continue to advocate for our scientists and the important work they do in providing trusted knowledge to Queenslanders and across the globe. Queensland is home to so many great scientists who are at the forefront of many breakthroughs and discoveries and who tackle important issues across the state.

One of the great things about science is that anyone can play a role in furthering this knowledge. Earlier this year we released the Queensland Citizen Science strategy, and last week I announced more than half a million dollars in funding as part of our first round of Citizen Science Grants across Queensland. These grants are about helping to boost community participation and research projects and encouraging more people to engage in science. We announced funding for 21 projects ranging from a Get Involved—Colours of the Reef project, which encourages people to help collect important data on the health of the Great Barrier Reef, to the Wild Macadamia Hunt, which asks Queenslanders to collect macadamia leaves for genetic testing. I had the privilege of seeing this particular macadamia program in action last week.

Here in Queensland we have many great scientists doing incredible work that benefits our everyday lives. We have scientists consistently monitoring air quality across the state as well as storm tides and waves along the Queensland coastline which provide real-time sea level data during severe weather events. This is particularly valuable during severe weather events, including storm surges and tropical cyclones, when the results can save lives and protect property. While the Palaszczuk government is furthering its commitment to getting more Queenslanders involved in science, we are also continuing our work on the global stage.

Queensland has an international reputation for science and research excellence. Our government recognises that a strong research and development capability is a critical driver for innovation in the state's economy and for putting us on the global market. That is why earlier this year we announced a \$25 million investment in the state's key scientific infrastructure through the Advance Queensland Research Infrastructure Co-investment Fund. Through this fund we are bringing the latest state-of-the-art equipment to Queensland and growing the state's cutting-edge science and innovation capabilities. This year's World Science Festival Brisbane also helped put Queensland's science on the global stage. More than 130 events were held across the state, attracting record crowds. More than 205,000 visitors attended events and it attracted more than 90,000 visitor nights, which was a 39 per cent increase from last year. These results support our government's vision to establish Queensland as a place that recognises, supports, advocates and engages in science and the job opportunities it underpins.

The Palaszczuk government is also continuing its commitment to enhance the Statewide Land Cover and Tree Study, otherwise known as SLATS. We are developing new scientific approaches for regrowth and vegetation biocondition monitoring as part of a \$4 million commitment over two years. This new approach will be based on new satellite and computing technologies supported by field data acquisition. The program is being developed and delivered through the expertise of scientists at the Queensland Herbarium and the remote sensing centre and will provide a more comprehensive view of Queensland's woody vegetation for land holders, the agricultural industry and environment groups.

The work of our scientific community is critically important in this generation as we adjust to the impacts of climate change. Last year Queensland experienced a series of unprecedented weather events from fires in rain forests to devastating floods to extreme droughts, and our scientists are helping ensure our state and communities can be better prepared. The department's scientists are collaborating with leading international researchers on the Palaeoclimate for Water Security project under the government's Drought and Climate Adaptation Program. Palaeoclimate research looks at climate variability beyond the relatively short time line of instrumental records. In this case, our scientists are extending the record out from 100 years to a few thousand years to help identify trends, patterns or cycles in climate events that may be missing in shorter records. Queensland scientists are linking globally and delivering locally. They are working to address global issues such as climate change, global health and water quality and helping us as a community to manage the local impacts of drought and natural disasters, tropical disease and water safety and security.

CHAIR: We will again begin questions in this session with a block of non-government questions. I call the member for Broadwater.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the minister. I refer to the minister's answer to question on notice No. 12 and the \$99,643 approved by the minister for international travel for the Department of Environment and Science. If this amount relates to the 23 approved trips, how many trip requests were rejected by the minister?

Ms ENOCH: Obviously, as I said in my opening statement, the scientists in this state who we back and support are connecting globally and delivering locally. Of course, international travel—not just for the portfolio of science but obviously across the portfolio, including the arts—is critical to ensure that we are connecting globally, supporting the great work they are doing and sharing that across the world and obviously being able to bring back great knowledge and information to enhance the work of scientists and other workers in other work that we do across the portfolio. In this last financial year none were rejected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question again is to the minister. I refer to the \$1.8 million spent by the department on conferences, catering and other hospitality expenses per question on notice No. 16. How much of the \$1.8 million spent by the department over the past financial year was on alcohol and food?

Ms ENOCH: I will bring forward the director-general who oversees that particular expenditure.

Dr Merrick: In relation to the question asked by the member, expenditure where alcohol was part of the total package of expenditure of events was \$13,000. I would stress that that is not the expenditure on alcohol: that is the total cost of the events at which alcohol was part of the package. These are longstanding events that the department has regularly held over a number of years, including the Queensland VIP reception at BIO, which a number of ministers over a long period have attended, and the Young Tall Poppies event for leading young scientists.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the minister. I refer to the biodiversity offset framework and the service area objective to deliver environmental, scientific and technical expertise on SDS page 14. In total, how much money does the state hold in environmental offsets?

Ms ENOCH: I will just gather that figure for you. To answer the member's question, as at 30 June 2019 the offsets account had received 131 financial settlement offset payments totalling more than \$36 million.

Mr CRISAFULLI: With \$36 million available in environmental offsets, how many hectares of offsets were acquired over the past year?

Ms ENOCH: I will again refer to the briefing note that I have been provided by the department. My advice from the department is that there have been 245 authorities requiring offsets for impacts on 14,107 hectares that have been registered in the environmental offsets register since July 2014. There have been eight advanced offset sites that have been registered across 193 hectares of land. Of this 193 hectares, 77 hectares have the potential to offset marine plant impacts, 87 hectares to offset koala habitat impacts and 29 hectares to offset regulated vegetation impacts.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, what time frame would you envisage the government taking to spend that \$36 million at a time when koala populations are under immense pressure?

Ms ENOCH: I know that the member avoids all conversations about science, but we are now into the science section of today's hearing—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, two points—

Ms ENOCH:—and we are continuing to see questions regarding the environment.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, the minister is making a point of order in relation to your question. There was also an aspect that was hypothetical in relation to that question.

Mr KRAUSE: Chair, I want to make a point of order in relation to the minister's statement that the Clerk clarified last week. Timetables do not prevent members from asking questions across the entire portfolio.

Ms ENOCH: It also does not prevent members asking questions about science.

Mr KRAUSE: To that point, I would say that the minister's statement is unnecessary and the shadow minister's questions are quite in order in this section.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, I referred to SDS page 14, which is for science, but I will continue. I know it is uncomfortable for the minister—

Ms ENOCH: Not at all.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—because koalas are something the government is failing on.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater and Minister. I take the point from the deputy chair; however, we are dealing with the very important portfolio area of science so I take the point from the minister. Notwithstanding the situation, we have a specific area for science directed to science questions. You said you were going to move on, member for Broadwater, and I urge you to do so.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am, and this question relates to the service area objective to deliver environmentally scientific and technical expertise. That is on SDS page 14. My question is to the minister. I refer to the Queensland Koala Advisory Council service area highlight, which is on SDS page 10, which is the earlier reference but it relates to SDS page 14. When will the South-East Queensland koala conservation strategy be finalised and released?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Queenslanders understand and embrace the importance of koalas in our ecosystem. That is why we as a government established the Koala Expert Panel, which provided six recommendations that the government accepted. Those six recommendations were fairly wide ranging. A number of activities have occurred immediately. One of those in the last 12 months has been the establishment of the Koala Advisory Council. That advisory council has a number of representatives from across sectors—from the development sector to the conservation sector to wildlife hospitals—who are working in the field to support the preservation and conservation of koalas.

