

~~be home to more than 250 four-year-old children by 2013, it is critical that early education services meet population demand. In 2010 Moorooka's new kindergarten will cater for up to 44 kindy-age children and will offer a program delivered by an early childhood teacher for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. This is a school community that is made up of 25 per cent of children born overseas, including 15 per cent who are refugees. These children need a good start to their education.~~

~~This building program will deliver 240 new kindergartens and create 2,500 construction jobs and represents a \$321 million investment in Queensland's growth and population demands. Population growth, and the subsequent pressure on services and infrastructure, is at the core of challenges facing Queensland, and this flying start for our children is about this government delivering today and planning for the needs of tomorrow.~~

RADIATION SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (12.02 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Radiation Safety Act 1999. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Radiation Safety Amendment Bill 2009.

Tabled paper: Radiation Safety Amendment Bill 2009, explanatory notes.

Second Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (12.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce this bill to the House. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Radiation Safety Act 1999 to enhance the security of particularly hazardous radiation sources located in Queensland. The Radiation Safety Act creates a regulatory framework to protect people and the environment from the harmful effects of particular sources of ionising radiation and harmful non-ionising radiation. As part of this framework, the act provides for the implementation of radiation safety and protection measures that govern the possession, use, acquisition, relocation, disposal and transport of radiation sources.

It is important to acknowledge that radiation sources are used to great effect in medicine, industry and scientific research. However, due to historical events, in April 2007 COAG decided a uniform approach must be taken to enhance Australia's existing national counterterrorism arrangements. The Bligh government is committed to bringing our legislation into line with the nationally consistent regulatory framework to stop radiation sources being accessed by persons with malicious intent.

The most significant change to the Radiation Safety Act concerns the adoption of the Code of Practice for the Security of Radioactive Sources. In order to give effect to the Code of Practice for the Security of Radioactive Sources, the bill creates a new category of radiation sources—security enhanced sources—that present the greatest danger to human health should they be misused. A radiation source will be prescribed as being a security enhanced source depending on the concentration or activity level of the radioactive components in the source. The provisions in the bill provide that a person wishing to possess, use, transport or otherwise deal with a security enhanced source in Queensland will be required to undergo either an identity check or a security background check. A person will be required to undergo an identity check if their access to a security enhanced source is to be restricted.

To illustrate when an identity check will be sufficient, I provide the example of a pathologist sterilising a blood sample in an irradiator containing a category 1 security enhanced source. Although able to use the irradiator for the designated purpose, the pathologist will not be able to gain access to the radiation source within the irradiator because of the significant physical protection preventing access to the source. In this instance, the pathologist has restricted access and therefore only needs to undergo an identity check for security to be assured. However, if a person is to have unrestricted access to a security enhanced source—for example a person changing the radiation source in the irradiator just described—they will be required to undergo a security background check because they have full access to the source.

A security background check will entail an identity check, a criminal history check and a security check for politically motivated violence obtained from ASIO. It is intended that the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 will not apply to the asking for, or giving of, information for the

purposes of a security background check. Access to information about a person's full criminal history is necessary to ensure a more complete assessment is undertaken of any charges or spent convictions that may indicate a pattern of behaviour suggesting a person may pose a potential security risk.

The bill will also require that a plan for the security of a security enhanced source, including for the transport of a source, be developed to specify how the requirements of the national security code will be satisfied. These plans, to be known as security plans and transport security plans, will detail—

- the responsibilities and duties of persons responsible for or otherwise dealing with the security enhanced source.
- the physical and procedural measures to be implemented to safeguard the source.
- the circumstances under which a person may have access to a security enhanced source, such as identity and security checks and participation in training.
- record keeping and other accountability requirements.

The legislation will also impose a statutory obligation on licensees and others dealing with a security enhanced source to take reasonable steps to ensure the security of the source, for example by complying with the approved security plan or transport security plan for the source.

The implementation of these new regulatory measures is an important step in creating and maintaining an effective security culture within those organisations and businesses that deal with security enhanced sources. An organisational culture that ensures security issues receive the attention they warrant will reduce the likelihood of a source being acquired or accessed for a malicious purpose.

While the main focus of the bill is to enhance security, the bill also includes a number of amendments that will clarify the application of the Radiation Safety Act in relation to the protection of the environment from the harmful effects of radiation sources. These amendments will, for example—

- expand the statutory obligations imposed on persons authorised to possess and use a radiation source, to ensure that the environment is not adversely affected by exposure to radiation as a result of their actions; and
- enable inspectors to inquire into the circumstances concerning a serious risk to the environment and, if necessary, seize the source to prevent further harm.

The Radiation Safety Act provides for a suite of internationally recognised radiation safety and protection measures to be implemented to protect the health and safety of Queenslanders and our environment. The bill provides for this suite of measures to be strengthened to increase the security of radiation sources and our ability to protect the environment, ensuring that we continue to benefit from the use of these sources while minimising the associated risks. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

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~~INTEGRITY BILL~~

~~COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY (CORRUPTION, CRONYISM AND UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR) AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Second Reading (Cognate Debate)~~

~~Integrity Bill resumed from 24 November (see p. 3529), on motion of Ms Bligh, and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill resumed from 24 November (see p. 3529), on motion of Mr Langbroek—~~

~~That the bills be now read a second time.~~

~~Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone Ind) (12.08 pm): I rise to support both of these bills and to seek some clarification on the Integrity Bill in particular. I thank the minister for the opportunity to have a briefing yesterday on the contents of this bill. Certainly her staff were very helpful. Yesterday in the debate it was interesting to listen to the interjections in relation to integrity or a lack thereof, or accusations of a lack thereof. It seems to me, from the time that I have been in this parliament, that the recollections of interjectors were at times optimistic and often inaccurate, and the reflections of some on the events of the past certainly had an interesting twist.~~

~~I note the comments of Mr Fitzgerald. They provide a very salient warning in relation to the governing of this state. In the late 1980s he saw and experienced firsthand the process that occurred that led to the deterioration of standards in the state. As a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry, he heard how it occurred and he could see the progression of events. His most recent statements are an important reminder, as he could see similar patterns developing—those are my words, not his. I believe it is~~