I met with the Koala Advisory Council yesterday. They have had their fifth meeting as a council and they have been doing an incredible body of work. It is a quite substantial body of work. The chair of that committee has recently written to me requesting an extension of time for the council in terms of finalising the koala conservation strategy, which I have granted. The chair has been very clear that the work has been quite substantial and it is complicated. He has very much recommended that there be consultation with councils in particular to make sure a very granular level of mapping is forthcoming. He has asked for that extension on behalf of the Koala Advisory Council and, as I have said, I have granted that, although that is not without some limits. I expect that the Koala Advisory Council will endorse the koala conservation strategy in its most granular form for cabinet's consideration within the time frame heading into the fourth quarter of this year.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, I will continue on mapping and again on page 14. Minister, after the Gabba was revealed as being included in areas incorrectly covered by the government's trigger mapping, has the department ensured that the latest version of the maps is true and correct?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. As the member would know, the trigger maps were first brought in by the LNP government in 2014, as I recall. That was when the member for Broadwater was a cabinet member around the cabinet table making decisions regarding these things. The trigger maps at the time the LNP brought them in saw some four per cent of the state covered by the trigger maps.

If the member for Broadwater is suggesting in any way that the trigger maps that were introduced by the LNP were wrong, he is substantially correct in that. What we have seen is that the trigger map that was first introduced by the LNP covered areas like I am showing here like in Mooloolaba, for instance. Since the work that has occurred under the Palaszczuk government, we have seen further refinement of trigger maps to ensure it is a more accurate map so there is more certainty—in fact, more certainty than the LNP had ever given to landholders during their time in office. In what I am holding up now, you can see the stark difference between the LNP's trigger mapping and the trigger mapping that now exists under the Palaszczuk government.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, further to that point on SDS page 14, I have been spending some time looking at the revised mapping and I can today reveal that mine sites like Rosewood mine and even the Brisbane River are still included. Minister, how can Queensland communities have faith in these maps if they continue to be inaccurate?

Ms ENOCH: As I have already stated to the committee, what we saw when the LNP introduced trigger mapping was four per cent of the state being covered by those trigger maps. That was outrageous. Now under the Palaszczuk government we see about 2.13 per cent of the state covered under trigger mapping. These maps are to protect plants. This flora survey trigger map is generated based on verified species records and information on a likely habitat for endangered plants. Much of the data has been provided by landholders through protected plants flora surveys conducted on their properties.

In terms of the LNP's record in this space, they gave so much uncertainty to landholders when they covered four per cent of the state with their trigger maps. The further refinement and the work that the Herbarium and others have been doing in this department to ensure that the trigger maps provide more certainty for landholders has been outstanding. They have been able to reduce it from four per cent under the LNP to 2.13 per cent. This is on top of a record by the LNP where tree clearing quadrupled after the LNP tore up Labor's sensible vegetation management laws. If the LNP and the member for Broadwater do not believe that the trigger maps were right, then there is criticism on their own introduction of trigger maps.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Minister, I refer to revelations that the department is spending \$4.8 million to fix the errors in the current SLATS report, and that is in the budget. Minister, why did the government not wait until the science and data behind SLATS was accurate before introducing the vegetation management legislation?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I will take guidance from the chair given that that is legislation that is not held by this department or under my jurisdiction.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, I am talking about the science behind it. I am talking about the science that informed that which the minister is responsible for under SDS page 14.

CHAIR: You are asking for a scientific analysis from the minister from legislation that is in another portfolio area, member for Broadwater. I am ruling that question out of order. Do you have any further questions?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Yes, I do. My question is to the minister. I refer to the discontinued performance measure and the service area objective of delivering environmental, scientific and technical expertise on SDS page 14. During last year's estimates the minister defended the department's three-month response time for the removal of crocodiles. Why is this KPI no longer satisfactory?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I think we are all well aware of the member for Broadwater's and the LNP's view on crocodile management.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is three days.

Ms ENOCH: It is one of culling and killing.

Mr CRISAFULLI: No, no, three days.

Ms ENOCH: No, it is pretty clear. It is pretty clear from the comments that the member for Broadwater has made with regard to crocodiles.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, you are continually interrupting.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, my next question—

CHAIR: No, member for Broadwater, the minister has not had the opportunity to respond. You have continually interrupted about four times in less than 30 seconds. Could you please restrain yourself? Minister?

Ms ENOCH: Further to the member's question with regards to what is a protected species in this state not just under state legislation but also under federal legislation and of course with international regard, there was an answer to a question on notice that clearly outlined the answer to that question. I would encourage the member to perhaps read that response.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Based on that response and the question to you in question on notice No. 2, over the past financial year what was the longest time taken to resolve a problem crocodile declaration?

Ms ENOCH: I outline for the committee that I am advised that 61 per cent of recognised problem crocodile declarations were resolved in the first 24 hours—61 per cent—which is an incredible effort—

Mr KRAUSE: Point of order, Chair.

Ms ENOCH:—in terms of the operations of our officers on the ground.

CHAIR: Sorry, Minister. The deputy chair has a point of order.

Mr KRAUSE: It is about relevance. It was a very specific question. The clock is ticking. I would ask the minister to please answer the specific question.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The question was: what is the longest time taken for an individual problem crocodile declaration? I was not asking about the whole lot.

CHAIR: The minister is answering the question and putting the statistics into context.

Mr KRAUSE: The minister is filibustering.

CHAIR: She is clearly directly answering the question. There is no point of order. I call the minister.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member and I thank the chair for his guidance. Clearly, when we are seeing those kinds of results from the department we want to be able to measure those results in a way that better reflects the efficiencies of the department. When you consider that 61 per cent of all declared problem crocodiles are resolved in the first 24 hours, that is a remarkable outcome.

Mr KRAUSE: What is the longest time?

Ms ENOCH: We want a measurement that better reflects the efficiencies of the department in this space.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I would suggest, Mr Chairman, that the law of averages says there is some—

CHAIR: Are you asking a question, member for Broadwater?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am asking again—

CHAIR: No, member for Broadwater.

Mr KRAUSE: What is the longest time?

CHAIR: I am going to give the member for Noosa an opportunity to ask a question because you do not seem to be—I am calling the member for Noosa.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman, the question was a specific—

CHAIR: Order, member for Broadwater.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Can the minister take it on notice?

CHAIR: The minister has answered the question—

Mr CRISAFULLI: No, Mr Chairman, the minister has not answered the question.

CHAIR: The minister has answered the question. I have made my ruling.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Chairman—

CHAIR: You are being unruly, member for Broadwater.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—may I respectfully raise a point of order? My question was specifically about the longest time taken for an individual removal. The minister has done an excellent job in answering about the overall situation. She has spoken about the average.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is true; it was a factual answer, but it has not responded to the question I asked.

Ms ENOCH: It is a great outcome.

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, the minister has answered your question. You may not like the answer—

Mr CRISAFULLI: No, Mr Chairman, with respect, my question was about—

CHAIR: Member for Broadwater, I warn you under standing orders. I call the member for Noosa.

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the minister. I refer to page 6 of the SDS regarding the appointment of the mining rehabilitation commissioner. Minister, can you advise when the commissioner will be appointed? Will their role include assessing current sites that have not been rehabilitated and also the construction of a time line and strategy to do so?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Of course, it was a commitment of the Palaszczuk government to explore this avenue. There is a body of work that is happening currently to finalise a discussion paper for that particular model to make sure that we have it right. There is further work being done in that space and further consideration by government is to come with regard to the question that you posed.

CHAIR: We will now move on to some government members' questions.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, I have a direct question about science. With reference to page 14 of the SDS, how does the science carried out by the Queensland government benefit Queenslanders, and have there been any alternative ideas about how we treat science in Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Jordan for a question about science; I appreciate that. The Department of Environment and Science provides quality, timely and innovative scientific and technical services. Science has always played an important role in our community. It is helping us to understand complex challenges and it informs our actions in an unbiased way. Unfortunately, there has been a concerted attack on science in this state. Science is coming under attack for political purposes, and the LNP appear to be the flag-bearers for this.

Just recently the LNP state conference made a recommendation—a recommendation I should add that the Leader of the Opposition confirmed she would look into. That recommendation was that Queensland should create an office of science quality assurance. I can only imagine that the purpose of such a body would be to undermine science in this state, allowing the LNP to pick and choose which scientific evidence they will accept to suit their agenda and which scientific evidence they will ignore.

Quite frankly, I think the Leader of the Opposition may as well call it the 'Derek Zoolander centre for alternative facts'. In fact, if those opposite were to turn to page 23 of the SDS, they would see that the government spent close to \$88 million on science last year. That includes research, staffing and, most importantly, quality assurance. Our investment in science will continue in 2019-20 to meet the challenges presented to us. This science enables the responsible use of our natural resources, protects and preserves our pristine environments, and ensures the best science and applied technical innovations are available to provide credible, evidence based information for Queensland.

In response to the unprecedented heatwaves, fires and devastating floods experienced in Queensland last summer, the department's scientists processed data and satellite imagery that informed emergency management decisions and assisted landholders to recover after what Queensland experienced. The Department of Environment and Science climate scientists are also working with the Global Change Institute at the University of Queensland to produce Australia's most extensive set of downscaled climate change simulations. The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is using the data to help stakeholders of the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework to understand their risks from hazards like heatwaves. Through this work, local governments and communities can prepare for potential increases in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Responding to extreme weather events, a changing climate and a growing population—scientific research underpins all of this work. My department has gone the distance in delivering world-class, peer reviewed, credible science, and we do not apologise for that.

The department is adept at not only doing the science but also supporting our research institutions to grow their ability to respond to challenges and create the jobs of the future working with universities and research institutes. The LNP's political attacks on the credibility of scientists in order to advance their own political agenda are, quite frankly, absolutely appalling. Their 'office of alternative facts' is the sort of idea you would expect to hear from people running around with tin foil hats on saying that the earth is flat. I stand by our scientists and the important work that they do. The LNP need to stop playing politics with science.

Ms LUI: Minister, how is the Palaszczuk government supporting science literacy in our community and encouraging great science outcomes?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Cook. I know that the member for Cook has been able to see some incredible science in her own electorate. In fact, the Flying Scientists have visited her electorate and have done some fantastic stuff with young children in her schools. I know that building science literacy across her electorate is something about which she is quite passionate.

Of course, the Palaszczuk government more broadly supports science literacy in our community and encourages great citizen science outcomes. Our government has a vision for a Queensland population that engages in, supports and advocates for science. The Queensland government's

Engaging Queenslanders in Science strategy looks to grow the number of students studying STEM and of course the arts, encourage participation in science based activities and improve understanding of the great science happening in Queensland.

We recognise that citizen science is one way in which these goals can be addressed. It is probably one of my more favoured areas. I think citizen science is a great opportunity for all communities across Queensland, for young and old, to get engaged in the incredible world of science. Citizen scientists are community volunteers who participate in scientific research specifically to deliver scientific knowledge. Anyone can be a citizen scientist. You do not need any priority experience. In fact, being involved in citizen science projects gives you the opportunity to learn scientific skills including collection, analysis and methodology. Not only that, but citizen scientists get to hear from professional scientists and researchers about important issues. They can learn about issues that impact us—for example, particular plants or animals, behaviours of wildlife and the local environment.

In January this year the Queensland Citizen Science Strategy and the Citizen Science Grants scheme were launched to increase Queenslanders' awareness of and participation in citizen science. There are more than 130 citizen science projects in which Queenslanders can get involved. As a government, we are keen to encourage more people in the community to become citizen scientists and at the same time support our researchers in the pursuit of scientific discovery. We want to help people find opportunities where they can work with scientists on research projects, whether those projects protect the reef, test water quality or monitor threatened species.

The first round of the Queensland Citizen Science Grants closed earlier this year. I was very pleased that the Queensland government has now supported 21 citizen science projects to help build science literacy across our state. This included projects such as CoralWatch's 'Get Involved—Colours of the Reef' project, which collects important data on reef health.

The potential global impacts of citizen science are phenomenal. Citizen science can increase our scientific knowledge. When applied, this has the potential to improve human health, our environment and our society. It is programs like this that our government is funding that are improving science literacy across our state. We will continue to support their important work.

CHAIR: Minister, with reference to page 15 of the SDS, how is the Queensland government working with landholders, traditional owners and the Queensland community to get great scientific outcomes?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the chair and member for Stretton for his interest in science and for his question. The Queensland government is working to bolster and encourage science through meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples, Queensland landholders and the general community. Our first scientists in Queensland have knowledge of the natural world and its uses which today is informing the development of cutting-edge science. Scientific discoveries are improved when researchers work in partnership with First Nations peoples. The Queensland government understands and values these partnerships to ensure Queensland's science policies and initiatives reflect community expectations and encourage a thriving and world-leading scientific sector in Queensland.

In partnership with the University of Queensland, the Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation is working to process native spinifex grass into diverse commercial applications, from superstrong roads and tyres to super thin condoms and surgical gloves. It is incredible that these nano-fibres in spinifex grass can be applied in such a way that really can make a huge difference to the market and give Queensland, and of course First Nations organisations like Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation, a competitive edge in the market globally.

Of course, reforming the Biodiscovery Act 2004 is both a government priority and an example of where Queensland's regulatory framework is being improved to foster excellence in scientific research and the sustainable use of Queensland's unique biological resources while providing for biodiversity's benefits to be shared equitably. This is a reform piece that is really assisting in this work that is happening in partnership with First Nations peoples and university research institutions. This legislation is being reformed to align with international access and benefit-sharing practices—changes that are vital to ensuring future research and industry that originates in Queensland can be shared internationally and with our First Nations peoples.

Recently I attended a combined workshop of the traditional knowledge stakeholder round table and representatives of the biodiscovery entities. The message was clear: our consultation is working to form an act that acknowledges traditional knowledge and customs and helps to find a way forward to build benefit-sharing agreements with industry and universities. Through meaningful and genuine consultation we can achieve this. We have brought together traditional owners and experts in the field

of access and benefit sharing and biodiscovery research to inform us on how our regulatory framework can best meet the needs of all stakeholders and still promote a thriving scientific industry. Consultation is ongoing and has reinforced a need to streamline our regulatory process to more efficiently facilitate Queensland research and development. My department will continue to engage with First Nations peoples, Queensland researchers and community stakeholders to develop a thriving and world-leading science industry that recognises the immense potential of Queensland's biodiversity.

Ms LUI: Minister, how is the Queensland government making science more accessible to Queenslanders?

Ms ENOCH: As the committee has already heard, there are many programs currently being delivered to extend science in this state and to demonstrate the huge commitment that the Palaszczuk government has to science and scientists. One initiative is the extremely popular World Science Festival. Since its inception we have welcomed over 700,000 attendees to this event. Since the program started in August 2016, our flying scientists have visited 17 rural and remote communities across the state, engaging more than 18,000 locals. Engaging regional towns is an important science outreach activity that the department undertakes each year as part of National Science Week celebrations. Last year the department delivered a National Science Week event in Longreach involving 560 students and teachers from 14 schools and covering a range of activities including coding and robotics, drone building and flying, entrepreneurship, and virtual reality. Over two days in August this year, the department is travelling to Maryborough to engage the local community in science based activities and inspire an interest in science subjects and careers.

While our government is engaging Queenslanders in science and new ideas for research and discovery, the LNP is engaging in a different discussion. In the last week we have seen the LNP's nuclear plan for Queensland. In fact, you cannot pick up a newspaper in this state without seeing the far right of the LNP agitating for our state to go nuclear. On 18 June, when quizzed about nuclear energy on Sky News, Gold Coast MP and federal Minister for Science Karen Andrews said that she did not have an issue with it being considered. Just recently, federal energy minister Angus Taylor has said that the federal government has an open mind to nuclear energy. We all know that Senator James McGrath and federal Queensland MP Keith Pitt are on a unity ticket regarding nuclear power. They are out in the national media calling for an inquiry into nuclear power.

These comments come on the back of a recent policy motion passed at last year's LNP state conference which called on the federal government to consider the feasibility of nuclear powered energy generation in Australia. Federal energy minister Angus Taylor is now saying that Canberra is more than willing to consider nuclear power. The question remains: where in Queensland would the LNP like a nuclear reactor to be built? Reports indicate that nuclear power plants require large quantities of water and are usually located close to large, reliable water sources. A 2007 study identified six locations in Queensland for possible nuclear power plants including Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast and Bribie Island.

What the people of Queensland need to know is where the Queensland LNP would locate their nuclear power plant. Could it be on the Gold Coast in the member for Broadwater's electorate, for instance? I have not yet heard the shadow environment minister's opinion on nuclear power, but I think the people of Queensland need to know where the LNP stands on this matter. The LNP need to stand up for Queensland when it counts, not just when it suits them. They need to reassure Queenslanders that they will not sell them out to their LNP mates in Canberra.

Mrs MULLEN: This is a question close to my heart, with two daughters who love science. How is the Queensland government continuing to profile and promote great Queensland female scientists?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Jordan for this question. Of course, more female representation in STEM and STEAM subjects and the industry is critically important for the expansion of those industries in that sector. Queensland is home to dedicated female scientists who, through their contribution, inspire and engage with the broader community about science. The Department of Environment and Science in partnership with the World Science Festival Brisbane and the Office for Women in the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women is involved in running and promoting the annual Queensland Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Prize. The competition celebrates inspiring female STEM professionals who are making a positive contribution to their individual fields and engaging with the broader community. The Palaszczuk government is committed to getting more women engaged in STEM, and that is what this prize is all about.

This year the STEM prize recognised the outstanding contribution of three early career scientists, awarding \$15,000 to a researcher looking at how to tame weeds using gene editing, marine scientists investigating the impact of microplastics on seafood and a first nations researcher seeking to protect

the eyesight of people with diabetes—all incredibly important projects. Queensland's female experts in STEM fields are international leaders at the forefront of many breakthroughs and discoveries. They are working to make a difference to the wellbeing of individuals and communities locally, nationally and internationally and we have an array of talented women scientists here in our own backyard—for example, James Cook University's Dr Alana Grech, who was awarded the Queensland Young Tall Poppy Scientist of the Year Award in 2018 for her work which leverages the power of spatial technology to inform the conservation of Australia's diverse coastal environment, and Professor Ranjeny Thomas based at the Translational Research Institute who is developing a vaccine for rheumatoid arthritis. There are so many more female scientists who are being recognised for their incredible contribution to science in this state.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to raising the profile of women's STEM professionals in this state and there are many benefits to sharing that profile. Women have a lot to contribute to the field of science and it is incumbent upon government to help break glass ceilings and make sure all of the voices in the room are heard and appreciated. On top of that, encouraging smart, professional women in science today creates role models for our girls—for your girls—who will be the scientists of tomorrow. The government recognises and actively pursues the benefits of having gender equality across-the-board and our approach to science further demonstrates exactly that commitment.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I note that we only have a few minutes remaining, but I have a question that I really wanted to ask you in the time remaining. With reference to the World Science Festival, departmental open days and community outreach programs, how is the Queensland government engaging Queenslanders to understand, share and embrace science?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. The extremely popular World Science Festival Brisbane has been held in Queensland since 2016 and we have welcomed over 700,000 people since its inception. The festival is the only global extension of this initiative and so Queenslanders are very lucky to have this opportunity right on their doorstep, but of course that does not happen by accident. It is happening in Queensland because of the commitment that we have to science as a government. Our regional program has gone from strength to strength. We have seen a 47 per cent increase in attendances in Gladstone, a 39 per cent growth in Townsville, 124 per cent growth in Ipswich, 94 per cent growth in Toowoomba and a 27 per cent growth in Chinchilla since last year. All up, this represents over 18,000 people in regional Queensland engaged in the World Science Festival.

The World Science Festival is an incredible success story for our state. After visiting some of the locations where we have held World Science Festival events across the state, we have seen young people, their mums and dads, their grandparents and members of the community wholeheartedly engaged in the incredible activities of World Science Festival. We continue to fund and support World Science Festival Brisbane in Queensland knowing that it is going to make a massive difference to lots of young lives who will see science as a career path for them into the future.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister. The time allocated for consideration of the science portfolio has now expired and the committee will now examine the proposed expenditure for the important portfolio area of the arts. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, I invite you to make an opening statement.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the committee for the opportunity to report on the Palaszczuk government's continued investment in the arts. We recognise the value of Queensland's dynamic arts and cultural sector and the role it plays in telling unique stories, connecting communities and ensuring Queenslanders have access to rich and vibrant arts experiences. The arts and cultural sectors contribute to the creation of jobs across the state and provide pathways for artists to showcase their talents. This year's budget is an exciting one for the arts. Since forming government, we have restored funding in the sector and invested in infrastructure and programs that continue to attract visitors and put Queensland on the global map for arts and cultural experiences.

The Palaszczuk government is eager to see a First Nations cultural centre finally established in Queensland, and that is why we have allocated \$2 million in this year's budget for an options assessment. Australia is an ancient land, with the oldest living continuous cultures in the world, and our new First Nations cultural centre will help to respectfully showcase these cultures, tell important stories and contribute to the important task of truth telling in this state. At a time when Queensland is also working on Tracks to Treaty, our first nations cultural centre will play a very important role.

We are also continuing our investment in the new performing arts venue at QPAC, with works on the \$150 million new theatre due to start next year. We are investing a total \$125 million in this project, which is the largest investment in Queensland arts infrastructure since the Gallery of Modern Art. It will also make QPAC the largest performing arts centre in Australia and ensure Queensland can compete at a global level in attracting productions. It is expected that this new world-class facility will support more than 100 jobs during construction and more than 40 new full-time jobs upon completion.

The Palaszczuk government is also continuing the investment in arts infrastructure in regional Queensland. Our work is progressing on the refurbishment of the Cairns Centre of Contemporary Arts, which we have committed more than \$5 million towards. The upgrade will open new performance and creative opportunities to local arts groups and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and will help expand cultural tourism in Far North Queensland. In Rockhampton the Palaszczuk government is investing \$15 million towards a new art gallery as part of a new cultural hub in the city and of course the Rockhampton Art Gallery has played a leading role in the city's cultural history for more than 50 years. Rockhampton's art collection is also one of the best in the world and has a collection of truly legendary modern Australian art. All of these investments in arts infrastructure support job creation, both during construction and after completion, and are also ensuring Queensland can maximise the opportunities for residents and visitors to experience what the thriving arts and cultural sector has to offer.

The Palaszczuk government's support for the arts also goes further than infrastructure investment. In this year's budget we have allocated \$4 million over two years to allow the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art to attract more blockbuster exhibits. The Queensland Cultural Centre in Brisbane attracted a record seven million visitors in 2017-18 and investment from this year's budget will help draw more exclusive exhibitions to Queensland and enhance our reputation as a globally significant arts institution. Supporting the arts in regional areas is part of our ongoing commitment to foster Queensland's healthy communities. The Palaszczuk government is continuing to invest in the Regional Arts Services Network to deliver localised models to support local arts priorities, build collaboration across regions and leverage the value of the arts to boost local jobs.

All of these programs and initiatives I have mentioned are just a snapshot of what the Palaszczuk government is doing in the arts space. We know that the arts and cultural sector delivers social and economic opportunities and outcomes to Queenslanders. Our government is leading the way in delivering arts services and infrastructure. We know the important role the sector plays in engaging with audiences right across the state in connecting communities, showcasing local talent and telling stories that are unique to Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We will now move to questions. I call the member for Moggill.

Dr ROWAN: Thank you, Chair and thank you, Minister, and your staff for your attendance here today. With reference to pages 17 and 45 of the SDS and the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art and the public controversy surrounding the displayed works of Australian paedophile artist Donald Friend, will the government ensure that a portion of the proceeds of the Margaret Olley *A Generous Life* exhibition be given to child victim support groups? Whilst I acknowledge there was free admission given to the exhibition, there are proceeds from merchandise sales and other things that are provided.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Of course, art in all its forms often plays a critical role in challenging the thoughts of those who witness it and are experiencing it. Quite often we will see artworks that will do exactly that—that will challenge the viewer. To answer that question further, I will bring forward the director of the Queensland Art Gallery, Mr Chris Saines.

Mr Saines: In directly responding to that question, no, the gallery had not contemplated doing as the member has proposed. The only receipts, as it were, or new income that will be received from the exhibition will come through the form of merchandise associated with the exhibition, which is on sale through our retail operations. I am prepared to give consideration to the proposal, but I have not given consideration to it to this point.

Dr ROWAN: We have had the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Minister, based on the response from the director, Chris Saines, will the government and you consider that? I am happy for you to take it on notice for further consideration. Given there has been displayed artwork by a known paedophile and there has obviously been the receipt of income around that, is there some consideration to a portion of that being provided to the victims of child abuse through various organisations?

CHAIR: Member for Moggill, you have effectively restated your original question that was answered by Mr Saines. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Ms ENOCH: As the member would know from his interactions with stakeholders, curatorial decisions are made by the gallery. I am happy to have that conversation with the board, which makes those decisions.

Dr ROWAN: I refer to page 17 of the SDS and the 2019 Queensland Arts Showcase Program, where its funding recipient is specifically the \$34,000 funded project titled *TOY*, which—

... provides young children and families with the creative space to explore gender fluidity and multiplicity, against the backdrop of traditional gendered roles and responsibilities.

What evaluation is occurring by the department or Arts Queensland of such projects?

Ms ENOCH: I will bring forward the deputy director-general for Arts Queensland with regard to the processes for evaluation of any set of programs that are undertaken in Arts Queensland. That is a normal and natural process. In terms of programs that are supported, for the member's benefit, there is an independent panel that makes recommendations about grants. The department ensures that the evaluation of the programs more generally is part of their everyday approaches.

Ms Herring: I thank the member for Moggill for the question. The Queensland Arts Showcase Program is one of the contestable funding programs for the Queensland government that disburses project grants right across the state of Queensland. It is a rolling fund. We do around 11 rounds each year so that we can be responsive to clients' needs. QASP has four key criteria by which it is assessed and it is assessed by an independent panel. Certainly, that is what the minister said. They come from a peer assessment pool, so we choose the peers based on their understanding and knowledge of the projects in that round that will go forward, noting that probably around 25 per cent will be successful in any round. In any round you are probably considering around 20 to 25 grant applications of which anywhere between five and eight may be successful.

There are four key criteria, as I mentioned. The first one is quality, which really relates to artistic achievement by the artist previously—that they have produced evidence of a high standard of artistic work, that they are demonstrating artistic progression in their practice and, for some categories, that they are engaging with other partners in that activity.

Reach is another key criteria. We very much would like to see the work that we fund reach as many people as possible. We rely on the applicant to explain how that work will be seen, connects with and develops new audiences in Queensland, and provides access to and participation in arts and culture in Queensland communities. I suppose you could also say in that situation that we also like to see that that work is accessible to a range of different target groups. The peer assessors do not necessarily make a decision about the content of a specific target group that might be the subject of it; they are just really trying to connect with a large audience.

There are another two criteria. One is impact: it has to contribute to the capacity building of the Queensland arts and cultural sector, including the cultivation of local talent and legacy outcomes as well as create employment and training opportunities for Queensland based artists and arts workers. It includes that there is evidence of community support for the activity. We like to see co-funding in the projects that come to our table because, obviously, if there is co-funding that shows there is community demand and community interest.

The fourth criteria that we work through is viability. Clearly, we need it to be a viable project that can be delivered within the constraints of the budgets provided. We like to see, again, good financial and in-kind support from partners but also evidence of good planning and logistics for the delivery of the project to make sure that it is delivered on time and on budget.

Dr ROWAN: I refer to page 16 of the SDS and supporting individual artists and the biennial Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition. Given that the competition did not receive any state government funding for this year's event, will the minister consider financial support for the next event separate to contestable funding via the Queensland Arts Showcase Program?

Ms ENOCH: My recollection is that there has been some correspondence from the party that the member is referring to. I have asked the department to work directly with them regarding the pathway into the funding arrangements that are available.

Dr ROWAN: With reference to page 17 of the SDS, as you have outlined in your opening statement the government intends to create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural centre, as I understand it, in Brisbane. Why has the state government refused to commit \$13.3 million towards the Cairns Gallery Precinct project to be funded on a three-way basis with the Cairns Regional Council and the federal government?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Unless the member has some information that is new to this area, I understand that the federal government has not made available that \$13 million. I have been in constant negotiations and conversations with the mayor of Cairns regarding the movement of that project. The federal government has been slow to uptake in this space, just as the federal government has been leaving the heavy lifting in terms of arts funding in this state to the Queensland government.

I say that because right now, in terms of the support that is provided to our major performing arts companies, the federal government continues to short-change Queensland. For every dollar that Queensland is investing in our major performing arts organisation this year the federal LNP chips in just 81 cents, whereas in New South Wales the federal LNP government invests \$3.93 for every dollar provided by the New South Wales government.

Dr ROWAN: Chair, I raise a point of order under standing order 118 on relevance. I wanted the minister to answer specifically in relation to the Cairns Gallery Precinct project and whether the state government will be funding that on a tripartite basis?

CHAIR: The minister is answering your question.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the chair. The member referred to the federal government already stumping up the \$13 million and that, as I understand, is not correct unless he has other information. This is the story of the LNP government at the federal level when it comes to the arts in Queensland. Queensland contributes the most of any state to our major performing arts organisations whilst we receive the lowest percentage of funding contribution from the federal government. If the LNP is serious about the arts in Queensland, and in particular speaking to the member for Moggill's question about the Cairns Gallery Precinct, then he should pick up the phone to his friends in Canberra and get the LNP federal government to invest more in the arts in Queensland.

Dr ROWAN: In the SDS on page 57 there is a reference to First Nations artists. Can you outline what progress has been made on increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on boards and committees under your control?

Ms ENOCH: There are a number of boards that sit within this portfolio. Can I be really clear in this space: of course we want to see, I personally want to see, more First Nations peoples engaged in decision-making around arts outcomes in this state. We know that Queensland has a unique opportunity in that we are home to the longest continuous living cultures on the planet and we are uniquely positioned as a state as a result of that. One of the things that I have made very clear to the department is that improving our First Nations partnerships is an absolute priority right across the board in this department. Obviously the member has asked for specific numbers.

Dr ROWAN: I am happy for you to take it on notice.

Ms ENOCH: I think we can add them up now if that is what you wish. On the board of Queensland Museum there is one dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member. On the Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees there is also one. The Queensland Theatre Company, another First Nations person is on that board. On the Library Board of Queensland there is another position. The Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts, there are three Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people on that board. In relation to the Queensland Music Festival we see another position and, of course, where there are not Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people situated on the boards, those boards make every effort to consult with and often create First Nations reference groups or advisory groups to be able to inform the decisions of the board.

Dr ROWAN: I refer to page 22 of the SDS and to the Queensland Theatre Company's 2018 annual report. The key performance indicator of engaging with regional artists, companies and underserved communities failed to be reached by a significant margin of 62 per cent. The target was 10,000 and the actual was 3,821 attendees or participants. Why did the extensive tour of regional Queensland as mentioned in the footnotes not eventuate?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. I will bring forward Amanda Jolly, who is the executive director for the Queensland Theatre Company, to address that question.

Ms Jolly: This was a result of a tour that no longer eventuated, but it is also part of a larger change in strategy on our part. There have been years when we have toured anything up to five shows regionally but talking to regional venues and communities and looking at our own program we have now moved to a much more participatory model. We are now developing work in the regions with regional stories, shows like *My Name is Jimi* or *The Longest Minute*, where stories are developed, rehearsed and premiered in Cairns before then moving down to Brisbane.

We have also significantly increased our education programs, now working with 32 regional schools on a project called The Scene Project which involves us working with schools over a whole term with our professional artists and also giving a lot of professional development to regional teachers. A lot of them can work in a lot of isolation so they work with our artists as well. This year for the first time we will then be taking that regional Scene project and working with local theatre companies. Although the reach is less, we feel that the impact will be greater and more sustainable because we are trying to develop the skills in the regional communities.

Dr ROWAN: Thank you. Minister, again referencing page 22 of the SDS and the Queensland Theatre Company's annual report, a footnote in that annual report on improving sustainable practices noticed that power cost reductions are unlikely to continue in 2019 due in part to electricity prices. Can you shed some light on what expectations the Queensland Theatre Company has for electricity prices and has any modelling been done to factor in the government's 50 per cent renewable energy target?

Ms ENOCH: Again I will bring forward the executive director for the Queensland Theatre Company. Can I just refer to the previous question that the member asked with regard to regional reach of the Queensland Theatre Company and reassure the member that the Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed and finds it incredibly important to ensure that we have regional reach of arts experiences. We have seen some great examples of that through our international program where we had simulcast events across regional Queensland in places like Longreach, Mount Isa and Yarrabah where people from across the state got to experience international ballet companies. People absolutely enjoyed that. That is one of the features of the new performing arts venue, to be able to build in the capacity of the new theatre, the new venue, to be able to reach into regional Queensland and share the experiences across our state.

That is on top of the amount of work that has been happening to support regional Queensland storytelling and arts development from the Regional Arts Development Fund to the Regional Arts Services Network which was created since I have been the arts minister to really foster and grow arts across our state because that is where our competitive edge will be in terms of the great storytelling and the incredible artists that we have in all the corners of our state. But to answer the most recent question I will bring forward the executive director of the Queensland Theatre Company.

Ms Jolly: We are very much involved in the sustainable energy movement. We have 400 solar panels on the roof of our theatre. We have recently renovated the Bille Brown Theatre into a fully functioning theatre. We have worked very closely with the building landlord, the Department of Housing and Public Works, on energy efficiency. Obviously, we have installed LED lights into the theatre. The reason we are expecting our power bill to increase is because our power consumption has increased because of the increased size of that theatre, and the air conditioning and other services needed there. We have gone from a 228-seat space to 351 seats. We are also performing more in our own performance space.

CHAIR: We will now move to government questions.

Ms LUI: Minister, with reference to pages 16 and 17 of the SDS, what work is the Queensland government doing to support artists, companies and individuals in Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I acknowledge that the electorate of Cook is home to some amazing artists who have been supported through our arts network and, in particular, our arts centres that are supported by the Queensland government. We support artists and arts organisations to provide an array of vibrant arts experiences to Queenslanders statewide. In 2019-20, Arts Queensland will invest \$12.9 million through a suite of contestable funding programs including the Queensland Arts Showcase Program, the Playing Queensland Fund and the Organisations Fund. In 2018-19, the \$3.2 million QASP fund supported 88 projects across all art forms, delivering vibrant and accessible arts and cultural experiences for Queenslanders. The Playing Queensland Fund continues to deliver high-quality visual and performing arts throughout Queensland, with 40 tours approved, some of which will span multiple years.

Brisbane based Topology are established leaders in musical creativity in Australia, creating original work and collaborating across genres and art forms to produce award-winning musical experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. In 2018-19 the company delivered its most extensive regional Queensland tour, Queensland at Home, visiting 42 towns statewide, supported with \$153,175 through the Playing Queensland Fund. Topology also receives \$125,000 per annum through the Organisations Fund, which spans 2017-2020.

Townsville's contemporary dance company, Dancenorth, is supported with \$550,000 per annum from the Organisations Fund and creates outstanding and critically acclaimed work that is in demand locally, nationally and internationally. The company has grown significantly over the past five years,

doubling its turnover and significantly expanding its activities and audiences. Dancenorth's performance output more than tripled, from 19 performances in 2014 to 66 in 2018, with audiences and participant numbers growing by more than 1,000 per cent over the same period, to 50,000 in 2018. That is an incredible achievement. Since 2015, the company has undertaken an annual national tour. As part of its vision to be a dynamic regional presence, Dancenorth engages with local communities, schools, the disability sector and at-risk youth through its expanding community enrichment program.

The government also assists artists and cultural workers via the Individuals Fund, which supported 27 emerging and established artists and cultural workers with \$171,246, enabling them to participate in transformational professional and career development opportunities at home and abroad.

Queensland's four major performing arts organisations—Opera Queensland, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Theatre and Queensland Ballet—will receive \$12.7 million in core funding in 2019. The Queensland government also provided \$6.84 million in core funding to three arts owned companies: Major Brisbane Festivals, Queensland Music Festival and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts. The government will continue to support our artists and arts organisations to provide dynamic arts and cultural experiences to Queenslanders statewide.

Ms LUI: Minister, with reference to page 17 of the SDS, how is the Queensland government investing in arts infrastructure across Queensland and how is this supporting Queensland arts?

Ms ENOCH: The Palaszczuk government is investing in arts infrastructure right across Queensland. In Far North Queensland, the new Cairns Performing Arts Centre, CPAC, opened in December with Queensland government investment of \$15 million. The Far North Queensland community has already embraced this new venue and its calendar of top-quality productions presented in the 940-seat CPAC theatre, the 400-seat studio and the outside performance area.

Also in Cairns, the government is investing more than \$5 million in an exciting refurbishment of the Centre of Contemporary Arts, or CoCA as it is known, to strengthen the local arts sector and open up new performance and creative opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, helping to expand cultural tourism in Far North Queensland. Recently I visited CoCA and saw firsthand the work being undertaken. This is an important investment in the Cairns arts community and it is great to see it coming together.

I was very fortunate to also be at the opening of the Cairns Performing Arts Centre. It is an absolutely beautiful building. I am sure it will continue to service the great city of Cairns and the region into the future.

The Palaszczuk government is also delivering upgrades to Indigenous arts in Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait as part of a \$500,000 infrastructure fund through the Backing Indigenous Arts initiative. This has seen art centre infrastructure upgraded in Aurukun, Darnley Island, Hope Vale, Mornington Island, Mossman Gorge and Thursday Island.

In Rockhampton the Queensland government is supporting the Rockhampton Regional Council's vision for the construction of a new \$31.5 million art gallery as part of a new cultural hub in the city. A further \$5 million has been allocated from Building our Regions, on top of the \$10 million already allocated through the state budgets in 2017-18 and 2018-19. The Rockhampton Art Gallery has played a leading role in Rockhampton's cultural history for more than 50 years. The gallery relocation to the new CBD site will ensure it remains a cornerstone in a changing and revitalised cityscape and riverfront.

The government is, of course, also investing in new infrastructure in Brisbane, with \$125 million in funding for a new \$150 million theatre at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. In May the project reached another key milestone with the release of the winning concept design and the announcement of Brisbane architects Blight Rayner, in partnership with globally renowned Snohetta, as the principal consultant design team for the new theatre. It is quite stunning. The winning design was selected following an international design competition and a rigorous evaluation process. When completed, the new theatre will make QPAC the largest performing arts centre in Australia, which is something that all Queenslanders can be very proud of.

The government is also investing in the redevelopment of the Queensland Ballet's home, the Thomas Dickson Centre, supporting the company to broaden its reach and community engagement. We have also supported the \$3 million redevelopment of the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts and Queensland Theatre's new Billie Brown Theatre, which I was also very pleased to be at the opening of in October 2018, following Queensland government investment of \$2 million.

It is encouraging to see each of those infrastructure projects take shape. As they progress, they support jobs in construction as well as create an important legacy for current and future generations of Queensland audiences and, of course, artists.

Mrs MULLEN: Minister, with reference to page 38 of the SDS, will you outline the success of the government's First 5 Forever program?

Ms ENOCH: I imagine that many committee members know how important the First 5 Forever program is. It is critically important for the brain development of young children under five. It has been a very popular program right across the state. It is coordinated by the State Library of Queensland. It provides families with the information and resources they need to help children aged zero to five years develop language and early literacy skills.

The program is integral to the government's objective of giving all children a great start. Nearly three million attendances have been reported at First 5 Forever events in the four years since it was launched. The Palaszczuk government proudly committed ongoing funding of \$5 million per year to this vital program in 2018. I can tell you that there were many a happy librarian and community groups and families when that announcement was made.

We see over 320 public libraries and Indigenous knowledge centres across Queensland now deliver First 5 Forever sessions for families and children up to the age of five. The program's reach continues to grow. Twelve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils are delivering First 5 Forever through 24 Indigenous knowledge centres, up from 22 participating IKCs in 2018. Some 74 councils covering over 99 per cent of the Queensland population are delivering First 5 Forever events this year, up from 69 participating councils in 2018.

Last month while in Weipa I got to visit some students at the St Joseph's Parish School who welcomed a First 5 Forever pop-up library as part of their annual Under 8s Day. I think every child in Weipa and surrounds was there for that event. The school students in Weipa came together for that day and were excited to be able to do arts and craft and take part in storytelling.

In 2019, \$1.8 million has been allocated to councils in direct First 5 Forever funding and nearly half a million dollars in project grants have been awarded to 17 local councils under the inaugural First 5 Forever Project Grants program. These grants will support innovative, flexible and local delivery of early literacy support for children aged five and under.

2019 is the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Five of the successful projects aim to embrace and celebrate local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including Cook Shire Council's work with local Aboriginal artists to translate four popular nursery rhymes into local Aboriginal languages. These nursery rhymes will then be used in First 5 Forever rhyme time sessions at Cook shire libraries and shared with the neighbouring Indigenous knowledge centres at Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale and other community groups. All participating library and Indigenous knowledge centre staff should be very proud of what First 5 Forever has achieved.

Ms LUI: Minister, could you update the House on the success of the Backing Indigenous Arts program?

Ms ENOCH: Backing Indigenous Arts has been a groundbreaking initiative for Queensland. Now in its 12th year, BIA, Backing Indigenous Arts, invests \$12.6 million over four-year periods to build ethical and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts industries. Supporting these artists is an important part of ensuring the continuation of vibrant art, which contributes significantly to Queensland.

BIA provides a development pipeline supporting First Nations artists, production and professional development in 14 Indigenous art centres across North Queensland through to the annual Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, CIAF—an ethical marketplace for exhibition and sales. I recognise that CIAF, the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, celebrated its 10-year anniversary this year. I was very happy to be there with the member for Cook to celebrate that great milestone for Australia's leading Indigenous art fair. In recent years total art sales via the network of BIA funded Indigenous art centres have increased annually 16 per cent, directly contributing to an increase in income for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists living in Queensland's remote communities. A large portion of these sales occur through CIAF.

What we heard at the 10-year anniversary were some staggering statistics. CIAF has attracted more than 280,000 visitors. They have welcomed 1,800 First Nations artists and contributed more than \$22 million to the Queensland economy. It just goes to show how important CIAF is in generating direct and incremental expenditure, which has exceeded \$4.1 million, for the Cairns economy.

In the 2017-18 state budget the Palaszczuk government invested an additional \$2.1 million into BIA to support Queensland Indigenous performing arts over a two-year period, including funding to strengthen emerging performing arts organisations, support industry placements for early career

producers and commission new productions. Over 2018-19 a number of emerging First Nations arts organisations have been supported to strengthen their business and governance and develop new work, including Grace Lillian Lee Productions, Nintiringanyi Cultural Training Centre and the Pryce Centre for Culture and Arts. These organisations will present new works at the revitalised Centre of Contemporary Arts Cairns when it reopens later this year, sharing distinctly Queensland stories with new audiences.

The arts allow us to reflect on our past, help us understand the present and of course imagine our future. Art can play a vital role as we embark on an historic journey towards negotiated treaties for First Nations peoples in this state. The Palaszczuk government continues to support First Nations art and storytelling through programs like Backing Indigenous Arts.

Mrs MULLEN: Could you please update the committee on the progress of the Regional Arts Services Network?

Ms ENOCH: The Regional Arts Services Network is a \$6.5 million commitment from Palaszczuk government over four years to drive regional development priorities, boost local jobs and provide better opportunities for arts investment across regional Queensland. RASN, as it is called, comprises seven contracted arts service providers across eight regions with Arts Queensland acting as an interim provider for Far North Queensland.

The Queensland Music Festival has been contracted in the role of State Coordination Office to establish the development of the wider network and offer support to contracted providers. The network is going from strength to strength, with powerful programs building across all regions and engaging regional communities to share their local stories.

Dress the Central West, presented by Red Ridge, a service provider for Western Queensland, was the first major initiative to roll out and was delivered across two showcase events in Blackall and Longreach with 400 attendees. In the lead up to events, 70 local residents and artists came together to create wearable art, exploring the region's unique stories and traditions.

Similarly, the inaugural Somerset Art Beat Festival was developed by the council in partnership with the Creative Arts Alliance, the service provider for South-East Queensland north. The event included an art exhibition, performances and local arts and craft products and sets a solid foundation for future collaboration with the Somerset Regional Council.

Recently, I had the pleasure of speaking at the Central Queensland Regional Arts Services Network summit hosted by CQ University, the service provider for Central Queensland. The summit focused on gathering diverse input from stakeholders in order to deliver the best outcomes for the Central Queensland region and has already informed the development of initiatives to benefit the region.

Empire Theatre Projects Co., the service provider for South-West Queensland, is presenting live performances of the children's book *My cat likes to hide in boxes* through a tour of libraries in Toowoomba, Balonne and Maranoa. This live production enhances the First 5 Forever program aimed at developing literacy foundations for all Queensland children and is developed and performed by local artists.

The Savannah Way Art Trail, a project being delivered within the Far North Queensland region, has secured \$50,000 through the Premier's Year of Outback Tourism Events Program fund. The project will enhance the already beautiful landscape of Georgetown, Croydon, Normanton, Karumba, Burketown and Doomadgee by creating artwork on and with existing water towers along the Savannah Way tourist route. The RASN has achieved so much in its first year. I look further to providing further updates on the array of projects RASN will support in the years ahead.

While I have your attention, Mr Chair, can I just note that the DG has further information on questions that were asked earlier regarding trigger maps. Can he take some time to deliver those?

CHAIR: Yes, that would be fantastic.

Dr Merrick: The member for Broadwater raised two examples in relation to the most recent trigger maps that were recently released. I can confirm, based on the diligent work of the scientists at the Queensland Herbarium, that in terms of the Rosewood open-cut mine site native vegetation is present around the open-cut mine. That includes a number of threatened plant species in the area. In relation to the Brisbane River, there is a threatened species present—*Lilaeopsis brisbanica*, which grows along the edge of the Brisbane River. In both cases there are threatened species present.

CHAIR: Minister, is there anything you would like to say before we close this session?

Ms ENOCH: I would like to thank the chair and the committee for their consideration of the 2019-20 budget estimates. Thank you also to Hansard and to other parliamentary staff who contribute to the smooth running of the process. Thank you to my director-general and staff from the Department of Environment and Science who have worked hard to prepare for this hearing. Thank you to my ministerial staff for the work they have done in preparing for today. Once again, thank you to all members of the committee.

CHAIR: The time allocated for the consideration of the estimates for the portfolios of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts has expired. Thank you, Minister, Director-General and officials, for your attendance. That concludes the estimates hearing for the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee. I would like to thank my fellow committee members and visiting members who attended the hearing today. Thank you also to Hansard, the secretariat and attendants for their assistance today. I declare the hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 5.00 pm.